The Making of the Democratic Party. The Emergence of the Party Organizations of the German Social Democratic Workers' Party, the British National Liberal Federation and the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Party, 1860s-1880s

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Contents

Introduction

1. Political Parties and Representative Democracy

The current discussions about political parties appear to suggest that we have reached the end of the democratic membership party. This trend seems to be so obvious that reports about what the Germans call the end of the *Volkspartei* feature prominently in the mass media.[1] Several Western countries, if not all of them, have been affected by this trend. Take Britain, where the once so powerful parties of Labour and Conservatives have lost a considerable share of members and voters, and British Prime Ministers have been forced to rely on smaller parties as coalition partners.[2] In the Netherlands, where coalition governments are the rule rather than the exception, public concerns about the "the future of political parties" are growing.[3] Here, the *volkspartij* of the Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid), whose electoral results used to claim 53 seats, is now at a historical low with 9 out of the 150 seats of the Dutch parliament in the 2017 election.[4] In the scholarly literature the discussion about party decline has been ongoing for three decades. Most scholars agree that it is difficult to assess the consequences of this development, but there is a general concern that the crisis of the party might point towards a larger crisis of democracy.[5] Declining membership numbers, in particular, are seen as an

[1] For instance, Hans-Jürgen Schlamp, "Das Ende der Demokratie, wie wir sie kennen.," *Spiegel Online*, June 22, 2016, http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/europa-den-parteien-laufen-die-mitglieder-weg-a-1078084.html.

[2] While Labour had to rely on the support of the Liberal Democrats for its 2010 government, Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May depended on the Democratic Unionist Party in 2017. For a general discussion of the decline of party membership in the UK see e.g. Paul Whiteley, "Where Have All the Members Gone? The Dynamics of Party Membership in Britain," *Parliamentary Affairs* 62, no. 2 (January 4, 2009): 242–57.

[3] Quote is the title of a lecture series of the Dutch think tank Pro Demos – House of Democracy in the fall of 2015. "Collegereeks 'Hebben politieke partijen de toekomst?,'" *ProDemos* (blog), accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.prodemos.nl/leer/debatten-lezingen-colleges/collegereeks-politieke-partijen-toekomst/.

[4] The PvdA won 53 seats in 1977. "Zetelverdeling Tweede Kamer 1946-Heden," https://www.parlement.com/id/vh8lnhronvx6/zetelverdeling_tweede_kamer_1946_heden, Parlement & Politiek, n.d., accessed May 3, 2018. The 2017 figure is from Kiesraad, "Officiële uitslag Tweede Kamerverkiezing 15 maart 2017," nieuwsbericht, March 21, 2017, https://www.kiesraad.nl/actueel/nieuws/2017/03/20/officiele-uitslag-tweede-kamerverkiezing-15-maart-2017.

[5] Colin Crouch, *Post-Democracy* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2004); Klaus von Beyme, *Die politische Klasse im Parteienstaat* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993). Recently, political theorists even suggested new democratic institutions that contribute to or even replace existing representative ones. Pierre Rosanvallon, *Counter-Democracy: Politics in an Age of Distrust*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); David Van Reybrouck, *Tegen Verkiezingen*, 8th ed. (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2015); Tom van der Meer, *Niet de Kiezer is Gek* (Houten: Spectrum, 2017).

indicator of a growing distance between ordinary citizens and the political elite.[6] Scholars fear that if former mass parties lose more members, their democratic function might be jeopardized, because their organizations no longer represent ordinary citizens.[7]

Under closer scrutiny, however, it is not obvious that decreasing party membership poses a threat to representative democracy.[8] For one thing, not only parties, but also other non-political organizations like trade unions and churches have lost membership support.[9] This might not be a crisis of parties, but a general social trend where it has become increasingly difficult to convince potential members of the benefits of permanent membership. Moreover, party members have become increasingly similar to the socio-economic composition of the general electorate. In this sense, their representative function has been strengthened rather than diminished.[10] Third, there is a certain arbitrary element in the way we conceptualize the causal relationship between party membership and representative democracy. Although the quantity is often seen as an empirical indicator for the representative function of parties, we have no understanding about the exact scale of mass membership that is needed to enable a well-functioning system of democratic representation. Differences in national experiences

[6] van Biezen, Mair, and Poguntke, "Going, Going, . . . Gone?"; Susan E. Scarrow, "Parties without Members? Party Organizations in a Changing Electoral Environment," in *Parties Without Partisans Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, ed. Russel J. Dalton, Russell J and Martin P. Wattenberg, 1st paperback, vol. 5, Comparative Politics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 79–101; Philippe C. Schmitter, "Parties Are Not What They Once Were," in *Political Parties and Democracy*, ed. Larry Jay Diamond and Richard Gunther (JHU Press, 2001), 67–89; Ulrich von Alemann and Tim Spier, "Parteimitglieder nach dem 'Ende der Mitgliederpartei' : ein Überblick über Forschungsergebnisse für Westeuropa seit 1990," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, 2008, 29–44.

[7] This is a simplified account of the much discussed cartel-party thesis of Katz and Mair. "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy," *Party Politics* 1, no. 1 (January 1, 1995): 5–28; "The Cartel Party Thesis: A Restatement," *Perspectives on Politics* 7, no. 04 (2009): 753–66. A critique of the cartel-party thesis has been offered by Herbert Kitschelt, "Citizens, Politicians, and Party Cartellization: Political Representation and State Failure in Post-Industrial Democracies," *European Journal of Political Research* 37, no. 2 (March 1, 2000): 149–79. Other contributions to this debate can be found in Ingrid van Biezen, "Political Parties as Public Utilities," *Party Politics* 10, no. 6 (January 11, 2004): 701–22; Pepijn Corduwener, "Institutionalizing the Democratic Party-State: Political Parties as 'Public Utilities' in Italy and West Germany, 1945–75," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'histoire*, April 13, 2017, 1–20; Russell J. Dalton and Steven A. Weldon, "Public Images of Political Parties: A Necessary Evil?," *West European Politics* 28, no. 5 (November 2005): 931–51.

[8] In general, the discussion about the consequences of membership decline has several focal points. While Dalton and Weldon relate decreasing trust in parties to low voting turnout, others like Scarrow and Gezgor have compared the socio-economic background of party members and the general electorate. They conclude that sinking membership numbers are not a problem for representation, because party members share more socio-economic characteristics with their voters. Dalton and Weldon, "Public Images of Political Parties"; Susan E. Scarrow and Burcu Gezgor, "Declining Memberships, Changing Members? European Political Party Members in a New Era," *Party Politics* 16, no. 6 (November 2010): 823–43.

[9] Ingrid van Biezen and Thomas Poguntke, "The Decline of Membership-Based Politics," *Party Politics* 20, no. 2 (March 1, 2014): 205–16.

[10] Scarrow and Gezgor, "Declining Memberships, Changing Members?"

show that the proportion of party members in the general population varies from as high as 17.27% in Austria to as low as 1.21% in Britain.[11] Fourthly, recent research on long-term developments has questioned the assumption of declining membership numbers and suggested that in most countries their peak might be a historical exception, rather than a rule.[12] Finally, political theorists have argued that representation is essentially constructed in a process where claim-making is more important than actual procedures.[13] In this sense, the representative function of political parties has always depended on the ability of party leaders to make credible arguments about legitimately speaking for specific constituencies.[14]

These points raise the question why scholars and journalists describe the decline of mass membership of parties through the lenses of representative democracy? To answer this question, the historical roots of the relationship between party organizations and democracy need to be better understood. Originally, the term "party" had a broader, primarily negative, meaning, referring to groups holding opposing opinions.[15] For instance, in the Netherlands, "partijen" were considered to be a threat to a harmonious public order, worth criticizing and preventing.[16] Only in the first half of the twentieth century parties did become increasingly conceptualized as essential to democracy. The most important feature of these new parties was their ability to represent the people through a broad membership organization. Remarkably, the early scholarly judgment on the representative function of parties was not always a positive one. Robert Michels' Iron Law of Oligarchy stated that parties were inevitably doomed to be controlled by an internal elite, disregarding the interests of ordinary members.[17] In the case of

[11] Figures are from 2008, van Biezen, Mair, and Poguntke, "Going, Going, . . . Gone?," 28.

[12] Scarrow, "Parties without Members? Party Organizations in a Changing Electoral Environment."

[13] Michael Saward, *The Representative Claim* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

[14] See especially Enroth's argument that the problem with cartel parties is not their failure to represent their constituencies, but rather that it is difficult to empirically determine whether they are representative or not. "Cartelization versus Representation? On a Misconception in Contemporary Party Theory," *Party Politics* 23, no. 2 (March 1, 2017): 124–34.

[15] An exception to the negative perception of partisanship can be found in the writings of the eighteenth-century British Conservative Edmund Burke who described partisanship as beneficial to the common good. Terence Ball, "Party," in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, ed. James Farr, Russell L. Hanson, and Terence Ball, Ideas in Context (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 155–76; Jonathan White, *Meaning of Partisanship.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 14–21. In the German-speaking context, there was a similar developments where "Partei" was largely considered to be a community in principle (Gesinnungsgemeinschaft). Klaus von Beyme, "Partei," ed. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck, *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1978).

[16] Adriaan van Veldhuizen, "De Partij: over het politieke leven in de vroege S.D.A.P." (Leiden University, 2015), 18–19.

[17] Robert Michels, *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie: Untersuchungen über die oligarchischen Tendenzen des Gruppenlebens* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt, 1911), http://www.archive.org/stream/zursoziologiede00michgoog#page/n8/mode/2up. See also for an analysis of Michels' theoretical work Lawrence A. Scaff, "Max Weber and Robert Michels," *The American Journal of Sociology* 86, no. 6

Britain, Mosei Ostrogorski criticized party organizations for what he considered improper interference in the electoral process and the disruption of individual citizens' proper representation in parliament.[18] But there were also more optimistic evaluations, like those of Abbott Lawrence Lowell and Hans Kelsen, who praised parties for channeling diffuse public opinion into clear policy choices.[19] Max Weber even saw party organizations as instrumental for a democratic state to organize democracy in an orderly way.[20]

This growing scholarly interest in the democratic nature of parties was the result of an earlier modification of their institutional form. In the 1860s and 1870s the traditionally loose alliances of parliamentary representatives were merged with the extra-parliamentary membership organizations. Parties started to become permanent organizations with a formalized political agenda.[21] For most political commentators and later scholars this was a crucial moment and remarkable process, which was viewed with apprehension. The founders of the new party organizations further strengthened these concerns by using language that was provocative for their contemporaries. They proudly announced that their organizations would finally enable the participation of ordinary people in political institutions. In a period where democracy was a highly contested term, they called their party "democratic" and praised the "popular basis" of their organizational structure.[22] This allowed the self-styled "democrats" to

(May 1, 1981): 1269–86; Andrew G. Bonnell, "Oligarchy in Miniature? Robert Michels and the Marburg Branch of the German Social Democratic Party," *German History* 29, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 23–35; Philip J. Cook, "Robert Michels's Political Parties in Perspective," *The Journal of Politics* 33, no. 3 (1971): 773–96.

[18] Mosei Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1902), http://archive.org/details/democracyandtheo031734mbp.Mosei Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1902), http://archive.org/details/democracyandtheo031734mbp. For a historical analysis of Ostrogorski's position on parties, see Paolo Pombeni, "Starting in Reason, Ending in Passion. Bryce, Lowell, Ostrogorski and the Problem of Democracy," *The Historical Journal* 37, no. 02 (1994): 319–41.

[19] Pombeni, "Starting in Reason, Ending in Passion. Bryce, Lowell, Ostrogorski and the Problem of Democracy"; Sandrine Baume, *Hans Kelsen and the Case for Democracy* (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2012).

[20] For an analysis of Weber's position on parties, see Henk te Velde, "The Domestication of a Machine. The Debate about Political Parties around 1900," in *Organizing Democracy Reflections on the Rise of Political Organizations in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Henk te Velde and Maartje Janse (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 255–75.

[21] Henk te Velde and Maartje Janse, eds., *Organizing Democracy: Reflections on the Rise of Political Organizations in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017). See chapter one for a more detailed discussion of associational culture in Europe.

[22] "sozial-demokratisch" "Protokoll über die Verhandlungen des Allgemeinen Deutschen sozial-demokratischen Arbeiterkongresses zu Eisenach am 7. , 8. und 9. August 1869," in *Protokolle der sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei*, vol. 1 (Glashütten im Taunus: Verlag Detlev Auvermann KG, 1971), 55; "Proceedings Attending the Formation of the National Federation of Liberal Associations with Report of Conference Held in Birmingham" (The "Journal" Printing Offices, 1877), 7, Manuscript Papers Relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the Organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections, University of Bristol. For a discussion of the term democracy in nineteenth-century Europe, see Robert Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote in British Politics, 1848-1867: The Making of the Second Reform Act* (Aldershot: Ashgate,

position themselves as the representatives of the masses against the "aristocrats" and "dictatorship" of their political opponents.[23] Meanwhile, the nineteenth-century critics of party organization pointed to the gap between the announced mass membership and the actual size of the party. For them, the promise of hundreds of thousands of members was a crude exaggeration of the reality of a few thousand followers.[24]

These historical discussions about the democratic character of party organization serve as a starting point for my dissertation. Instead of analyzing the current state of membership parties, I study the founding years of the relationship between party organization and democracy. This allows me to approach party formation from a different angle. Many scholars have described parties as crucial institutions for democratic representation in present political systems.[25] They have, however, given little attention to the fact that this relationship might also have a reversed effect. Parties not only were contested organizations in processes of democratization, democratic ideas and practices also were a decisive factor in the emergence of the first party organizations. My study bridges this gap in the literature by comparing three early party organizations with different ideological orientations and national circumstances. The main research question is: why and how did the first party organizations emerge?

To answer this question, the dissertation analyzes the nineteenth-century discourse and practices of early party founders. Their organizations operated on two levels that enabled the development of a new organizational model that would decisively determine political history for the coming decades. The representative capability of the new parties' membership was both a contested rhetoric and an actual experience.[26] On the one hand, there was the

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2011); Joanna Innes and Mark Philp, *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Age of Revolutions: America, France, Britain, Ireland 1750-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Henk te Velde, 'De domesticatie van democratie in Nederland. Democratie als strijdbegrip van de negentiende eeuw tot 1945', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 127, no. 2 (25 June 2012): 3–27.Robert Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote in British Politics, 1848-1867: The Making of the Second Reform Act* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011); Joanna Innes and Mark Philp, *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Age of Revolutions: America, France, Britain, Ireland 1750-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Henk te Velde, 'De domesticatie van democratie in Nederland. Democratie als strijdbegrip van de negentiende eeuw tot 1945', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 127, no. 2 (25 June 2012): 3–27.

[23] Rienk Janssens, *De opbouw van de Antirevolutionaire Partij 1850-1888* (Verloren, 2001), 156–58; Velde, "De domesticatie van democratie," 14. "Protokoll," 11.

[24] This point is further elaborated in chapter four and five of this dissertation. See also Susan E. Scarrow, *Beyond Party Members: Changing Approaches to Partisan Mobilization*, Comparative Politics (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), chap. three.

[25] For instance, Larry Jay Diamond and Richard Gunther, *Political Parties and Democracy* (JHU Press, 2001). The most recent contribution to this discussion is probably Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Ziblatt, "The Historical Turn in Democratization Studies: A New Research Agenda for Europe and Beyond," *Comparative Political Studies* 43, no. 8–9 (2010): 931–68.

[26] This approach is inspired by a recent study of political scientist Susan Scarrow, who has argued that historical membership numbers of parties have to be studied with caution, because they were both "organizational rhetoric and (…) organizational practices." Scarrow, *Beyond Party Members*, 67.

powerful promise of mass politics that would allow for a better system of democratic representation. Party founders told their followers that their organizations were the only tool to achieve democratic reform and the political participation of ordinary people.[27] This was, of course, an exaggeration of organizational routine where a small group controlled the course of the comparably low number of party members. Still we should not underestimate the importance of the appeal of the narrative of the quantitatively membership organization. Ideas, narratives or scripts have the power to create new political realities.[28] Early party founders' claims about their ability to enable the political participation of ordinary people in- and outside their organizations might look exaggerated given our understanding of modern democracy, but they functioned as a self-fulfilling prophecy that enabled democratization, especially in a period when political rights were limited to a small fraction of the population.

Based on these initial considerations, the dissertation's objective is to contribute to the historiography of party formation. Because it does not rely on a single case study, but rather analyzes several party organizations, this study shows why and how organizing as a party became a possible and logical course of action in a nineteenth-century setting. In conversation with more conventional narratives of political history, I derive new explanatory factors for party emergence and show how they shaped the first years of organizational consolidation in a transnational framework.[29] Through this broader angle I finally hope to inspire a different perspective on the current discussions about party decline. Studying the first moment when the relationship between democracy and party organization was fostered, the dissertation intends to offer a historical contribution on the crisis of membership parties.

2. Historical Comparison

The study is based on an interdisciplinary research design. Although historians as well as political scientists have studied early party organizations, there is surprisingly little exchange between party scholars of the two disciplines. One of the main reasons for this continued separation are different objectives and epistemologies. For most social scientists, early party organizations are not the primary research object, but rather serve as a starting point to explain

[27] Rosanvallon has referred to the ambigious nature of democracy writing that "democracy is always at one and the same time the apparent solution to the modern problem of the constitution of social order as well as a question for ever left unanswered." Pierre Rosanvallon, 'Towards a Philosophical History of the Political', in *The History of Political Thought in National Context*, ed. Dario Castiglione and Iain Hampsher-Menk, Ideas in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 196.

[28] See e.g. Keith Michael Baker and Dan Edelstein, *Scripting Revolution: A Historical Approach to the Comparative Study of Revolutions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015); Gordon S. Wood, *The Idea of America: Reflections on the Birth of the United States* (London: Penguin Books, 2011), chap. 1.

[29] See, for instance, Dimiter Toshkov, *Political Analysis: Research Design in Political Science* (New York: Palgrave, 2016).Dimiter Toshkov, *Political Analysis: Research Design in Political Science* (New York: Palgrave, 2016).

current political developments. Social scientists who venture into the still largely unchartered territory of the history of the first party organizations rely on comparison to develop multiple sorts of categorization, for instance, by suggesting Weberian-style ideal types.[30] Based on a large sample of cases, the relationship between parties and democratization has been explored in numerous studies.[31] Concentrating on a number of well-known historical cases in the first part of their books, party scholars like Duverger and Satori decisively shaped our understanding of the broad phenomenon of party emergence.[32] Their systematic studies demonstrate the relevance of studying early parties in a more general research design, even though their broad focus limits both the depth of their empirical research and exchange with recent scholarly work of political historians. An exception to this is the work of Susan Scarrow, who has relied on primary sources and historiography to place parties' membership numbers in their historical context. Her work on the difference between the myth and realities of membership numbers has inspired this dissertation to study in more detail what the ideas and practices of democratic mass organization meant for the formation of the first party organizations.[33]

The dissertation also stands in the tradition of the often more detailed and specialized research of history. While most social scientists compare several parties, historians usually chose to study a single case study of party emergence.[34] Instead of generalized conclusions, the party historiography is full of detailed analyses of primary sources that are carefully interpreted in their specific historical context. The few party historians who have used historical comparison for party research studied a small number of cases to minimize methodological problems like

[30] See Angelo Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization and Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 17; Ingrid van Biezen, "Building Party Organisations and the Relevance of Past Models: The Communist and Socialist Parties in Spain and Portugal," *West European Politics* 21, no. 2 (April 1, 1998): 32–62.

[31] For instance, Joseph G. LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, 'The Origin and Development of Political Parties', in *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. Joseph G. LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, 6 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 3–42; Hans Daalder, 'Parties, Elites, and Political Developments in Western Europe', in *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. Joseph La Palombra and Myron Weiner, Studies in Political Development 6 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 43–77.

[32] See the classic work of Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans. D. W. Brogan, Third edition (London: Barnes and Noble, 1967); Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (ECPR Press, 2005).

[33] Scarrow, *Beyond Party Members*.

[34] Of special importance for this dissertation are John P. Rossi, *The Transformation of the British Liberal Party: A Study of the Tactics of the Liberal Opposition, 1874-1880* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1978); John Russell Vincent, *The Formation of the Liberal Party, 1857-1868* (London: Constable, 1966); Janssens, *opbouw*; Shlomo Na'aman, *Die Konstituierung der Deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1862/63* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975); Thomas Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit: die deutsche Sozialdemokratie vom Vormärz bis zum Sozialistengesetz* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 2000).

different languages and historiographies.[35] For instance, specializing in a single ideological orientation, Åberg compared the Liberal Party in Germany and its counterpart in Sweden.[36] Another possibility is the comparison within a single national context like Mittmann's comprehensive study between the Social Democrats and the Centre Party in Germany.[37] Other authors, most prominently the influential historians Nipperdey and Hanham, and recently, de Jong, analysed entire party systems to demonstrate the importance of party competition for the political developments of Germany, Britain or the Netherlands respectively.[38] Tracing the transfer between German and British Socialist parties, Berger has shown how successful models of party organization in two countries influence each other and inspire their further institutionalization.[39] Another notable inspiration is the work of historian Pombeni who has analyzed the history of British, French, German and Italian party systems to engage with early-twentieth-century criticism of party organization.[40] This dissertation is inspired by Pombeni's approach, but will look at three specific cases in more detail, enabling a closer analysis of the emergence of the first party organizations.

Summing up, this dissertation connects the principles of the social sciences and history to provide a new research approach to the phenomenon of early party organization. Sartori has used the metaphor of the "ladder of abstraction" to explain the limits of comparison. Climbing up the ladder, thus creating increasing abstraction, scholars cannot avoid missing some of the details of the case-specific context. Likewise, descending the ladder means that general observations will remain limited.[41] Analyzing three party organizations, I stand somewhere on the middle steps of Sartori's ladder. The study is based on primary sources and the specialized secondary literature of both disciplines to provide in-depth insights into the creation of an

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[35] Jürgen Kocka, "Comparison and Beyond," *History and Theory* 42, no. 1 (2003): 39–44. On a general level, Baldwin has argued that historians should work more often with comparisons to study causality. Peter Baldwin, "Comparing and Generalizing: Why All History Is Comparative, yet No History Is Sociology.," in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. Maura O'Connor and Deborah Cohen (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1–22.

[36] For instance, Martin Åberg, *Swedish and German Liberalism from Factions to Parties 1860-1920* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2011). See also Berger's detailed comparison between German and British Labour parties *The British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats, 1900 - 1931* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

[37] Ursula Mittmann, *Fraktion und Partei* (Droste, 1976).

[38] Thomas Nipperdey, *Die Organisation der deutschen Parteien vor 1918* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1961); Harold John Hanham, *Elections and Party Management: Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1978); Ron de Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit: verkiezingen voor de Tweede Kamer 1848-1887* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1999).

[39] Stefan Berger, "Herbert Morrison's London Labour Party in the Interwar Years and the SPD: Problems of Transferring German Socialist Practices to Britain," *European Review of History: Revue Europeenne d'histoire* 12, no. 2 (2005); Berger, *The British Labour Party*.

[40] Paolo Pombeni, *Introduction à l'histoire des partis politiques* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1992).

[41] Giovanni Sartori, "Comparing and Miscomparing," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 3, no. 3 (1991): 254.

important political institution. In order to allow for a detailed study of the process of party formation, the dissertation focuses on the years around the decade between 1869 and 1879 in which the three cases were founded. This means that for each case the five years before and after the founding assembly have been studied. Still one should not ignore the fact that, already in their early phase, the ideas and practices of party organizations exceeded the traditional boundaries of the nation state. I, therefore, compare three case studies to venture out of the traditional field of party history that usually relies on historical comparison of two cases. To analyze the broad range of nineteenth-century party formation, the dissertation brings together organizations that are usually not studied together. Moreover, the dissertation incorporates a transnational perspective by studying the three cases as an interrelated phenomenon of political transition.

3. Three Early Party Organizations

In order to bridge the gap between history and the social sciences, I will introduce the three cases in connection to the research approaches of both disciplines. The three cases of this study are: the German Social Democratic Workers' Party (Sozialdemokratische Arbeiter Partei, SDAP), the British National Liberal Federation (NLF) and the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Party (Anti-Revolutionaire Partij, ARP). Historians are familiar with these three party organizations because they are important cases of national historiographies and generally considered to be the first modern parties of their national political systems.[42] Their founders were among the first to combine organizational structure outside of parliament with parliamentary representation. Still, the specialized historiography mentions organizations that could fit this definition and emerged before these three prominent cases. Depending on their specific research interest, historians have named the German Central March Association (Centralmärzverein) in 1848 and the National Association (Nationalverein) in 1859 and the General German Workers' Associations (Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein) in 1863 as the first German party organization.[43] In Britain, the Liberals had already established the Liberal Registration Society

[42] For the Dutch ARP, this argument has been made in both general and specialized literature. Herman de Liagre Böhl, "Hoofdlijnen in de politieke ontwikkeling van het moderne Nederland," in *Maatschappij & Nederlandse politiek.*, ed. Uwe Becker (Het Spinhuis, 1998), 213; George Harinck and Arie van Deursen, "Woord vooraf," in *De Antirevolutionaire Partij, 1829-1980*, ed. Roel Kuiper, Peter Bak, and George Harinck (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), 10; de Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit*, 22. For the British NLF, see Francis H. Herrick, "The Origins of the National Liberal Federation," *Journal of Modern History* 17, no. 2 (June 1, 1945): 116–29. For German Social Democracy, see Michels, *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie*; David E. Barclay and Eric D. Weitz, *Between Reform and Revolution: German Socialism and Communism from 1840 to 1990* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998).

[43] Dieter Langewiesche, 'Die Anfänge der deutschen Parteien. Partei, Fraktion und Verein in der Revolution von 1848/49', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 4, no. 3 (1 January 1978): 324–61; Andreas Biefang, *Politisches Bürgertum in Deutschland, 1857-1868: nationale Organisationen und Eliten* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1994); Toni Offermann, *Die erste deutsche Arbeiterpartei: Materialien zur Organisation,*

(later Liberal Central Association) to nationally coordinate electoral efforts in 1860.[44] In 1867 the Tories followed this example and founded the British National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations.[45] Finally, in the Netherlands the conservative General Electoral Association (Algemeene Kiesvereniging) emerged in 1868.[46]

The three cases of this study - German SDAP, British NLF and Dutch ARP - differ from these earlier cases of party organization because of their ability to survive the first years of organizational consolidation. As the first permanent party organizations, their organizational structures existed until the twentieth, or even twenty-first, century. Comparing these three party organizations with different political orientations in different national contexts is a challenge and an opportunity. It requires not only the command of three languages, but also a thorough understanding of national historiographies. The prominent position of the three cases in the secondary literature helps in dealing with this challenge. The German SDAP, after being renamed Socialist Workers' Party (Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei) in 1875 and later Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei), became the "model party" of Marxist Socialism.[47] When at the beginning of the twentieth century, Michels described German Social Democracy in his *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der Modernen Demokratie* (On the Sociology of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy), the party became the most cited example of early party organization.[48] For the early phase of Social Democratic history, a significant number of detailed studies have been published that provide a good addition to the more general literature on the party in the later phase of Imperial Germany.[49] The British party

Verbreitung und Sozialstruktur von ADAV und LADAV, 1863-1871 (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 2002).Dieter Langewiesche, 'Die Anfänge der deutschen Parteien. Partei, Fraktion und Verein in der Revolution von 1848/49', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 4, no. 3 (1 January 1978): 324–61; Andreas Biefang, *Politisches Bürgertum in Deutschland, 1857-1868: nationale Organisationen und Eliten* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1994); Toni Offermann, *Die erste deutsche Arbeiterpartei: Materialien zur Organisation, Verbreitung und Sozialstruktur von ADAV und LADAV, 1863-1871* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 2002).

44 Vincent, *The Formation of the Liberal Party*, 84–85.

45 Robert Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Churchill* (London: Fontana, 1972), 114; Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978, 93, 349–68; Archie Hunter, *A Life of Sir John Eldon Gorst: Disraeli's Awkward Disciple* (London: Frank Cass, 2001).Robert Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Churchill* (London: Fontana, 1972), 114; Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978, 93, 349–68; Archie Hunter, *A Life of Sir John Eldon Gorst: Disraeli's Awkward Disciple* (London: Frank Cass, 2001).

46 Ron de Jong, 'De Algemeene Kiesvereeniging, 1868-1875. De eerste politieke partij van Nederland', in *Jaarboek Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen 1999*, ed. Gerrit Voerman and Anthonie Lucardie, Jaarboek Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen (Groningen: DNPP, 2000), 240–50.

47 Barclay and Weitz, *Between Reform and Revolution*, 2.

48 Michels, *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie*. For a more recent application of Michel's theoretical framework, see Charlie Jeffery, *Social Democracy in the Austrian Provinces, 1918-1934: Beyond Red Vienna* (London: Leicester University Press, 1995).

49 Most recently and influential for this study is Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*. See also Na'aman, *Die Konstituierung*; Ilse Fischer, *August Bebel und der Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine 1867/68: Brieftagebuch und Dokumente*, Archiv für Sozialgeschichte, Beiheft 14 (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz

organization of the National Liberal Federation is known as the "source of modern popular party organization" in the party historiography.[50] The early party scholar Mosei Ostrogroski wrote about it in his influential *Democracy and Organization* after the turn of the century.[51] Despite the large international impact of Ostrogorski's study, research on the early years of the NLF has been confined to a number of articles and book chapters that are accompanied by more general studies of the parliamentary Liberal Party.[52] As the first "modern" party organization of the

Nachf., 1994); Ursula Herrmann, "Zur Vorgeschichte des Geraer Vereinstags 1867: Eine Dokumentation," *Internationale wissenschaftliche Korrespondenz der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung* 27, no. 2 (1991): 182–208; Ernst Schraepler, "Der Zwölfer-Ausschuss des Vereinstages Deutscher Arbeitervereine und die Ereignisse von 1866," *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands* 16–17 (1968): 210–53; Offermann, *Die erste deutsche Arbeiterpartei*. In addition, there are numerous studies on the local and regional levels that have influenced this dissertation, for instance, Georg Eckert, *Aus den Anfängen der Braunschweiger Arbeiterbewegung: unveröffentlichte Bracke-Briefe* (Braunschweig: Limbach, 1955); Georg Eckert, "Aus der Korrespondenz des Braunschweiger Ausschusses der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiter-Partei.," in *Braunschweigisches Jahrbuch*, 45 (Wolfenbüttel: Waisenhaus-Buchdruckerei und Verlag, 1664), 107–49; Stephan Resch and Karl Borromäus Murr, *Lassalles "südliche Avantgarde": Protokollbuch des Allgemeinen Deutschen Arbeitervereins der Gemeinde Augsburg* (Bonn: Dietz, J H, 2013); Gerlinde Runge, *Die Volkspartei in Württemberg von 1864 bis 1871: Die Erben der 48er Revolution im Kampf gegen die preussisch-klein-deutsche Lösung der nationalen Frage*, vol. 62, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg, B (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1970); Torsten Kupfer, "Die organisatorische Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie in Preußen nach dem Sozialistengesetz 1889 - 1898," *Moving the Social* 18 (1997): 61–82; Toni Offermann, "Die regionale Ausbreitung der frühen deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1848/49-1860/64," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 13, no. 4 (1987): 419–47. See also the edited volumes of Hans Mommsen, ed., *Sozialdemokratie zwischen Klassenbewegung und Volkspartei: Verhandungen der Sektion Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung des Deutschen Historikertages in Regensburg, Okt. 1972* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1974); Gerhard Ritter, *Arbeiterbewegung, Parteien und Parlamentarismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1976); Gerhard Ritter, *Der Aufstieg der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung: Sozialdemokratie und freie Gewerkschaften im Parteiensystem und Sozialmilieu des Kaiserreiches* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1990). An excellent English-language overview is provided by Stefan Berger, *Social Democracy and the Working Class in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Germany*, Themes in Modern German History Series (Harlow: Longman, 2000). Older English-language contributions are Douglas A. Chalmers, *The Social Democratic Party of Germany, from Working-Class Movement to Modern Political Party* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964); Roger Pearce Morgan, *The German Social Democrats and the First International, 1864-1872* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965); Vernon L. Lidtke, *Outlawed Party: Social Democracy in Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966); Richard W. Reichard, *Crippled from Birth: German Social Democracy, 1844-1870* (Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1969); Barclay and Weitz, *Between Reform and Revolution*.

[50] Herrick, 'The Origins', 116.Herrick, 'The Origins', 116.

[51] Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization*.Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization*. See also Watson's early description of NLF history. *The National Liberal Federation from Its Commencement to the General Election of 1906* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1907).

[52] Herrick, "The Origins"; Trygve R. Tholfsen, "The Origins of the Birmingham Caucus," *The Historical Journal* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 1959): 161–84; Griffiths, P. C, "The Origins and Development of the National Liberal Federation to 1886" (Oxford, 1973); P. C Griffiths, "The Caucus and the Liberal Party in 1886," *History* 61, no. 202 (June 1, 1976): 183–97; Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978; Patricia

Netherlands, the Anti-Revolutionary Party adds a case to the study that is less known to an international audience. Still in the Dutch historiography, the party has gained renewed attention, both as an interesting case of its own and as an important example of nineteenth-century political history.[53] Although mentioned in some comparative studies, its presence in the social science literature has given an incorrect impression of its process of emergence. This party organization did not emerge out of "the Churches and religious sects" outside of parliament, as party scholar Maurice Duverger suggested, but had important roots in the parliamentary faction around the aristocratic MP Groen van Prinsterer.[54] In addition, a number

Auspos, "Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics: From the National Education League to the National Liberal Federation," *Journal of British Studies* 20, no. 1 (October 1, 1980): 184–204; Eugenio F. Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism, 1876-1906* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chap. four; James Owen, *Labour and the Caucus: Working-Class Radicalism and Organised Liberalism in England, 1868-1888* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014). For the parliamentary Liberal Party, see for instance Vincent, *The Formation of the Liberal Party*; Rossi, *The Transformation of the British Liberal Party*; Jonathan Parry, *The Rise and Fall of Liberal Government in Victorian Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Terence Andrew Jenkins, *The Liberal Ascendancy, 1830-1886* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

[53] See especially Janssens, *opbouw*. But also Roel Kuiper, *Herenmuiterij: vernieuwing en sociaal conflict in de antirevolutionaire beweging, 1871-1894* (Leiden: Groen, 1994); Arie van Deursen, 'Van antirevolutionaire richting naar antirevolutionaire partij 1829-1871', in *De Antirevolutionaire Partij, 1829-1980*, ed. George Harinck, Roel Kuiper, and Peter Bak (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), 11–52; Ron de Jong, 'Antirevolutionaire partijvorming, 1848-1879: een afwijkende visie', in *Jaarboek Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen 2001*, ed. Gerrit Voerman, Jaarboek Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen (Groningen: DNPP, 2003), 213–26, http://pub.dnpp.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/root/DNPPjaarboeken/2001/Antirevolupartijvo/; Ron de Jong, 'Het antirevolutionaire volk achter de kiezers. De mythe van een leuze. De electorale aanhang van de ARP rond 1885 en in 1918', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 123, no. 2 (1 January 2008): 185–96. For an overview on the recent historiography see, D.F.J. Bosscher, "Een partij die niet ophoudt te fascineren: nieuwe literatuur over de Antirevolutionaire Partij," in *Jaarboek Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen 2001*, Jaarboek Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen (Groningen: DNPP, 2003), 227–36, http://pub.dnpp.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/root/DNPPjaarboeken/ 2001/Eenpartijdienietop/. The relationship of the ARP to earlier forms of political protest has been discussed by Annemarie Houkes, *Christelijke vaderlanders: godsdienst, burgerschap en de nederlandse natie (1850-1900)* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2009); Maartje Janse, *De Afschaffers: Publieke Opinie, Organisatie en Politiek in Nederland 1840-1880* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2007). For recent references to the ARP's general position in Dutch political history, see, for instance, Henk te Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap: persoon en politiek van Thorbecke tot Den Uyl* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2002); Ido de Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom: de constitutie van de Nederlandse politiek in de negentiende eeuw*, De natiestaat (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2003); de Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit*.

[54] Duverger, *Political Parties*, xxxi. For Groen van Prinsterer, see, among many other titles, Jan Willem Kirpestein, "Groen van Prinsterer als belijder van kerk en staat in de negentiende eeuw" (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 1993).

of well-researched political biographies have described the life of leading party activists of the three party organizations by critically engaging with their contemporary image.[55]

Because this study is inspired by the scholarly discussions about the current decline of party organization, the dissertation has followed additional analytical criteria, based on the social science literature. I do not claim to have employed the rigid framework of political science, but rather use their reasoning as a starting point for a historical analysis. Comparative scholars distinguish between most different research design and most similar research design.[56] The most different research design is best suited to offer new explanatory factors of party emergence. For this study, I use an exploratory approach that is not based on hypotheses. In this sense, the dissertation follows the approach of historians that build their analysis inductively by first going to the archive before identifying general mechanisms. Still, the dissertation starts with noting that the outcome remains constant: the three cases followed a similar organizational model in the same period. Differences occur in what one could call two possible independent variables 1) national circumstances and 2) ideological orientation. Concerning the first independent variable, the national circumstances of Germany, Britain and the Netherlands differed in regard to their nineteenth-century transformations in a) political institutions and b) socio-economic structure.[57] The German Social Democratic Workers' Party was founded two years before German unification in 1869. While the Reichstag had only limited influence, universal male suffrage had been established in the states of the North German Confederation in 1867.[58] The second case, the British National Liberal Federation emerged in

[55] Biographies of Joseph Chamberlain provide a particularly valuable addition to the literature on his party organization. See, for instance, Peter T. Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain: Entrepreneur in Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); Michael Balfour, *Britain and Joseph Chamberlain* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1985); Denis Judd, *Radical Joe: A Life of Joseph Chamberlain* (London: Hamilton, 1977); Duncan Watts, *Joseph Chamberlain and the Challenge of Radicalism* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1992); James Louis Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1932). For Abraham Kuyper this dissertation has primarily relied on the recent study of Jeroen Koch who provided an extensive account in connection with recent innovations in political culture Jeroen Koch, *Abraham Kuyper: een biografie* (Utrecht: Boom, 2007). See also C. Augustijn, J. H. Prins, and H.E.S. Woldring, eds., *Abraham Kuyper: zijn volksdeel, zijn invloed* (Delft: Meinema, 1987); James D. Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: Modern Calvinist, Christian Democrat*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013). For the German Social Democrats, I relied on more recent studies as well as more historical biographies. Francis Ludwig Carsten, *August Bebel und die Organisation der Massen* (Berlin: Siedler, 1991); Raymond H. Dominick, *Wilhelm Liebknecht and the Founding of the German Social Democratic Party* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1982); Kurt Eisner, *Wilhelm Liebknecht: Sein Leben und Wirken*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Vorwärts, 1906), https://archive.org/details/wilhelmliebknec00eisngoog.

[56] B. Guy Peters, *Comparative Politics: Theory and Methods* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 1998).

[57] A more thorough discussion of structural and institutional explanations of party emergence is provided in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

[58] Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Marcus Kreuzer, "Parliamentarization and the Question of German Exceptionalism: 1867–1918," *Central European History* 36, no. 3 (2003): 327–57.

1877. In contrast to Germany, voting rights in Britain were limited, but a powerful House of Commons enabled a much more liberal political landscape.[59] In regard to socio-economic development, Britain experienced industrialization first, while Germany was a relative latecomer.[60] When Abraham Kuyper founded the Anti-Revolutionary Party in 1879, the Netherlands lagged behind in industrialization and focused on other areas of economic development such as agriculture and services.[61] On a political level, the small Dutch constitutional monarchy experienced gradual parliamentarization and comparatively late suffrage rights extension.[62]

Table 1: Most different system design[63]

Variable / Party organization	**SDAP (**1869)	**NFL (**1877)	**ARP (**1879)
1) **National circumstances**			
a) Suffrage rights	High	Middle	Low
b) Industrialization	Middle	Early	Late
2) **Ideology**	Social Democratic	Radical Liberal	Orthodox Protestant
3) **Explanatory variable**	?	?	?
Outcome	Early Party Organization	Early Party Organization	Early Party Organization

In relation to the geographical circumstances of the case studies, a disclaimer might be necessary for specialists in the political history of the three countries. In the comparative framework of this study, a certain degree of simplification cannot be avoided. In particular with regard to the three states, the general labels Germany, Britain and the Netherlands will be used.

[59] Patrick Joyce, *The State of Freedom: A Social History of the British State Since 1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[60] Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, C.1848-1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1993); Friedrich Lenger, *Industrielle Revolution und Nationalstaatsgründung (1849-1870er Jahre)*, ed. Jürgen Kocka, Gebhardt, Handbuch der deutschen Geschichte 15 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2003).

[61] Michael Jansen, *De industriële ontwikkeling in Nederland 1800-1850*, Reconstruction national accounts of the Netherlands (Amsterdam: NEHA, 1999).

[62] Henk te Velde, 'Van grondwet tot grondwet. Oefenen met parlament, partij en schaalvergroting, 1848-1917', in *Land van kleine gebaren: een politieke geschiedenis van Nederland 1780-1990*, ed. Remieg Aerts et al. (Nijmegen: SUN, 1999), 99–175.

[63] Table design is taken from Toshkov, *Political Analysis*, 268.

Although changing political entities played an important role in national histories, the details of this process are of limited relevance for the general phenomenon of party formation. This is especially the case for Germany where states like Saxony or Prussia formed nearly independent governments until their unification in the Second Empire in 1871.[64] For reasons of simplicity, most sections in this dissertation refer to the broad term "Germany." Only when content makes it necessary have I applied more specific terminology. The use of the term "Britain" should be interpreted in a similar vein. Although the party organization of the NLF extended its organizational structure from its North English heartland to Wales and Scotland, the dissertation generally speaks about "British" politics.[65] The same applies to the Netherlands, where most Anti-Revolutionary activities occurred in the provinces of North and South Holland, but regions like Friesland also hosted influential party chapters.[66]

Inspired by the framework of the most different research design of the social sciences, the three cases have, secondly, been selected for their variance in ideology, an independent variable that is often mentioned in studies on party formation. For early generations of party scholars, both in history and the social sciences, it seemed logical to attribute early party organizations to Socialist parties whose ideology contained the most obvious affinity with mobilizing ordinary people.[67] However, the British perspective shows that bourgeoisie-dominated Radical Liberals also adhered to the mass character of early party organization.[68] Unlike the Social Democratic and Liberal cases, the Dutch ARP had a religious political orientation. Founded by Orthodox Protestant minister Abraham Kuyper, the party opposed the individualistic values of the French Revolution. Nevertheless, despite his hostility towards the values of Liberalism and Social Democracy, Kuyper based his political mission on the promise to improve the parliamentary representation of ordinary people.[69]

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[64] Hartmut Zwahr, "Die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung im Länder- und Territorienvergleich 1875," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 13, no. 4 (January 1, 1987): 448–507; Ritter, *Der Aufstieg*.

[65] For an example of NLF campaign activities in Scotland, see e.g. Ewen A. Cameron, "'A Far Cry to London': Joseph Chamberlain in Inverness, September 1885," *Innes Review* 57, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 36–53.

[66] Janssens, *opbouw*.

[67] Most famously and influentially is Duverger, *Political Parties*, 1. Otto Kirchheimer, "Der Wandel des Westeuropäischen Parteisystems," *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 6, no. 1 (1965): 25.

[68] Most well-known is Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization*.Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization*.

[69] J. H. Prins, "Kuyper als Partijleider," in *Abraham Kuyper: zijn volksdeel, zijn invloed*, ed. C. Augustijn, J. H. Prins, and H.E.S. Woldring (Delft: Meinema, 1987), 95–122; Roel Kuiper, "De Weg van het volk. Mobilisering en activiering van de Antirevolutionaire beweging, 1878-1888," in *De eenheid & de delen: zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland, 1850-1900*, ed. Henk te Velde and Hans Verhage (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1996), 99–119; Henk te Velde, "Ervaring en zingeving in de politiek: het politieke charisma in de tijd van Abraham Kuyper," *Theoretische Geschiedenis* 23, no. 4 (1996): 519–38; Henk te Velde, "Kappeyne tegen Kuyper of de principes van het politieke spel," in *De eenheid & de delen: zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland, 1850-1900*, ed. Henk te Velde and Hans Verhage

4. Sources

In addition to the secondary literature, the dissertation relies on a range of primary and secondary sources. Most sources that were used in this dissertation were composed in the decade around the emergence of each party. These formative years provide a detailed insight into the interplay between democratic ideas and practices, before the democratic mass membership party became a widely accepted phenomenon. For this extensive body of material, ideological complexities and national identities were less important than the ideas and practices that were shared by the party founders of the three organizations. Of special importance for the study of this period were primary sources that gave insights into the motives of party founders and their organizational choices. Following a similar organizational model, party founders were occupied with the same sort of activities to mobilize and discipline their geographically separated followers. Perhaps most surprising, the types of sources also share similarities. In particular, I analyzed letters, autobiographies, political brochures and other publications that were composed by party leaders, their members and critics. Also reports of party congresses and newspaper articles provide insights into how party members and critics justified their behavior and contributed to the emergence of party organization.

The source analysis started with the German SDAP whose comprehensive archives have been made accessible in well-sorted collections and numerous reprinted publications. But also the British and Dutch cases have left an impressive, though less extensive, amount of printed and unpublished material. Most material has not yet been re-published, thus requiring me to spend additional time in the archive. An increasing number of digital sources are available online, but I primarily had to rely on national, university and party archives. For the German case study I used the Bundesarchiv in Berlin, Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie in Bonn, International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam and the private collection of Wilhelm Bracke in the Stadtbibliothek Braunschweig. For Britain, I relied on the archives of the Special Collection of Bristol University and the Cadbury Research Library of Birmingham University. The Historische Documentatie Centrum voor het Nederlandse Protestantisme of the Free University in Amsterdam gave me access to the primary material on the Dutch ARP.

5. Dissertation Structure

The following five chapters explore the emergence of party organization in chronological order by comparing the three cases in each chapter. The first chapter introduces the theoretical argument of the dissertation by combining the literature of social movements, party organizations and the cultural turn in political history. On the basis of a transnational analysis,

(Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1996), 121–33; Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2; Hanneke Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord: politieke mobilisatie en natievorming bij Kuyper en Gladstone," *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 4 (2003): 494–511; Arko van Helden, "De 'kleine luyden' van Abraham Kuyper – een vorm van populistische retoriek?," *Negentiende Eeuw* 35, no. 3 (2011): 139–53.

new explanatory factors of party organization are identified. The conventional secondary literature of party organizations often maintained the boundaries of the nation state and refers to structural developments like industrialization and suffrage-rights extension to explain party emergence. Yet for early party founders, these broad developments created very different national circumstances. The leaders of the three parties participated in a European intellectual sphere in which organization was seen as a powerful tool to overcome social and political problems. In particular, the example of the Anti-Corn Law League impressed party activists of different political orientations. Already as young men, party founders like August Bebel, Abraham Kuyper and Joseph Chamberlain joined local and national associations in which they soon experienced the emancipatory effect of their own and their peers' lives.

The second chapter uses comparison to identify common explanatory factors in the period before party formation. It was no coincidence that education was an important topic in all three cases. Party founders built on previous national organizations in the field of education to demonstrate the existence of a national community of disadvantaged followers. But their calls for further politicization and institutionalization were confronted with considerable opposition by other activists. In order to overcome their skepticism, the founders of the German SDAP, British NLF and Dutch ARP used the frame of education as a tool of empowerment to convince their followers that they could improve their own and their families' lives. When party founders argued that this political mission required an advanced model of political organization, the narrative of the mass party as an organization of democratic representation was conceived. This discourse had to be implemented in the organizational practices of early party organization. To study this process, the third chapter provides a close empirical analysis of three founding assemblies to show how party founders implemented their promise of democratization by developing representative structures. While delegates considered practical arguments, their main concern was to create an organization that enabled the democratic representation of ordinary followers. This was an experience that shaped the birth of not only the membership organization of the German Social Democrats, but also the British Liberals and even the Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries.

Chapter four shows how parties' democratic mission remained important after the founding assemblies. The chapter starts with analyzing party leaders' commitment to democracy by exploring different options of implementing representative structures. While the Dutch ARP relied primarily on a charismatic model of representation, the German SDAP focused on a procedural model. The case of the British NLF is an example of how these two models could be combined. The fifth chapter brings together the main argument of the dissertation by critically engaging with the idea that the young party organizations were primarily electoral organizations. For early party founders, parliamentary representation was not an easy strategy to achieve political change. Depending on their specific political context, they developed alternative conceptualizations of the performance of their organization in elections. For all three of them, elections were not only a means to gain political influence, but more importantly

in this early phase, they were also an instrument of organizational consolidation and legitimation of this organization. Finally, in the conclusion the narrative and experiences of party founders are summarized to comment on the current discussions about party decline. The nineteenth-century contested ideas and practice of democratic representation were an essential, yet often overlooked, factor in the foundation process of first party organization.

I. A New Perspective on Party Emergence

1. "Powerful Unity"

In April 1872 the Dutch newspaper *De Standaard* (the Standard) reported on the trial of the German Social Democrats August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht on charges of high treason. The article itself was not unusual: German political and social events were regularly discussed in Dutch newspapers. In this case the editor of the newspaper was the Anti-Revolutionary politician and Protestant minister Abraham Kuyper who blamed the two Germans for "threatening and undermining (…) the social order."[70] It is interesting, however, that this political aversion did not prevent Kuyper from expressing some admiration and praise for the "powerful unity and great organizational skills" of German Social Democracy.[71] This positive description of an ideologically antagonistic party organization is the starting point of this chapter. Separated by national borders and political ideologies, the leaders of German Social Democrats and Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries never established direct communication. At the same time, both political movements participated in the process of party formation that was a phenomenon of different European countries in the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1869 the German Social Democrats founded the Social Democratic Workers' Party (SDAP). Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries followed in 1879 with the foundation of the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP). This is also the period when the third case of this study, the National Liberal Federation (NLF), was founded in Britain in 1877.

These three cases are still acknowledged as decisive in transforming their country's political history.[72] But although they appear in the same period in the same geographical region, their histories are usually not studied together. The reasons for this are manifold, but most important are the traditional national focus of political history and the different languages in which empirical sources and secondary literature are composed.[73] Another explanation is the difference in political orientations that makes the detection of direct political transfer unlikely.[74]

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[70] "het bedreigen en ondermijnen (…) van de maatschappelijke orde" in "Bebel en Liebknecht," *De Standaard*, April 4, 1872, 1, Delpher.

[71] "veel krachtige aaneensluiting en groote organisatiegave" "Bebel en Liebknecht," 2.

[72] See Duverger who mentions all three party organizations in his famous book. *Political Parties*. For the ARP, see Harinck and Deursen, "Woord vooraf," 10; de Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit*, 22. For the British NLF, see Herrick, "The Origins." For German Social Democracy, see Berger, *Social Democracy*; Barclay and Weitz, *Between Reform and Revolution*, 2.

[73] For a critique of traditional political history, see Willibald Steinmetz and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "The Political as Communicative Space in History: The Bielefeld Approach," in *Writing Political History Today*, ed. Willibald Steinmetz, Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey, and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, vol. 21, History of Political Communication (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2013), 11–33.

[74] Henk te Velde, "Political Transfer: An Introduction," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'histoire* 12, no. 2 (July 1, 2005): 205–21. Berger has shown how shared political ideology allows for

This chapter overcomes this problem by focusing on the indirect links of political transfer. It shows that party founders participated in an interconnected European intellectual sphere, where ideas and practices were transferred from one national context to another. For this purpose, I first introduce the theoretical framework of the dissertation, which draws from social science and history literature. Secondly, two conventional explanations of party emergence are discussed: industrialization and suffrage reform. The third section introduces an alternative explanation by describing the primarily Western European phenomenon of association mania. An illustration of this is the Anti-Corn Law League, whose influence on the three cases of the dissertation is discussed in more detail in the fourth part. Finally, the experience of party founders in local associations is discussed to demonstrate in detail the emancipatory effect of organization.

2. The Agency of Party Founders

The nineteenth century is known as a period of radical transformations like industrialization and democratization, which decisively changed ordinary people's lives. When this era is described in history books, it often seems as if the destiny of entire societies was determined by the currents of broad economic and political developments. In this grand narrative, individual actors have no choice other than obediently playing their part in the larger scheme of things. In this way the process of party emergence appears as a natural process caused by the increasingly industrialized and democratized societies of the European continent. Under closer scrutiny, however, party founders had considerable room for individual agency, which they used to convince their followers to join their political organization.[75] To provide a better understanding of this study's approach to party formation, I introduce two scholarly fields outside of political history that focused on the formation of collective action: social movement research and the work of party scholar Panebianco.

Social movement scholars have developed different theories to explain why people start protesting together. In particular, structural configurations and political institutions have been studied as opportunity structure to identify the "specific situations, in which grievances can be translated into collective actions."[76] The weakness of the concept of opportunity

transfer between the party organizations of British Labour and German Social Democracy. Berger, "Herbert Morrison's London Labour Party"; Berger, *The British Labour Party*.

[75] For the Netherlands, this argument has been made by Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom*, 182–83.

[76] Herbert Kitschelt, "Resource Mobilization Theory: A Critique," in *Research on Social Movements: The State of the Art in Western Europe and the USA*, ed. Dieter Rucht (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1991), 272. Likewise, Meyer argued that "activists do not choose goals, strategies, and tactics in a vacuum" in "Protest and Political Opportunities," *Annual Review of Sociology* 30, no. 1 (July 13, 2004): 127. Although it is disputed what opportunity structure specifically entails, the concept was broadly defined as the "specific configurations of resources, institutional arrangements and historical precedents for social

structure is its limitation in explaining the timing and strategy of protest.[77] As has been argued, social structure and political institutions are often so complex that they confront actors with many, possibly infinite, options to respond to the opportunity of protest. Hence, when collective protest emerges, it cannot be explained only by external factors. Rather one needs to study the preceding process of interpretation that allows actors to take the risk of protest.[78] For social movement leaders this means that, if they aim to broaden the basis of their protest, they need to present the goals of their organization in such a way that their potential followers accept them as a necessary course of action.[79] Scholars like Snow and Benford call this process of creating new (or adjusting already existing) meaning to social structure and political institutions "framing."[80] Other sociologists have analyzed the practice of storytelling within social movements to show how shared narratives strengthen the internal cohesion of protest organizations and consolidate solidarity among activists.[81]

Although developed for social movements of the twentieth century, social movement research in general and framing in particular provide a valuable starting point for the analysis of early party organizations. For one, historians share the interest of social movement scholars in the modification of "ideas" to understand social change. This has inspired a rich historiography that aims at explaining, for instance, the spread of revolutionary practices in Europe, the influence of the American Revolution in the history of the United States, or the paramount status of elections in current conceptions of democracy.[82] Social movement research, secondly, offers a valuable contribution to the study of early party formation, because it shares with historical research an interest in the transnational dimension of social and political change. The historical sociologist Charles Tilly, for instance, combined the two disciplines and described how historical modes of collective action became globally available as

mobilization." Herbert Kitschelt, "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* 16, no. 01 (January 1986): 58.

[77] Meyer, "Protest and Political Opportunities," 127.

[78] Kitschelt, "Resource Mobilization Theory"; David A. Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 4 (August 1, 1986): 464–81.

[79] Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Processes"; Jürgen Gerhards and Dieter Rucht, "Mesomobilization: Organizing and Framing in Two Protest Campaigns in West Germany," *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 3 (November 1, 1992): 555–96.

[80] David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, ed. Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 136. Frame analysts refer to Goffman's work as their source of inspiration. Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).

[81] Francesca Polletta, *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting: Democracy in American Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

[82] Baker and Edelstein, *Scripting Revolution*; Wood, *The Idea of America*; John Dunn, *Setting the People Free: The Story of Democracy* (Atlantic, 2005).

they were modified to their specific context by local activists.[83] As the historian Bayly argued, "systems of ideas (…) began to converge across the world" in the nineteenth century.[84] This was also true for the contested concepts of democracy and representation that play an important role in the legitimation of party organizations, as chapters three and four of this dissertation will show.[85] Finally, there is also an empirical basis for applying social movement research to early party organizations. Not only are there commonalities between nineteenth- and twentieth-century social movements.[86] Early party organizations also share a number of important features with the social movements of later decades, both in rhetoric and organizational structure. In particular, the three cases of this study were formed in opposition to the political elite; party leaders emphasized their collective protest against the establishment.[87] Especially during the early phase of organizational consolidation, the membership structure of parties was flexible and open, similar to the social movements of later decades.

In terms surprisingly similar to the discussions about opportunity structure among social movement researchers, the party scholar Angelo Panebianco in his book *Political Parties: Organization and Power* criticized two common analytical simplifications in the study of what he calls the complex organizations of parties. The first assumption is that parties can be studied as direct representation of groups in society. Panebianco refuted this "sociological" view by arguing that the relationship between parties and specific social groups is less immediate, leaving party leaders with room for developing unexpected strategies.[88] Panebianco's second criticism is that an often "teleological" perspective deduces party behavior from a previously determined set of goals. But party leaders do not necessarily adhere to a previously agreed political program. Like his social movement colleagues, Panebianco rather suggested that

[83] Charles Tilly, *Social Movements, 1768-2004* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004). See also Sidney Tarrow *The New Transnational Activism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Historians have made a similar argument, showing that violent uprisings were inspired by an internationally available script for revolution. Baker and Edelstein, *Scripting Revolution*; Dennis Bos, *Bloed en barricaden: de Parijse Commune herdacht* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2014).

[84] Christopher Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World: 1780-1914*, 8th ed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 19. See also Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

[85] See for changing ideas of democracy and representation Innes and Philp, *Re-Imagining Democracy*; Bernard Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Dunn, *Setting the People Free*.

[86] Historical sociologists have argued that the social movements of the twentieth century can be compared with movements of earlier centuries. Tilly, *Social Movements*; Craig Calhoun, "'New Social Movements' of the Early Nineteenth Century," *Social Science History* 17, no. 3 (1993): 385–427; Paul D'Anieri, Claire Ernst, and Elizabeth Kier, "New Social Movements in Historical Perspective," *Comparative Politics* 22, no. 4 (July 1, 1990): 445–58.

[87] See for the anti-establishment rhetoric of social movements Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[88] Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 3.

understanding party behavior requires the study of the process of goal formation within their organization.[89] Summing up these different scholarly contributions to party research, social movement scholars specialized in framing like Snow and Benford agree with party specialists like Panebianco that social structure and political institutions do not suffice to understand social and political transformation. They suggest that we need to consider the complexity of organizational processes and the agency of party founders. Following their suggestion, this dissertation describes external circumstances like social structure and political institutions while arguing that individuals had opportunities beyond obediently following the path laid out by their socio-economic status and political rights. For party founders, this meant that their practice of selecting, emphasizing and re-interpreting a specific situation functioned as an empowering catalyst. Studying their agency contributes to a more nuanced understanding of party formation.

3. Industrialization and Suffrage Rights

Industrialization

This section applies the above described theoretical considerations to two often mentioned explanations for party emergence. The first classic explanation for party emergence is industrialization, the process that triggered the massive socio-economic transformation of nineteenth-century European societies. Party scholars of the first post-war generation like Duverger and Kirchheim explain the foundation of mass party organization by referring to the specific circumstances of the (extra-parliamentary) circumstances of Socialism.[90] Later scholars, inspired by a revival of Marxist theory in the 1970s and 1980s, relied on industrialization to explain the emergence of parties on the left side of the political spectrum. Referring to the growing number of workers, scholars like Daalder argue that "[t]he modern political party itself can be described with little exaggeration as the child of the Industrial Revolution."[91] The theme is also prominently featured in politics text books where the foundations of left-wing parties are explained by the necessity "to represent the political interest of the growing working class."[92] Based on older historiography, these studies have demonstrated the importance of the

[89] Panebianco, 4. For another study focusing on the internal processes of current parties see also the edited volume of Kay Lawson, *How Political Parties Work: Perspectives from Within* (Westport: Praeger, 1994).

[90] Duverger, *Political Parties*, 1; Kirchheimer, "Der Wandel," 24–25.

[91] Daalder, "Parties, Elites, and Political Developments," 52. See also more recent contributions of Daalder in Hans Daalder, "The Rise of Parties in Western Democracies," in *Political Parties and Democracy*, ed. Larry Jay Diamond and Richard Gunther (Baltimore and London: JHU Press, 2001), 40–51.

[92] Michael Gallagher, *Representative Government in Modern Europe*, 5th ed. (Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education, 2011), 240.

radically changing socio-economic context for the emergence of political organizations.[93] But in the last decades, historians have empirically shown that for early party organizations, industrialization played a less important role than a simplified reading of this account might suggest. Using Panebianco's theoretical criticism, industrialization as an explanation has a teleological nature: later functions of organizations are used to explain their original purpose.[94] In other words, the emergence of political parties cannot be explained by the rise of a specific social class, but rather the construction of the social structure of their members needs to be studied.

This applies to the historical situation of the German case, which is the best-known example of Socialist party organization in Europe. Historians have shown that party members were not the impoverished factory workers, but the better educated "qualified craftsmen."[95] Moreover, Social Democratic voters did not belong only to the classic proletariat but included many middle-class supporters and even Catholics.[96] From these empirical observations, political historians pointed to a combination of factors to explain the early creation of Social Democratic party organizations in Germany. In addition to industrialization, the Imperial unification process, the introduction of universal male suffrage and the failed political strategy of Liberal activists supported party founders´ efforts for organizational consolidation.[97] Accordingly,

[93] Especially for the local and regional levels, the socio-economic circumstances of working-class activists and voters and their influence on the Social Democratic movement is well researched, see e.g. Friedrich Lenger, *Zwischen Kleinburgertum und Proletariat: Studien zur Sozialgeschichte der Düsseldorfer Handwerker 1816-1878* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986); Resch and Murr, *Lassalles "südliche Avantgarde."* For a more comparative perspective, see Zwahr, "Die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung"; Ritter, *Der Aufstieg*.

[94] Paul Pierson, "The Limits of Design: Explaining Institutional Origins and Change," *Governance* 13, no. 4 (October 1, 2000): 475–99.

[95] Na'aman, *Die Konstituierung*, 14. For a more recent perspective and more extensive study see the comprehensive work of Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*. For a study of the workers' movements of Berlin and their organizational activities see Wolfgang Renzsch, *Handwerker Und Lohnarbeiter in Der Frühen Arbeiterbewegung: Zur Sozialen Basis von Gewerkschaften Und Sozialdemokratie Im Reichsgründungsjahrzehnt*, Kritische Studien Zur Geschichtswissenschaft 43 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1980).

[96] Sperber has shown that the later SPD was not a labor party, but a "people's party". Jonathan Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters: Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 65.

[97] See John Breuilly, "Liberalismus oder Sozialdemokratie? Ein Vergleich der britischen und deutschen politischen Arbeiterbewegung zwischen 1850 und 1875," in *Europäische Arbeiterbewegungen im 19. Jahrhundert : Deutschland, Österreich, England und Frankreich im Vergleich*, ed. Jürgen Kocka (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 129–66; Walter Schieder, "Das Scheitern des bürgerlichen Radikalismus und die sozialistische Parteibildung in Deutschland," in *Sozialdemokratie zwischen Klassenbewegung und Volkspartei: Verhandungen der Sektion Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung des Deutschen Historikertages in Regensburg*, ed. Hans Mommsen (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1974), 17–34. Ritter gives three reasons for the early emergence of the political workers' movement in Germany: the strong position of the state after mercantilism and absolutism, the disappointing role of Liberal

social historians have proposed a more nuanced account of workers' history, in which they questioned whether the rising numbers of industrial workers suffices to explain Social Democratic activism. Instead, the eminent historian Kocka suggested a flexible definition of the working class that is based on shared experiences of exploitation across different trades, rather than pointing only to the difficult working circumstances in industrialized factories.[98] Dutch and British party historians have contributed to this debate by analyzing the social background of domestic party organizations of different political orientations. They have shown that because national histories evolved differently, the emergence of party organization cannot be explained by simplified socio-economic accounts. In the Netherlands, the race for technological innovation and economic growth played a less prominent role.[99] At the same time, the social backgrounds of the supporters of the first party organization of the Anti-Revolutionary Party were remarkably diverse. While the urban electorate of the party belonged to the lower classes, ARP voters in the countryside often belonged to the local elite.[100] Although industrialization was early in Britain, working-class party organizations emerged much later than in Germany.[101] British historians have, therefore, studied the social and cultural processes that contributed to working-class identities to understand how they actually prevented independent organization.[102] Many of these more recent historical studies were inspired by what historians

Democrats in the conflict about the national question and the extension of male suffrage. Gerhard Ritter, *Die deutschen Parteien, 1830-1914: Parteien und Gesellschaft im konstitutionellen Regierungssystem* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), 15–16.

[98] Instead of emerging from the socio-economic position of the classic industrialized proletariat, the German working-class movement was created by the shared experiences of homeworkers and craftsmen. For Kocka, the daily life of these two occupational groups was similar to those of the wageworker. *Lohnarbeit und Klassenbildung: Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung in Deutschland 1800-1875* (Berlin: Dietz, 1983), 73–155.

[99] Joel Mokyr, "Industrialization and Poverty in Ireland and the Netherlands," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 10, no. 3 (1980): 429–58; Joel Mokyr, "The Industrial Revolution in the Low Countries in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: A Comparative Case Study," *The Journal of Economic History* 34, no. 2 (1974): 365–91; Jansen, *De industriële ontwikkeling in Nederland 1800-1850*.

[100] De Jong, "Het antirevolutionaire volk." Furthermore, in its early phase the parliamentary representatives of the party were almost exclusively aristocratic. D. Th. Kuiper, *De voormannen: een sociaal-wetenschappelijke studie over ideologie, konflikt en kerngroepvorming binnen de Gereformeerde wereld in Nederland tussen 1820 en 1930* (Meppel: Boom, 1972).

[101] One of the rare comparisons between British Labour and the German Social Democratic Party can be found in Breuilly, "Liberalismus oder Sozialdemokratie? Ein Vergleich der britischen und deutschen politischen Arbeiterbewegung zwischen 1850 und 1875"; John Breuilly, *Labour and Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Essays in Comparative History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994); Berger, *The British Labour Party*.

[102] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Gollancz, 1980); Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Eugenio F. Biagini, *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Jon Lawrence, *Speaking for the People: Party, Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*.

call the political culture approach.[103] In contrast to the conventional political science use of the term, historians of political culture are less interested in the behavioral dimension of the concept and rather use it in a "holistic and evolutionary fashion" when they study political history outside of traditional institutions.[104] The German historian Thomas Welskopp, for instance, has shown how belonging to a respectable community inspired early activists in the German states to form a political organization.[105] In a similar vein, historians of British Liberalism and Dutch Orthodox Protestantism have demonstrated how early party founders did not depend on socio-economic divisions of class, but rather managed to develop a new narrative to unite followers of different socio-economic background into a single organization.[106]

Suffrage Rights

A second conventional explanation for party emergence is the extension of suffrage rights. At first sight, this radical change of political structure seems a promising approach, directly linking party emergence to the growth of the electorate. Many political science textbooks refer to the transformation of electoral procedures to account for the rise of party organizations.[107] In particular, the older literature argued that "it is customary (…) to associate the development of parties with the rise of parliaments and with the gradual extension of the suffrage."[108] Indeed, most standard social science definitions distinguish parties today from other political groups "by the fact that they nominate candidates for elective office."[109] Yet, Panebianco would argue

[103] Important works of the political culture approach are James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture, c. 1815-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Ido de Haan and Henk te Velde, "Vormen van politiek. Veranderingen van de openbaarheid in Nederland 1848-1900," *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 111, no. 2 (January 1, 1996): 167–200; Steinmetz and Haupt, "The Political as Communicative Space"; Thomas Mergel, "Überlegungen zu einer Kulturgeschichte der Politik," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 4 (2002): 574–606.

[104] Ronald Formisano, "The Concept of Political Culture," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* xxxi, no. 3 (2001): 396.

[105] Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*.

[106] Although not proponents of political culture, Kuiper and Tholfsen have shown the diversity of class background in early party organizations. Kuiper, *De voormannen*; "The Origins of the Birmingham Caucus."

[107] See Boix and Stokes who argue that parties "developed into gradually more cohesive machines," after "the electorate expanded and elections became clean and truly competitive mechanisms of selection." "The Emergence of Parties and Party Systems," in *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, 1st ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199566020.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199566020.

[108] LaPalombara and Weiner, "Political Parties," 8. More recent literature has provided more complex models that have added responsible government as an important factor of party emergence. Daalder, "The Rise of Parties"; Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems*.

[109] A. Ranney, "Political Parties," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. Paul B. Baltes (Oxford: Pergamon, 2001), 11684–87, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/

that this explanation has its limitations, serving as a typical example of teleological reduction in party research.[110] The paramount importance of elections for today's parties does not mean that early parties depended on electoral rights exclusively. For the late nineteenth century, the focus on elections disregards the numerous activities of early party founders.[111] Moreover, as historians and political scientists recently have noted, most early party organization preceded the large suffrage rights reforms.[112]

This study shows the limits of the explanatory value of voting rights in the three cases we examine. The British National Liberal Federation has been described as a typical case for party emergence after suffrage rights extension. The NLF was founded in Birmingham, which gained an additional seat in the House of Commons, after the suffrage rights extension of 1867. This inspired early party scholars like Mosei Ostrogorski to argue that the extended electorate after the Second Reform Act required a new form of political organization.[113] What Ostrogorski's study disregarded was the continuity of organized electoral practices in this period. Historians and social scientists have shown that local electoral associations and party identities had consolidated already in the 1850s.[114] Only in the 1880s did British party agents reach a degree of organized professionalization.[115] Nevertheless, the British case shows that suffrage rights extension had an important effect on nineteenth-century contemporaries who were both frightened and excited about the possible outcomes of reform.[116] This led to an increase in organizational activities after the Reform Act, and inspired the foundation of the

pii/B0080430767011888. See also Ruud Koole who uses electoral candidacy to differentiate parties from other organizations. Ruud Koole, *Politieke partijen in Nederland: Ontstaan en ontwikkeling van partijen en partijstelsel* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1995), 14.

[110] Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 15.

[111] While political science refers to elections as an identifying factor, in the historiography a much wider definition is used to incorporate broad common parliamentary alliance as party. De Jong, "De Algemeene Kiesvereeniging"; Offermann, *Die erste deutsche Arbeiterpartei*.

[112] See the political science literature of Klaus von Beyme, *Parteien in westlichen Demokratien*, 2nd ed. (München: Piper, 1984); Susan E. Scarrow, "The Nineteenth-Century Origins of Modern Political Parties: The Unwanted Emergence of Party-Based Politics," in *Handbook of Party Politics*, ed. Richard S. Katz and William J. Crotty (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 16–24.

[113] Ostrogorski developed his analysis first in an article. Mosei Ostrogorski, "The Introduction of the Caucus into England," *Political Science Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (June 1, 1893): 287–316. Later, his famous study of the Birmingham Caucus was published in book form. Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization*.

[114] Herrick, "The Origins"; Tholfsen, "The Origins of the Birmingham Caucus"; Gary W. Cox, "The Development of a Party-Orientated Electorate in England, 1832-1918," *British Journal of Political Science* 16, no. 2 (April 1, 1986): 187–216.

[115] Kathryn Rix, "Professionalisation and Political Culture. Party Agents, 1880-1914," *Journal of Liberal History*, no. 84 (Autumn 2014): 18–25.

[116] Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote*.

National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations, and the already mentioned National Liberal Federation.[117]

Things seem similar in the German case where the foundation of the Social Democratic Workers' Party occurred after the suffrage reform in the North German Confederation in 1867.[118] But earlier organizations like the Central March Association (Centralmärzeverein), National Association (Nationalverein), the General German Workers' Associations (Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein) and the Saxon People's Party (Sächsische Volkspartei) were founded in 1848, 1859, 1863 and 1866, predating the most comprehensive suffrage rights extension of German history.[119] In the Netherlands, the short-lived General Electoral Association (Algemeene Kiesvereeniging) and the Anti-Revolutionary Party emerged thirty years *after* the suffrage rights reform of the 1848 constitution.[120] While this might seem as if suffrage reform paved the way for party organization in the Netherlands, quantitatively this early reform was not a step forward, but a setback, limiting the size of the electorate before the foundation of Dutch parties. Only in 1887 was the constitution revised, allowing more Dutch citizens to vote.[121]

[117] Hanham describes the decade after 1867 as a "transitional stage" where traditional electoral practices persist, but new forms of organization become increasingly popular. Harold John Hanham, *Elections and Party Management: Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1978), 93. For the organization of the Conservative NUCCA, see the biography of its first chairman John Gorst Hunter, *A Life of Sir John Eldon Gorst*.

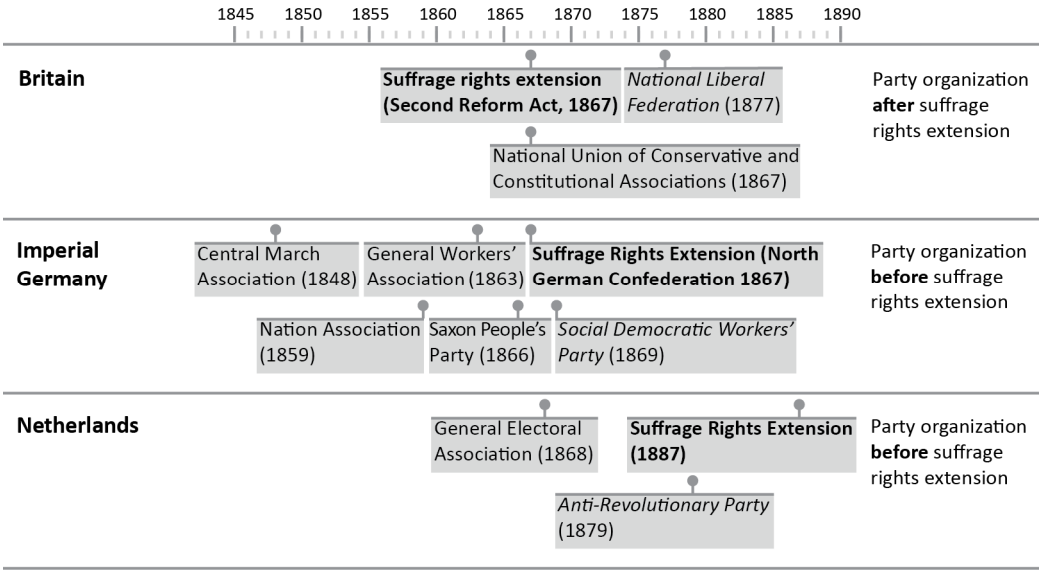
[118] Klaus Erich Pollmann, "Arbeiterwahlen im Norddeutschen Bund 1867-1870," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 15, no. 2 (January 1, 1989): 164–95.

[119] See Langewiesche, "Die Anfänge der deutschen Parteien"; Biefang, *Politisches Bürgertum*; Offermann, *Die erste deutsche Arbeiterpartei*.

[120] De Jong, "De Algemeene Kiesvereeniging."

[121] Ron de Jong, Henk van der Kolk, and Gerrit Voerman, *Verkiezingen op de kaart 1848-2010: Tweede Kamerverkiezingen vanuit geografisch perspectief* (Utrecht: Matrijs, 2011).

Graph 1: Party organizations and suffrage rights



There is an additional layer of empirical complexity, because suffrage reforms were differently implemented in the three countries. It seems fairly obvious that the extension of suffrage should be understood as a broadening of the number of the citizens who were allowed to vote. But the European states experienced considerable differences in the historical sequence and scope of franchise extension. Germany, in particular, is a remarkable outlier in this regard. While in England after the Second Reform Act only 30% of the male population was eligible for casting the ballot, suddenly all German men older than 25 gained the vote in the North German Confederation.[122] In the Netherlands it was a small minority of 11% of the male population that could vote in the period before 1887.[123] At least for the three countries of this study, the conclusion is that party organizations had a longer practice that predated the major electoral reforms of their national parliaments. In Britain, suffrage rights might account for the

[122] Figures are from Stein Rokkan and Jean Meyriat, *International Guide to Electoral Statistics = Guide International Des Statistiques Électorales. I: National Elections in Western Europe.*, vol. 1, Publications. Série B, Guides et Répertoires 2 (The Hague: Mouton, 1969), 330, 333. In Britain, the Second Reform Act increased the number of voters from 1,430,000 to 2,470,000 potential voters, including many working-class households in 1867. Francis Barrymore Smith, *The Making of the Second Reform Bill* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966). In the North German Confederation (1867) and the German Empire (1871) all male citizens older than 25 years gained the vote for the representatives of the *Reichstag*. This excluded soldiers in service, recipients of poor relief, those under financial custody or in a process of bankruptcy or insolvency and, finally, also those whose had been deprived of citizenship in a legal process. Gerhard Ritter, *Wahlgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch: Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreichs 1871-1918* (München: Beck, 1980), 26.

[123] The 1887 reform determined voting eligibility based on factors such as taxes and rent. De Jong, Kolk, and Voerman, *Verkiezingen op de kaart*, 18.

emergence of party organizations, because the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations and the National Liberal Federation were founded after the electoral reform. But in Imperial Germany and the Netherlands, the causal link cannot be established through chronology. In the two countries, party organizations were founded before a large share of male citizens gained the vote.

This raises the question why party organizations emerged in Britain, Germany and the Netherlands in the same period although electoral reform was so differently implemented. One reason is that elections meant different things in the three countries. Taking their political rights seriously, German men meticulously weighted their political options, becoming attentive citizens of the new state after suffrage reform.[124] Remarkably, the case of the Netherlands illustrates that in the opposite situation of limited suffrage, elections could also stimulate the formation of political organizations. Because voting was seen as an important local activity, many electoral associations emerged, despite the low number of eligible voters for the *Tweede Kamer*. Dutch electoral associations even organized the transport to the polling station for voters who were too old, sick or lived at a distance.[125] In other circumstances, other forms of political participation accompanied the electoral process. In Britain, despite the aristocratic composition of the House of Commons, electoral campaigning was a spectacle, allowing disenfranchised citizens to express their view. Even though they had no influence on the electoral outcome, they considered MPs their political representatives.[126]

A second consideration that speaks against suffrage rights as a simplified explanation for party emergence is that the broadening of the electorate was only one aspect of an entire package of political reforms. The extension of parliamentary influence and other legal reforms, for instance the Corrupt Practices Act in Britain, need to be considered as well.[127] Also the emergence of responsible governments has been named as an important factor by political scientists who, however, still remain remarkably aloof from recent innovations in political history.[128] Thirdly, pressure groups outside of parliament played a crucial role in establishing a

[124] For a discussion of the traditional historiography, see Anderson, *Practicing Democracy*, 3–21. This can also be seen in the impressive increase in electoral turnout for the *Reichstag*. While parliamentarians could not even appoint the offices of the German government, citizens widely used their new political rights. Electoral participation rose from 51.0% (1871) to 61.2% (1874), and 60.6 (1877). Ritter, *Wahlgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch*, 38.

[125] De Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit*, 86.

[126] Frank O'Gorman, "Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies: The Social Meaning of Elections in England 1780-1860," *Past and Present*, no. 135 (1992): 79–115.

[127] Kathryn Rix, "'The Elimination of Corrupt Practices in British Elections'? Reassessing the Impact of the 1883 Corrupt Practices Act," *The English Historical Review* CXXIII, no. 500 (February 1, 2008): 65–97. Dubabin argues that the "revival of party controversy, and of the parliamentary reform question" inspired the organizational innovation of parties. "Electoral Reforms and Their Outcome in the United Kingdom 1865-1900," in *Later Victorian Britain, 1867-1900*, ed. Terence Richard Gourvish and Alan O'Day (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), 115.

[128] Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems*; Daalder, "The Rise of Parties."

democratic discourse, placing universal suffrage on the political agenda.[129] Mobilizing voters was only one among many possible strategies of using membership organization to gain parliamentary influence. As in the well-known case of Britain, also in the Netherlands and Germany the instrument of petition was available to voters and non-voters alike.[130] Most studies have, therefore, advocated a more nuanced account of the relationship between party emergence and the changing political structure of elections.[131] Under the already mentioned banner of new political history, historians of political culture have moved away from analyzing established political institutions, shifting their attention to cultural aspects, like "the attitudes and assumptions that underpinned political behavior and experience."[132] The result is a more nuanced understanding of how ordinary people responded to their political environment that, as will be shown in the next part, also shaped the focus of this dissertation.

4. Organizing as a Transnational Phenomenon

If structural and institutional determinants like industrialization and suffrage rights expansion do not suffice to explain early party emergence, other previously underestimated factors gain new relevance. The example of the Dutch party newspaper *De Standaard* from the beginning of this chapter offers a first indication for a new perspective on party emergence, based on a transnational belief in the power of organization. For this approach, social movement research offers a first perspective on party founders' ability to develop new interpretations of existing structures and create their own "mental" opportunity structure. Combined with the recent

[129] Peter J. Gurney, "The Democratic Idiom: Languages of Democracy in the Chartist Movement," *The Journal of Modern History* 86, no. 3 (September 1, 2014): 566–602; Alexander Wilson, "The Suffrage Movement," in *Pressure from without in Early Victorian England*, ed. Patricia Hollis (London: Edward Arnold, 1974), 80–104.

[130] Janse, *De Afschaffers*; Henry Miller, "Petition! Petition!! Petition!!! Petitioning and Political Organization in Britain, c. 1800 - 1850," in *Organizing Democracy - Reflections on the Rise of Political Organizations in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Henk te te Velde and Maartje Janse (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 43–61; Maartje Janse, "'What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?' Petition Campaigns and the Problem of Legitimacy in the Nineteenth-Century Netherlands," *Social Science History*, n.d.; Fischer, *August Bebel und der Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine 1867/68*.

[131] Sartori makes this observation. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems*. Susan Scarrow who critically remarked that "[t]he newfound prominence of political parties in much of 19th century Europe seems clearly linked to two distinct but interrelated developments: the transfer of political power to legislatures, and the expansion of the electorate." Scarrow, "The Nineteenth-Century Origins of Modern Political Parties," 17.` For the German Social Democratic Party, persecution was e.g. an important factor for the creation of a strong party organization. Lidtke, *Outlawed Party*; Pollmann, "Arbeiterwahlen"; Elfi Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie 1867-1914* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1990); Kupfer, "Die organisatorische Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie."

[132] David Craig and James Thompson, "Introduction," in *Languages of Politics in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2; Haan and te Velde, "Vormen van politiek"; Steinmetz and Haupt, "The Political as Communicative Space"; Vernon, *Politics and the People*.

findings of political culture, we learn that the nineteenth century was not only the period of industrialization and suffrage rights extension, but also the golden era of organization. Of course, formal cooperation for a specific purpose had occurred before, for instance, under the leadership of religious authorities.[133] But a major transformation was set in motion when ordinary men and women became the initiators of various forms of organization. Long before social scientists praised their beneficial effects, clubs, leagues, fraternities and unions grew like mushrooms in the Western world.[134] Already in the eighteenth century, associational culture had a first peak, culminating in the 1830s and 1840s.[135] Most associations had no political purpose, being devoted to sociable and religious purposes, but there were a number of important exceptions. In Britain, the number of voluntary associations grew considerably

[133] Stamatov has shown the religious element in the early history of mass organization in the Anglo-American world. Peter Stamatov, "The Religious Field and the Path-Dependent Transformation of Popular Politics in the Anglo-American World, 1770-1840," *Theory and Society* 40, no. 4 (2011): 437–73. For Britain, see also Ian Machin, "Disestablishment and Democracy, c. 1840 - 1930," in *Citizenship and Community: Liberals, Radicals and Collective Identities in the British Isles, 1865-1931*, ed. Eugenio F. Biagini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 120–47; Maartje Janse, "A Dangerous Type of Politics? Politics and Religion in Early Mass Organizations: The Anglo-American World, c. 1830," in *Political Religion beyond Totalitarianism the Sacralization of Politics in the Age of Democracy*, ed. Joost Augusteijn, Patrick Dassen, and Maartje J. Janse (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 55–76. Also in the Netherlands, the religious tradition of political organization has received increased attention, especially in regard to the role of church councils in organizing political protest and the influence of the oratorical tradition of preaching. Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord"; Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*; Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2. For a German case of religious influence on community building and political identity see Rebecca Ayako Bennette, *Fighting for the Soul of Germany: The Catholic Struggle for Inclusion after Unification*, Harvard Historical Studies (Cumberland: Harvard University Press, 2012); Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[134] For the democratic effect of voluntary organization, see the classic work of Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel Der Öffentlichkeit* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1990); Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Nancy Gina Bermeo and Philip G. Nord, *Civil Society before Democracy: Lessons from Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000); Tom Van Der Meer and Erik Van Ingen, "Schools of Democracy? Disentangling the Relationship between Civic Participation and Political Action in 17 European Countries," *European Journal of Political Research* 48, no. 2 (March 1, 2009): 281–308; Robert Heise and Daniel Watermann, "Vereinsforschung in der Erweiterung," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 43, no. 1 (March 15, 2017): 5–31.

[135] Philip G. Nord, "Introduction," in *Civil Society Before Democracy: Lessons from Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Nancy Gina Bermeo and Philip G. Nord (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), xiii–xxxiii; Graeme Morton, Boudien de Vries, and R. J. Morris, *Civil Society, Associations and Urban Places: Class, Nation and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Historical Urban Studies (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, *Civil Society: 1750-1914*, Studies in European History (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Maartje Janse and Henk te Velde, "Introduction: Perspectives on Political Organizing," in *Organizing Democracy - Reflections on the Rise of Political Organizations in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Henk te Velde and Maartje Janse (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 1–18.

between the 1790s and 1830s.[136] In this liberal environment, political associations emerged at a national scale in the first half of the century.[137] In Germany, associations were more restricted by associational laws and based on interclass cooperation in the second half of the nineteenth century.[138] In the Netherlands, associational culture was organized according to class distinctions as well as vertical distinctions between different religious and political groups. Before 1848 Dutch political associations were impeded by monarchical power, remaining marginal in this period.[139]

An important aspect of this association mania was the language that contemporaries used to describe the new phenomenon. For many nineteenth-century observers, organizational structure played a role as important as railways and telegraphs in the transformation of their

[136] Michael J.D. Roberts, "Head versus Heart? Voluntary Associations and Charity Organizations in England c.1700-1850," in *Charity, Philanthropy and Reform: From the 1690s to 1850*, ed. Hugh Cunningham and Joanna Innes (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 66–86; Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World*, Oxford Studies in Social History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000); Robert J. Morris, "Civil Society, Subscriber Democracy, and Parliamentary Government in Great Britain," in *Civil Society Before Democracy: Lessons from Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Nancy Gina Bermeo and Philip G. Nord (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 111–33; Klaus Nathaus, *Organisierte Geselligkeit: deutsche und britische Vereine im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009).

[137] Patricia Hollis, ed., *Pressure from without in Early Victorian England* (London: Edward Arnold, 1974); David Allan Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure: A Study in the History of Victorian Reform Agitations* (Hassocks: The Harvester Press, 1977).

[138] See Nathaus, *Organisierte Geselligkeit*, 292–96. For more historiography on German associational culture, see Thomas Nipperdey, "Vereine als soziale Struktur im späten 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert," in *Gesellschaft, Kultur, Theorie. Gesammelte Aufsätze zur neueren Geschichte*, Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft 18 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 1–44; Klaus Tenfelde, "Civil Society and the Middle Classes in Nineteenth-Century Germany," in *Civil Society Before Democracy: Lessons from Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Nancy Gina Bermeo and Philip G Nord (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 84–106; Oded Heilbronner, "The German Bourgeois Club as a Political and Social Structure in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *Continuity and Change* 13, no. 3 (1998): 443–473; Heise and Watermann, "Vereinsforschung in der Erweiterung."

[139] Boudien de Vries, "Een eeuw vol gezelligheid: verenigingsleven in Nederland, 1800-1900," *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 28, no. 2005 (2005): 16–29; Janse, *De Afschaffers*; Thomas Ertman, "Liberalization, Democratization and the Origins of a 'Pillarized' Civil Society in Nineteenth-Century Belgium and the Netherlands," in *Civil Society Before Democracy: Lessons from Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Nancy Gina Bermeo and Philip G. Nord (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 155–78; D. J. Noordam, "Getuigen, redden en bestrijden. De ontwikkeling van een ideologie op het terrein van de zedelijkheid," *Theoretische Geschiedenis* 23, no. 4 (1996): 494–517; Maartje Janse, "Op de grens tussen staat en civil society. Samenwerking tussen hervormers en politici, 1840-1880," *Negentiende Eeuw* 35, no. 4 (2011): 169–87; Maartje Janse, "'Vereeniging en verlangen om veernigd te werken' Réveil en civil society," in *Opwekking van de natie: Het protestantse Réveil in Nederland*, ed. Fred van Lieburg (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2012), 169–84; Jan van Miert, "Wars van clubgeest en partijzucht: liberalen, natie en verzuiling, Tiel en Winschoten 1850-1920" (Amsterdam University Press, 1994), chap. six.

societies.[140] A signpost of this perception was the powerful metaphors used to depict the almost mythical powers of organization. British commentators referred to organizations as *machines*, which could channel energy to movement, like the steam engine.[141] As a result, organizations were expected to be able to move governments, like the hugely impressive coal-driven locomotive.[142] In the German-speaking states, the noun "Organisation" and the verb "organisieren" were associated with the vocabulary of state institutions and legal texts. After 1815 "Organisation" entered a wider framework of meaning, where the term became associated with the "combination of many, who pursue similar purposes" and included an "active-dynamic" notion of change that could be reached by working together.[143] Germans started to think of organizations in relation to movement, activity and change.[144] In the Netherlands, the term "organisatie" was widely used and reached a peak in newspapers after the constitutional reform of 1848.[145] In this optimistic atmosphere, Dutch men and women shared their European neighbors' belief that they could achieve almost everything by working together.

5. The Organizational Model of the Anti-Corn Law League

Association mania in Europe also had an influence on the emergence of party organizations. It was no coincidence that early political associations in Germany, Britain and the Netherlands joined national networks. Activists believed that the powerful effect of organization could be increased by cooperating with like-minded men in numerous locations. Especially the British Anti-Corn Law League (1839 – 1846) and its fight against the protectionist Corn Laws decisively shaped the nineteenth-century understanding of the efficacy of political organization.[146] Under

[140] Velde and Janse, *Organizing Democracy*.

[141] Maartje Janse, "'Association Is a Mighty Engine': Mass Organization and the Machine Metaphor, 1825-1840," in *Organizing Democracy. Reflections on the Rise of Political Organization in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Henk te Velde and Maartje Janse (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 19–42.

[142] Janse.

[143] "Zusammenschluss vieler, die gleiche Zwecke verfolgen" "active-dynamic"" Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, "Organ, Organismus, Organisation, politische Körper," ed. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck, *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1978), 613.

[144] Böckenförde, 613.

[145] This trend has been retrieved from the frequency of the term "organisatie", "organisatiën" or "organizatie" in 102.775 Dutch newspaper in the period 1700 to 1900 in the digital databank of Dutch texts Delpher. "organisatie or organisatiën or organizatie," Delpher, February 27, 2017, https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/ngram?coll=ddd&query=%28organisatie+or+organisati%C3%ABn+or+organizatie%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-01-1700%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2231-12-1900%22%29.

[146] Paul A. Pickering, *The People's Bread: A History of the Anti-Corn Law League*, ed. Alex Tyrell (London: Leicester University Press, 2000); Norman Mccord, *The Anti Corn Law League*, 1956; Archibald Prentice, *History of the Anti-Corn Law League*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 2 vols., 18 (London: Routledge, 1968); Cheryl

the leadership of Richard Cobden the League became a national organization collecting ordinary people's signatures to pressure the political elite of aristocratic landowners. After Cobden forced the Conservative government to repeal the unpopular trade barriers, the fame of the League inspired political activists at home and abroad.[147] In Britain, the Liberal activist Jesse Collings referred to the Anti-Corn Law League to advocate the foundation of the National Education League.[148] Founded in 1869, this single-issue organization became the predecessor of the party organization of the National Liberal Federation under the leadership of Joseph Chamberlain. This meant that the Anti-Corn Law League had inspired a new organizational structure that enabled the foundation of early British party organization.[149]

Two aspects were important for this remarkable transfer of political practices: the League's business-like model and its success in effectively shaping government policy. Both factors impressed Dutch activists across a wide political spectrum who were keen to use this method of political change as an alternative to violent revolution. In 1869, the Liberal Anti-Stamp Tax League (Anti-Dagbladzegel Verbond) was founded to pressure electoral candidates to support the abolition of the newspaper stamp tax. In 1872, the Orthodox Protestant Rotterdam insurance broker J. Voorhoeve followed this model with the establishment of the Anti-School Law League (Anti-Schoolwetverbond) to campaign against the Liberal school laws.[150] This might seem remarkable, because the Anti-Corn Law League was an organization of British Liberalism, whereas its Dutch followers belonged to the Anti-Revolutionary opposition of the Liberal majority in parliament. But the British model was embraced in these Orthodox Protestant circles because it was probably considered to be of similar thematic orientation on dissent from the state church.[151]

The League's model also found application on German territory.[152] Here, the example of political organization was so impressive that, under the right circumstances, it was able to

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Schonhardt-Bailey, *From the Corn Laws to Free Trade: Interests, Ideas, and Institutions in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014).

[147] In its mother country, the League inspired the foundation of several single-issue organizations. Hollis, *Pressure from Without*; Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure*; Janse and Velde, "Introduction."

[148] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 36. Chamberlain friend John Morley wrote the biography of Richard Cobden describing his role in the foundation of the Anti-Corn Law League. John Morley, *The Life of Richard Cobden*, vol. 2 (London: Chapman and Hall, 1881).

[149] Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure*.

[150] Annemarie Houkes and Maartje Janse, "Foreign Examples as Eye Openers and Justification. The Transfer of the Anti-Corn Law League and the Anti-Prostitution Movement to the Netherlands," *European Review of History* 12, no. 2 (2005): 321–344; Velde, "Political Transfer"; Janse, *De Afschaffers*.

[151] For a comparison between the religious elements in the rhetoric of Dutch party founder Abraham Kuyper and British Liberal leader William Gladstone, see Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord."

[152] Andreas Biefang, "The German National Association 1859–1867: Rise and Fall of a Proto-Party," in *Organizing Democracy - Reflections on the Rise of Political Organizations in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Henk te te Velde and Janse, Maartje (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 165–84; Biefang, *Politisches Bürgertum*.

transcend political ideologies. The National Association (Nationalverein), one of the most comprehensive German political associations in the second half of the nineteenth century, was inspired by the Anti-Corn Law League. This was a fairly obvious choice, because its founders shared the Liberal principles of free trade with the original Anti-Corn Law League.[153] But the League's model also prospered in less familiar circumstances, inspiring many German Socialists. The influential theorist of German Socialism, Karl Marx, knew about the famous British single-issue organization and mentioned it critically during his speech in Brussels in 1848.[154] Another prominent figure in these circles, Ferdinand Lassalle, referred to the British organization more positively as an example for his General German Workers' Association. Lassalle was a proponent of universal male suffrage, hoping that it would produce legislation to alleviate working-class misery. In order to make suffrage reform feasible, Lassalle suggested a movement similar to the "great English agitation against the Corn Laws" in 1863.[155] From this ambitious statement, the course of action was clear: "Organize in a general German Workers' Associations for the purpose of a constitutional and peaceful, but tireless and diligent agitation."[156] In addition to Lassalle, also Wilhelm Liebknecht, the future founder of the Social Democratic Workers' Party, knew and wrote about the famous example of the Anti-Corn Law League. Living in his London exile in 1850s, Liebknecht acknowledged British associational law as a "great means of the public will", and connected it to the other well-known example of the political organization of British Chartism.[157] His report directly linked the activism of the middle-class Anti-Corn Law League to the working-class Chartists and stated that "the same hall in which yesterday the speech of Cobden and his friends about the blessing of free trade echoed, gathers tomorrow a revolutionary Chartist meeting that discusses the red republic and the rule of the proletariat."[158]

[153] Biefang, *Politisches Bürgertum*, 90.

[154] Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1892), http://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.258.

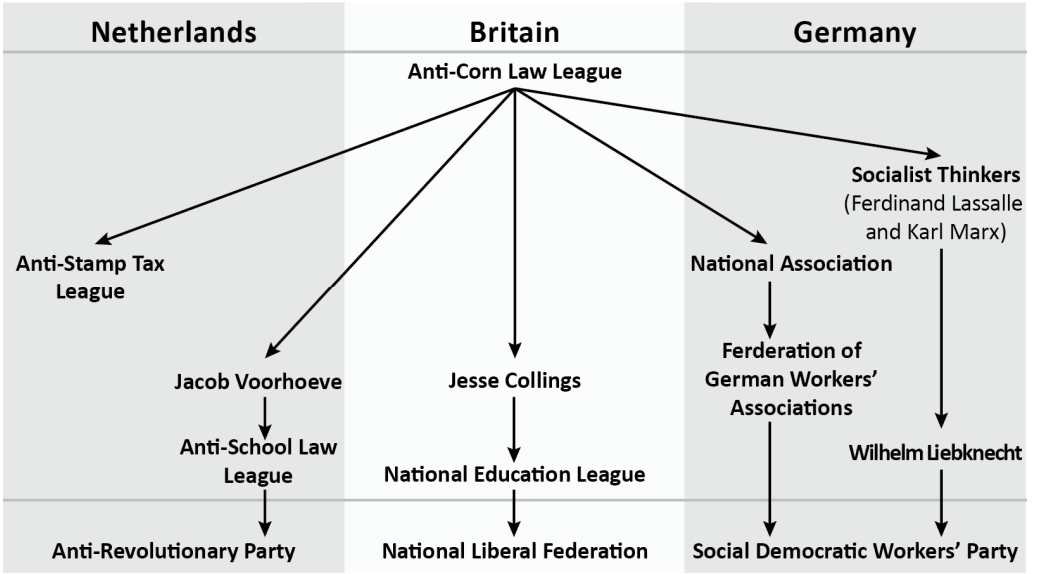
[155] "große englische Agitation gegen die Korngesetze" Ferdinand Lassalle, *Offenes Antwortschreiben an Das Zentral-Komitee Zur Berufung Eines Allgemeinen Deutschen Arbeiter-Kongresses in Leipzig* (Berlin: Buchhandlung Vorwärts, 1919), 58, http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb11126006_00001.html.

[156] "Organisieren Sie sich als ein allgemeiner deutscher Arbeiterverein zu dem Zweck einer gesetzlichen und friedlichen, aber unermüdlichen, unablässigen Agitation." Lassalle, 59.

[157] "großartige Mittel des öffentlichen Willens" Wilhelm Liebknecht, "Englische Skizzen (1850/51)," in *Liebknecht und England: Zur Publizistik Wilhelm Liebknechts während seines Londoner Exils (1850-1862)*, ed. Utz Haltern, Schriften aus dem Karl-Marx-Haus 18 (Trier: Karl-Marx-Haus, 1977), 75.

[158] "derselbe Saal, der gestern von Reden *Cobden's* und seiner Freunde über die Segnungen des Freihandels widerhallte, umfaßt morgen ein revolutionäres Chartiste[n]meeting, das die rothe Republik und die Herrschaft des Proletariats diskutirt." Liebknecht, 75.

Graph 2: Dissemination of Anti-Corn Law League



The case of the German Social Democrats indicates that examples of successful political organizations were so impressive that they transcended the boundaries of the national state and ideological differences of opinion. The infrastructure for organizing was available to political activists and could be used for different political agendas. This was a more general development that also explains the newspaper report from the beginning of this chapter. Despite all ideological differences, Abraham Kuyper admired the organizational strength of the German Social Democrats, making this an indirect case of political transfer.[159]

The Dutch party founders were not the only ones to write about political organization abroad, as the example of the Anti-Corn Law Leagues shows. Nineteenth-century Western Europe had much in common with the interrelated continent of today. National discourses differed considerably in their content and tone, but political communities were connected by a shared set of themes and practices that could be transferred across national borders. Organizations like the Anti-Corn Law League fascinated future party founders because it provided an emancipatory example for achieving political change through formal cooperation. More important than a specific level of industrialization or suffrage rights extension was the

[159] For the concept of historical transfer, see Velde, "Political Transfer." Maarje Janse and Annemarie Houkes have shown how British pressure groups influenced Dutch organizations. "Foreign Examples as Eye Openers and Justification." During the 1848 revolutions, the news about the revolutionary clubs in Paris inspired organizational efforts in Berlin, see Geerten Waling, "1848 Clubkoorts en revolutie: democratische experimenten in Parijs en Berlijn" (Leiden University, 2016). In the 1870s the example of the Paris Commune shaped revolutionary attempts in other circumstances. Bos, *Bloed en barricaden*. When the Labour activists Morrison visited the German Social Democratic party organization, he used this experience to reform the London branch. Berger, "Herbert Morrison's London Labour Party."

idea that working together in national organizations could achieve political change. This also explains how party organizations could emerge in in the same period in the different political and economic circumstances of Germany, Britain and the Netherlands. The Anti-Corn Law League provided a tangible strategy that showed activists how to organize mass politics. There was also another element to the example of the League that had become a prestigious model, of almost mythical proportions. Regardless of the specific events that led to the repeal of the Corn Laws, contemporaries believed that it was the vigorous pressure of the well-organized masses that forced the British government to abandon its unpopular legislation.[160] In this way, the League not only provided a practical blueprint for political protest, it also incorporated a promise of overcoming political discrimination and enabling the political participation of the politically powerless. In this way, it connected local activism to a larger political protest and showed ordinary citizens how to become a new force in politics.

6. The Rise of Party Founders

The effects of organization can also be seen in the early biographies of party founders. The three main protagonists of this dissertation, Joseph Chamberlain, Abraham Kuyper and August Bebel, were born into very different family backgrounds: ranging from the well-protected circumstances of successful cordwaining entrepreneurs in Britain and the faithful family of a Protestant minister in the Netherlands, to the impoverished circumstances of a single mother in a small German town. Determined to make use of the opportunities of their time, as young men they excelled in their business endeavors or religious aspirations. Nevertheless, despite talent and hard work, their socio-economic status limited their prospects of ascending the social ladder. Regardless of whether their fathers had acquired wealth or remained at the bottom of the middle classes, these men had no chance to rise to the ranks of the political elite. In this situation of constrained social mobility, organizations became an instrument to transcend socio-economic and political obstacles. As members of local associations, party founders could practice public speaking and learn how to manage a larger number of members. The German carpenter and future party leader August Bebel described his first encounters with local working-class organization in his autobiography. The local Commercial Educational Workers' Association (Gewerbliche Bildungsverein) in Leipzig left a lasting impression. Listening to the speeches at the stage of the Inn Wiener Saal, Bebel developed his "longing" to become a public speaker.[161] This emotional response was by no means an exception and it was stirred by the attention for oratorical skills at the gathering, typical for the so-called people's assemblies (Volksversammlungen) practiced in the German states in the 1860s. At these events, speakers

[160] For a recent study on the events leading to the repeal of the Corn Laws, see Schonhardt-Bailey, *From the Corn Laws to Free Trade*.

[161] "Sehnsucht"August Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben* (Bonn: Dietz, 1997), 46.

with talent and commitment could gain a respectful place among their peers.[162] As member of the Leipzig association, Bebel soon benefitted from the upward mobility within this associational culture.[163] After a year, he joined the managing committee and assumed responsibilities in the two departments for library and leisure affairs.[164]

In Britain, the local associational life of Birmingham likewise shaped the early biography of the future party leader Joseph Chamberlain. The city burst with organizational initiatives, fitting his family's Protestant Unitarian faith.[165] Moreover, Birmingham looked back at a history of cooperation between artisan entrepreneurs and Liberal bourgeois foremen. Political organizations such as the Complete Suffrage Union (1842), Birmingham Reform Association (1858), Radical Reform League (1861) and the Ballot Society (1861) had fostered cooperation between Liberal leaders and working-class artisans.[166] This trustful alliance became the basis of electoral organizations whose administrative form would soon be called Caucus.[167] The young Chamberlain, who was known for his ambition to hold the office of Prime Minister, became a prominent member of this flourishing associational environment. His first step was to join the city's Debating Society to gain experience in public speaking.[168] When in 1865 the Liberal Association of Birmingham was founded, the quickly rising entrepreneur became an active member and built a lasting network for his political career.[169]

These two biographies show how the empowering experience of associational membership formed the early lives of the British industrialist and the German carpenter. Bebel and Chamberlain joined newly founded local associations in the year of their foundation where they acquired the skills that would be crucial for their later political careers. Bebel practiced public speaking and assumed his first managerial responsibilities in the workers' association Leipzig. His British counterpart, Chamberlain, shared this experience as a member of the Debating Society and the Liberal Association of Birmingham. In fact, the two men were so

[162] Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, chap. 5; Waling, "1848 Clubkoorts en revolutie"; Karl Birker, *Die deutschen Arbeiterbildungsvereine 1840-1870*, 10 (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1973).

[163] Nathaus, *Organisierte Geselligkeit*; Birker, *Die deutschen Arbeiterbildungsvereine*.

[164] Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*, 46–47.

[165] The leading families were non-conformist and their belief inspired political engagement; "politics was a Christian mission". Watts, *Joseph Chamberlain*, n.p. See also for an overview of disestablishment and its relationship to democracy in the United Kingdom Machin, "Disestablishment and Democracy."

[166] W.B. Stephens, ed., "Political and Administrative History: Political History from 1832," in *The City of Birmingham*, vol. 7, A History of the County of Warwick (London: Victoria County History, 1964), 298–317, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol7/pp298-317.

[167] Tholfsen, "The Origins of the Birmingham Caucus"; Asa Briggs, *Borough and City 1865-1938*, History of Birmingham 2 (London: Oxford University Press, 1952).

[168] Richard Jay, *Joseph Chamberlain: A Political Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981). For a more general account of British (and Dutch debating societies), see Jaap van Rijn, *De eeuw van het debat: de ontwikkeling van het publieke debat in Nederland en Engeland, 1800-1920* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2010).

[169] Balfour, *Britain and Joseph Chamberlain*.

successful in local organizations that they quickly rose to higher ranks when these local practices were extended into national cooperation. In 1869 Chamberlain belonged to the group that founded the National Education League and became chairman of the organization's executive committee.[170] Bebel's role in the national organization of the German workers' movement was initially more modest, when he attended the founding congress of the Federation of German Workers' Associations (Vereinstag Deutscher Arbeitervereine) in Frankfurt in 1863. But four years later, Bebel was elected president.[171]

The inspiring role of local associational culture had a different dimension in the life of the Dutch party founder Abraham Kuyper. After a well-received dissertation at Leiden University, the future politician became a Protestant minister in the village of Beesd in 1863. For the talented Kuyper, local associational experience was first tied to the community of the parish that provided public speaking opportunities, similar to the workers' association in Germany and the Liberal associations in Britain.[172] Organizing was an essential part of the job and soon Kuyper turned to local associations to develop his own and his younger peers´ oratorical skills. At his second employment in Utrecht, he founded the Christian-Historical Debating Club (Christelijk-Historische Debating Club). This "auxiliary" allowed him to recruit Orthodox Protestant students who shared his religious and political aspirations.[173]

In addition to the acquisition of leadership skills, there was another consequence of party founders' early encounters with organizational culture. Participating in associational culture, men like Bebel, Chamberlain and Kuyper managed to acquire the appreciation of their peers, sometimes even respect outside of their party organization. Within the community of party members, ordinary men could become "true" and "active citizens."[174] From their biographies, we know that Social Democratic party leaders like August Bebel, but also his associates Wilhelm Liebknecht, Wilhelm Bracke and the many others who joined the board of the Social Democratic Workers' Party, earned the respect of the rank and file of the party and, to some extent, could even make a modest living from their party offices. Bebel, in particular, built up a national reputation over the years. Not without pride, he described in his autobiography how "two aristocratic looking Gentlemen" paid his workshop a visit and found it hard to believe that the ordinary craftsman was the same person as the infamous revolutionary speaker in the Reichstag.[175] This experience was shared by Kuyper who gained the respect and love of many Dutch Orthodox Protestants and, finally, became Prime Minister in 1901. Uniting

[170] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 38.

[171] Fischer, *August Bebel und der Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine 1867/68*.

[172] Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2; Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord." Kuyper was also member of the Leiden student corps, but his financial means were too limited to be an active participant. Jan de Bruijn, *Abraham Kuyper: Een Beeldbiografie* (Amsterdam: Bakker, 2008), 31.

[173] "Hulp department" Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, 91.

[174] Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, 275.

[175] "zwei aristokratisch aussehende Herren" Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*, 285.

Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries into a powerful party organization was a means to exercise political influence and introduce a new form of politics.[176] Kuyper developed a new leadership type that was not so much grounded in the halls of parliament, but in the party's public assemblies and its newspaper *De Standaard*. Instead of submitting the pragmatic approach to legislation typical for nineteenth-century Dutch politics, Kuyper based his parliamentary contributions on his ideological principles and developed an emotional rhetorical style.[177] Likewise, the Birmingham mayor Chamberlain (1873) implemented a comprehensive reform of the city's public utilities that earned him the respect of the local Liberal community. But the parliamentary aristocratic elite treated Chamberlain as an outsider and a threat to the established ranks of society. From his biography, we know that Chamberlain's first appearances in London's circles were shadowed by his "stigma as a metal manufacturer."[178] At his first formal introduction in parliament, Chamberlain famously offended the assembly's custom by wearing a hat before he swore his oath.[179]

7. An Alternative Explanation of Early Party Organizations

This chapter has suggested a new approach to the systematic study of party organizations as an interconnected phenomenon between different European countries. The report on two German Social Democrats in the Anti-Revolutionary newspaper from the beginning of this chapter provided a first insight into the interconnected European sphere of political organizations. Despite the outright hostility towards Social Democratic political ideology, *De Standaard* praised the well-known structure of the party organization of the German revolutionaries. In the nineteenth century, there was an appreciation of political organization that transcended political ideologies and national borders. This meant that party founders could use political organization as a tool to mobilize their followers in different socio-economic and political circumstances. In order to study this process, three approaches have been combined: the social movement approach of framing, the work of party scholar Panebianco and the political culture approach of historians. Despite all disciplinary differences, these scholars agree that more attention should be given to actors' ability to give new meaning to existing social structures and political institutions. Seen from this perspective, the two most conventional explanations of party emergence, industrialization and suffrage rights extension, have only limited explanatory value when applied to the three countries of this study.

In order to account for early party formation in Germany, Britain and the Netherlands, the emergence of associational culture was discussed to critically engage with the idea of gradual and natural processes of democratization. In particular, the model of the British Anti-

[176] Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom*, chap. 5.
[177] Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 59.
[178] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 113.
[179] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*.

Corn Law League was important for all three cases of this study. Through its ability to force a Conservative government to yield to popular protest of the masses, the League became a symbol for the political power of the people that could be applied to different political convictions. The fame of the League even transcended national borders. It inspired not only British contemporaries, but also activists in the Netherlands and Germany. Regardless of whether they were Liberals, Anti-Revolutionaries or Social Democrats, future party founders cited the model of the League to convince their followers that they could achieve political change. In this way, political organization became seen as an instrument of empowerment that enabled party organization in different nation states. Regardless of whether only a few, a moderate number or all male citizens were granted suffrage rights for national parliaments, the belief that formal organization was a powerful tool could overcome exclusive political institutions. It did not matter whether industrialization occurred early, late or remained limited, party organizations were still founded to achieve political change.

Association mania also had an effect on the individual level, as has been shown in the analysis of the biographies of party founders. The three main protagonists of this study participated in local associational culture at an early stage in their lives. Here, they practiced public speaking and acquired administrative responsibilities – skills that would be crucial for their later political careers. This local experience of organization was also important because it allowed party founders to experience what membership in organizations could mean for their individual lives. Among their peers, they gained respect and admiration that gave their actions a sense of meaning and dignity. The next chapter follows the study of political organization and analyzes in greater detail how party founders developed a new frame of interpretation on the basis of existing organizational structure. For this purpose, I leave the transnational and biographical dimension behind and offer a comparative analysis of the national organizations that preceded party organizations in the three countries.

II. Education: The Missing Link between Association and Party

1. Opposition to Political Organization

Looking back at the history of Orthodox Protestantism, the party founder Abraham Kuyper told his followers that the emergence of the Anti-Revolutionary Party (Anti-Revolutionaire Partij, ARP) was an unavoidable necessity in 1879: "Now organization could no longer be postponed."[180] This chapter analyzes the period before party organization to critically engage with this statement and analyze the processes that led to party foundation. Based on comparative source analysis and recent historiography, it argues that party emergence was not as inevitable and gradual as Kuyper wanted to make it seem.[181] Despite membership in local organizations, it took several decades before Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries could transform previous organizational traditions into party organization. This difficult process was not limited to the Netherlands, but shared among the different cases of this study. The reason for this was that party founders of different national circumstances encountered fierce opposition to setting up a formal political organization. Not only their political opponents, but also the adherents of their political orientation, including close allies, questioned whether a more outspoken political course on the part of their respective communities was desirable. These people suspected that further institutionalization facilitated the manipulation of ordinary people. Even worse, the radical adjustment of political culture that party founders proposed had the potential of igniting violent revolution. Hence, the question that stands in the center of the chapter is: How did party founders like Kuyper, Bebel and Chamberlain overcome this opposition and gain enough support for the foundation of party organizations?

The national organizations that preceded the three party organizations were founded for educational purposes. In the context of the nineteenth century, this was not a coincidence as education became a regular feature of private and public life, because it was as much a formative activity in schools, universities and associations as an attractive political cause. Especially for political reformers, education was a crucial topic, because it was directly related to the creation of the future nation.[182] Regardless of specific ideological orientation, Liberals,

[180] "Thans kon organisatie niet langer worden verschoven."Abraham Kuyper, "Vergadering van het Voorlopig Centraal Comité voor Antirevolutionaire Kiesverenigingen," 1879, 2, Politieke Organisaties, Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor het Nederlands Protestantisme.,

[181] See the detailed studies of Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*; Janssens, *opbouw*.

[182] In Britain, the example of the school movement in Manchester and Birmingham is a good example. A. F Taylor, "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education 1867-77: An Account of the Work and Influence of the National Education League" (University of Leicester, 1960). For the German context, see Frolinde Balser, *Die Anfänge der Erwachsenenbildung in Deutschland in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts: eine kultursoziologische Deutung*, Beiträge zur Erwachsenenbildung (Stuttgart: Klett, 1959); Birker, *Die deutschen Arbeiterbildungsvereine*; Francis Ludwig Carsten, "The Arbeiterbildungsvereine and

Socialists and Anti-Revolutionaries broadly agreed that schools and educational associations were responsible for preparing citizens for the future state. This was also the reason why education was an important topic in the discussions around suffrage rights extension. Contemporary commentators believed that ordinary people could participate in the political process only if they developed a thorough understanding of the functioning of the state.[183] At the same time education provided ordinary people with the tangible opportunity and transformative experience of social advancement and the advancement of their material situation. Even in the biographies of party founders, education played an important role. Bebel, Chamberlain and Kuyper were determined to succeed in the century's race for upward social mobility, creating a better life than their fathers had.[184]

In the process of party formation education became a frame that helped overcome the reservation against institutionalization. Education had a powerful mobilizing effect, because it

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the Foundation of the Social-Democratic Workers Party in 1869," *The English Historical Review* 107, no. 423 (April 1, 1992): 361–77; Werner Lesanovsky, *Lernen, lernen und abermals lernen: August Bebel über Volksbildung, Erziehung und Pädagogik* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2005); Winfried Meid, "Die Volksbildungskonzeption Wilhelm Liebknechts: Versuch einer Rekonstruktion unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Liebknechts politisch-aufklärerischem Wirken in der sächsischen Arbeiterbewegung (1865-1878)" (Universität Marburg, 1980). For the Dutch case, see Jan Lenders, "Van kind tot burger: Lager onderwijs en de vorming tot burgerschap in de negentiende eeuw," in *Tot burgerschap en deugd: volksopvoeding in de negentiende eeuw*, ed. Nelleke Bakker, Rudolf Dekker, and Angelique Janssens (Hilversum: Verloren, 2006), 11–34; Haan, Ido de, "Van staatszorg tot vrijheidsrecht. De Schoolstrijd in de Nederlandse politiek en samenleving," in *Tot burgerschap en deugd: volksopvoeding in de negentiende eeuw*, ed. Nelleke Bakker, Rudolf Dekker, and Angelique Janssens (Hilversum: Verloren, 2006), 81–103; Michael Wintle, "Natievorming, onderwijs en godsdienst in Nederland, 1850-1900," in *De eenheid & de delen: zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland, 1850-1900*, ed. Henk te Velde and Hans Verhage (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1996), 13–28; Miert, "Wars van clubgeest en partijzucht," 78–82; Th Veld, *Volksonderwijs en leerplicht: een historisch sociologisch onderzoek naar het ontstaan van de Nederlandse leerplicht 1860-1900* (Delft: Eburon, 1987), 77.

[183] Birker, *Die deutschen Arbeiterbildungsvereine*, 149–59; Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom*, 77–86; Robert Saunders, "Democracy," in *Languages of Politics in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. David Craig and James Thompson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2013), 142–67.

[184] Most educated was Abraham Kuyper, who according to some historians was already "brilliant" in his early years. In 1870, his commitment and charisma helped the thirty-year-old to become the minister of the prestigious parish of Amsterdam. Jasper Vree, "Abraham Kuyper in de jaren 1848-1874: een briljante, bevlogen branie," *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 29, no. 65 (2006): 26–49. Although unable to afford university education, the young August Bebel had benefitted from public schooling, despite his family's poverty. When the family moved to the Prussian town of Wetzlar, the clever boy qualified for extra lessons in mathematics. Later Bebel would start his vocational training as a carpenter to become his own master, financially struggling, but determined to keep his business going. Carsten, *August Bebel*, 15–22; Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*. Like his German and Dutch counterparts, Joseph Chamberlain was a bright student, winning several prizes at his school. With the financial support of his father, Chamberlain was able to join his uncle's automated factory for screw production in Birmingham. This provided the young entrepreneur with a formidable income and fortune. Balfour, *Britain and Joseph Chamberlain*, 52–57; Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 10–28.

demonstrated the connections between the living situations of geographically scattered individuals. School legislation gave state authorities increased influence in the local context. This intervention became a shared experience for many ordinary men and women. In this way, education created a social context where national cooperation became a viable course of action. The topic was so important that it inspired activists to extend their practices in three arenas: national assemblies, newspapers and organizations. Party founders used these platforms to address the constituencies of Dutch Orthodox Protestants, German Social Democrats and British Radical Liberals. They referred to the failed attempts of previous forms of national cooperation to advocate a more advanced form of organization. Only through better political representation could they improve the living situation of their community.

2. Dutch Anti-School Law League

2.1 Contested Political Protest

In the Netherlands, Protestants not only constituted the vast majority of the population, they also increasingly saw themselves as the core of the Dutch nation.[185] The Dutch Reformed Church was the unofficial state church of the Netherlands, organized in a national network of church councils. Within this broad church, different interpretations of Christian faith competed for support.[186] A crucial segment of the Anti-Revolutionary Party consisted of Orthodox Protestants who belonged to the most conservative form of Protestantism. In fact, the history of this group is one of a continuous struggle over the inclusion of the masses in political agitation. After the 1848 constitutional reform under Liberal politicians like Johan Rudolph Thorbecke, traditional forces had come under pressure in the new political order that was committed to the separation of state and church.[187] Ironically, these new political circumstances also provided the ground for the foundation of the first party organization under Orthodox Protestant leadership.

Following Liberal principles of citizenship, the new circumstances encouraged electors and non-electors alike to express their opinion in political protest.[188] A first expression of this was the no-popery April Movement of the 1853 that took protest into the streets to prevent the reinstatement of Catholic bishops in the Netherlands.[189] The protest movement was organized without the support of parliamentary representatives and relied on church councils

[185] Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom*, 106–11.

[186] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, chap. inleiding.

[187] Velde, "Van grondwet tot grondwet."

[188] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, chap. 1.

[189] Anti-Catholicism had a longer violent tradition in the Netherlands. See, for instance, Pieter de Rooy, "'Een reuk des doods ten dood': De fakkel van het antipapisme in Nederland," in *Met alle geweld: botsingen en tegenstellingen in burgerlijk Nederland*, ed. Conny Kristel et al. (Amsterdam: Balans, 2003), 60–77. For the indirect relationship of the April Movement with the history of Anti-Revolutionary ideology, see Deursen, "Van antirevolutionaire richting"; de Jong, "Antirevolutionaire partijvorming."

to organize national cooperation for a mass petition of different Protestant groups.[190] In total, the impressive number of 200,000 signatures was gathered and delivered to King Willem III in a short ceremony.[191] Despite this formal recognition by the political establishment, the political achievements of the movement were moderate. Under the Dutch constitution, the protest's most outspoken demand, the prevention of an episcopal seat in Utrecht, could not be prevented. Only in the long-term did the potential of the April Movement become apparent. Dutch historians regarded the protest as the first early episode of a century-long struggle about politics in which contemporaries not only argued about the distribution of political power, but also over how political decisions should be made.[192] The question was one of political legitimacy: should parliament or street pressure determine the political course of the nation?[193] In this struggle, education became the most contested issue.[194]

In the years after the April Movement, the members of the Dutch parliament discussed how to translate the principles of the new constitution into school legislation. The consequence was a second national petition movement that tried to prevent the introduction of denominationally neutral public schools in 1856.[195] Collecting only 13,250 signatures, this smaller movement likewise failed to achieve its political purpose.[196] This did not mean that the 'school question' had lost its mobilizing function. The introduction of a new public school system inspired Orthodox Protestants and their political leader Groen van Prinsterer to advocate the creation of private religious schools. For this purpose, Groen suggested founding an association, but did not show much interest in taking the necessary practical steps to arrange the actual implementation of his idea.[197] Eventually it was the teacher Nicolas Mattheus Feringa

[190] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 25,220.

[191] Houkes, 25.

[192] Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom*; Janse, *De Afschaffers*.

[193] Janse, "What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?"

[194] See for an overview of this period Veld, *Volksonderwijs en leerplicht*, 36–41.

[195] Petrus Boekholt and Engelina Petronella de Booy, *Geschiedenis van de school in Nederland vanaf de middeleeuwen tot aan de huidige tijd* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1987), chap. 11, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/boek009gesc01_01/.

[196] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 190; Th. van Tijn, "De wording der politieke-partijorganisaties in Nederland," in *Vaderlands verleden in veelvoud: 31 opstellen over de Nederlandse geschiedenis na 1500*, ed. G. A. M. Beekelaar et al. (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975), 590–601; Wintle, "Natievorming, onderwijs en godsdienst in Nederland, 1850-1900."

[197] Dirk Langedijk, *De schoolstrijd in de eerste jaren na de wet van 1857* (Kampen: Kok, 1937), 40. Nineteenth-century Anti-Revolutionaries saw 1857 as a turning point. *De strijd om de school in Nederland sedert 1857* (Rotterdam: J.M. Bredée, 1888), http://www.delpher.nl/nl/boeken/view?coll=boeken&identifier=MMUBVU02:000008946. Historian Janssens argues that Van der Brugghen's law was the turning point for Protestant critics who concluded that they could not hope for Christian elementary education. Rienk Janssens, "Politieke bewustwording van christelijke onderwijzers," in *De school met de bijbel: christelijk onderwijs in de negentiende eeuw*, ed. George Harinck and Gerrit Jan Schutte, Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme na 1800 14 (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2006), 133–48.

who managed to initiate the Association for Christian-National School Education (Vereniging voor Christelijk-Nationaal Schoolonderwijs) in October 1860, after two years of discussion and adjustment.[198] The mission of the new organization was to stimulate Orthodox Protestant education by collecting and distributing financial resources to support private schools.[199] The charitable character was no coincidence, but followed the widely shared skepticism among ordinary people about political agitation. Especially Orthodox Protestants distrusted the idea of vesting political legitimacy outside of the traditional processes of parliamentary politics. They often did, in fact, not like politics at all.[200] An often cited example is Groen van Prinsterer who is known for criticizing the popular and ad hoc form of mass participation for involving ordinary people in political questions.[201] In his newspaper *Nederlandsche Gedachten* (Dutch Thoughts, 1829-1832), Groen had labelled his political orientation Anti-Revolutionary to signal his opposition against what he considered the individualistic and subversive values of the French Revolution.[202] But although the Anti-Revolutionary parliamentary leader advocated an independent political course for Orthodox Protestants, he later distanced himself from the political motives of the April Movement.[203] This also explains why Groen failed to translate his political potential into parliamentary influence. On the one hand, contemporaries criticized his political methods for their similarity to British political practices of mass politics.[204] Suffrage rights, on the other hand, were limited to a small part of the population that did not see how the Anti-Revolutionary political ideology was related to their local context.[205] For a while, it even

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[198] Langedijk, *De schoolstrijd in de eerste jaren na de wet van 1857*, 40–47; Arent Th. Bloemendal, *Inventaris van het archief van de Vereniging voor Christelijk Nationaal Schoolonderwijs, 1860-1970*, Archiefpublicaties 2 (Voorburg: Besturenraad PCO, 1994), 5–8; E. Zuidema, "Feringa, Nicolaas Mattheus," ed. P.J. Blok and P.C. Molhuysen, *Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek* (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, online 2008 1911), http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/molh003nieu01_01/molh003nieu01_01_1399.php.

[199] Deursen, "Van antirevolutionaire richting," 33–35.

[200] Historian Houkes has shown how contested political action was among Orthodox Protestants throughout the nineteenth century. *Christelijke Vaderlanders*. See also Janssens, "Politieke bewustwording van christelijke onderwijzers." Janse, "What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?"

[201] For leading Anti-Revolutionaries, the idea and practices of popular politics was not only dubious, but also deeply problematic, threatening social and political order. Kuiper, *De voormannen*. This interpretation has been more generally described in Haan and te Velde, "Vormen van politiek." For a more favorable interpretation of Groen's ideas about mass politics, see historian Janse, "What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?"

[202] Deursen, "Van antirevolutionaire richting"; Roel Kuiper, "Antirevolutionair," in *Het Gereformeerde Geheugen: Protestantse Herinneringsculturen in Nederland, 1850-2000*, ed. George Harinck, Hendrik Jan Paul, and Barend Theodoor Wallet (Amsterdam: Bakker, 2009), 140–51. See also Groen's most prominent writing Groen van Prinsterer, *Ongeloof en revolutie. Eene reeks van historische voorlezingen* (Leiden: S. en J. Luchtmans, 1847), http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/groe009onge01_01/.

[203] Janse, "What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?" See also Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 32–43; Gerrit Jan Schutte, *Mr. G. Groen van Prinsterer* (Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1976); Kirpestein, "Groen van Prinsterer als belijder van kerk en staat in de negentiende eeuw."

[204] Janse, "What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?"

[205] De Jong, "Antirevolutionaire partijvorming"; de Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit*.

seemed as if the Anti-Revolutionaries could be integrated into the Conservative branch of parliamentary representation.[206]

This period of crisis allowed Abraham Kuyper to become an increasingly important figure in Anti-Revolutionary politics.[207] Following his theology studies, the Protestant minister first developed his argument for a new form of representation by commenting on the decision-making structure in the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1867, the male members of the church were granted the right to vote for local church offices. For Orthodox Protestants, these new procedures had an ambiguous nature. They had the theological conviction that church matters were subject to the sacred authority of God, in contrast to the mundane interests of ordinary church members. But Kuyper also saw an opportunity in the changing governance structure of his church. In his brochure *Wat moeten wij doen?* (What must we do?) he acknowledged the theological problem but encouraged his fellow churchmen to take action after all. His pragmatic advice was that believers should overcome religious reservations and participate in the church election, in particular because Orthodox Protestant parishes constituted the majority in the Dutch Reformed Church.[208] Kuyper's argument brought him in contact with the influential MP Groen van Prinsterer.[209] The two men quickly discovered that they shared many political convictions. Their most severe frustration about parliamentary politics was the reserved stance of Anti-Revolutionary parliamentarians in the school question.[210] Differences of opinion occurred only when Kuyper suggested institutionalizing political cooperation to produce a more active political course for school reform.[211] In 1869 Groen rejected Kuyper's idea of a fixed political program. The older parliamentarian feared the alienation of his parliamentary peers, especially over his advocacy for new forms of political culture: "suspicion of a political party [is] a dangerous weapon against us."[212] Despite his opposition to further institutionalization, Groen saw himself as a "party man" in the sense that his political convictions and behavior were based

[206] Jong has pointed to the short-lived Conservative General Electoral Association (De Algemeene Kiesvereeniging) as the first party organization of the Netherlands. "De Algemeene Kiesvereeniging." For the development of political conservatism, see Ronald van Raak, *In naam van het volmaakte. Conservatisme in Nederland in de negentiende eeuw van Gerit Jan Mulder tot Jan Heemskerk Azn* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2001).

[207] De Jong, "Antirevolutionaire partijvorming."

[208] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 102–9; Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*; Velde, "Ervaring en zingeving in de politiek."

[209] Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, 71–82.

[210] Over the years, Groen had grown distant from Anti-Revolutionary parliamentarians who refused to address the school question in parliament. Kuiper, *De voormannen*, 17.

[211] Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, chap. 3.

[212] "de verdachtmakerij van *politieke partij* [was] een gevaarlijk wapen tegen ons" 'Groen to Kuyper', 24 November 1869, in Adriaan Goslinga, ed., *Briefwisseling van Mr. G. Groen van Prinsterer met Dr. A. Kuyper, 1864-1876* (Kampen: Kok, 1937), 64–65.

on principles different from other parliamentary groups.[213] Two years later Kuyper took things into his own hands and developed a three-point agenda for the upcoming national elections with the editors of six Protestant newspapers. This initiative was chaotic and not well communicated with local Anti-Revolutionary foremen.[214] Even worse, Kuyper failed to coordinate his electoral campaign with Groen who had lost patience with the Anti-Revolutionary parliamentary group. Publicly separating from the parliamentary establishment, Groen announced that only three electoral candidates were worthy of the support of Anti-Revolutionary voters: M.D. van Otterloo, L.W.C. Keuchenius and Kuyper.[215] This incoherent message split the votes for Anti-Revolutionaries, and none of the three candidates gained a parliamentary seat.[216]

For Kuyper, this disastrous electoral result illustrated the urgency of tight national coordination, but his position remained isolated. Appealing to Groen, he wrote: "Organization is indispensable."[217] Groen ignored this suggestion and only after the elderly parliamentarian's death did another opportunity emerge for Kuyper to pursue party organization. When in June 1877 the electoral association of Kuyper's parliamentary constituency Gouda, Fear God, Honour the King (Vreest God, Eert den Koning), proposed a short electoral program, Kuyper praised this initiative and argued that the candidate who "shows his feelings so clearly, is a recommendation in itself."[218] In the following years, Kuyper rewrote the Gouda proposal, asking Anti-Revolutionary spokesmen and electoral associations to support his draft program for a more coherent Anti-Revolutionary orientation. In the spring of 1878, he published the text in his newspaper *De Standaard.* But even at this point in time this bold public strategy caused renewed resistance. Although Kuyper used the title *Ons Program* (Our Program) of his manifesto to verbally construct the political community of Anti-Revolutionaries, his initiative was slowed down again. The future party founder was forced to justify his plans in a series of articles, and the party organization seemed again to be off the table of realistic options.[219]

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[213] "partijman" De Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit*, 69–71. For a discussion of the term party in nineteenth-century Dutch politics, see Veldhuizen, "De Partij," chap. 1. The next decades were characterized by a changing perception of the role of Dutch MPs that increasingly voted along party lines. Erie Tanja, "Good Politics. Views of Dutch MPs on Parliament and Parliamentary Culture, 1866–1940," *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 28, no. 1 (2008): 121–35.

[214] Janssens, *opbouw*, chap. 7.

[215] Janssens, 79–80; Kuiper, *De voormannen*.

[216] Kuiper, *De voormannen*, 22.

[217] "*Organisatie* is onmisbaar" G. M. den Hartogh, "Groen van Prinsterer en de verkiezingen van 1871" (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 1933), 245.

[218] "die op zoo ronde wijs van zijn gevoelens doet blijken, is een aanbeveling op zich zelf" "Het Goudsche Program," *De Standaard*, June 4, 1877, 1, Delpher.

[219] Abraham Kuyper, *Ons program* (Amsterdam: J.H. Kruyt, 1880), http://archive.org/details/onsprogram1880kuyp.

2.2 Two Roads to the Christian School

To develop a more general perspective on party emergence, it is important to understand that Kuyper was not the first Anti-Revolutionary to suggest national cooperation in an electoral campaign. Since 1869, a central committee had been formed during election time to coordinate the campaign of local Orthodox Protestants under the aristocrat B.J.L. de Geer van Jutphaas.[220] Kuyper's suggestion differed from these initial attempts, because he believed that a closer relationship between voters and parliamentary representatives was needed to make national cooperation successful.[221] His plan was to create a broad organization built on a political program and formalized national structure.[222] Not many Orthodox Protestant leaders agreed with this bold strategy. Only when the education question inspired further political organization did Kuyper's plan gain sufficient support, first limited to activists outside of parliament. In 1872 the Rotterdam insurance- and stockbroker Jacob Voorhoeve founded the Anti-School Law League (Anti-Schoolwet Verbond*)*.[223] His aim was to build a national organization to mobilize mass support in the school struggle.[224] It was no coincidence that the name of this association was similar to that of the British Anti-Corn Law League that was known for its success in influencing parliament.[225] In 1869, the Anti-Stamp Tax League (Anti-Dagbladzegel Verbond) had demonstrated that this British model could work in the Netherlands.[226] Like these two previous pressure groups, the Anti-School Law League aimed at using public opinion so that "free education becomes the rule and public education supplemental."[227] Seen from its leaders' perspective, the political demands of the organization were not an overly bold idea, but fit in with the nineteenth-century understanding of the potential of mass organization.[228] In fact, the

[220] In the historiography, the 1869 meeting under B.J.L. de Geer van Jutphaas is named as the first meeting of the Central Committee. Kuiper, *De voormannen*, 17–18; Janssens, *opbouw*, chap. 1.

[221] Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2; Janssens, *opbouw*, 156–58.

[222] De Jong argues that the failure of Conservative members of parliament to accommodate Orthodox Protestant concerns about the education question gave Anti-Revolutionaries new impulses. De Jong, "Antirevolutionaire partijvorming." For Kuyper's determination to develop a political program see Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, 117–28.

[223] H. Algra, "De weg naar het volk enige opmerkingen over het Anti-schoolwetverbond, van 1872," in *Anti-Revolutionaire Staatskunde*, ed. J. Schouten, vol. 23 (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1953).

[224] First, he presented this idea at a meeting of educational activists where participants were enthusiastic about creating a more political movement outside of the non-political structure. Kuiper, *De voormannen*, 28. One month later in June, Voorhoeve's suggestion for an organizational committee was accepted by a gathering of representatives of educational associations, the Protestant press, ministers and teachers. Rienk Janssens, "Antirevolutionaire organisatievorming 1871-1879," in *De Antirevolutionaire Partij, 1829-1980*, ed. George Harinck, Roel Kuiper, and Peter Bak (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), 53–72.

[225] Houkes and Janse, "Foreign Examples as Eye Openers and Justification."

[226] Janse, *De Afschaffers*, chap. 5.

[227] "het vrije onderwijs regel en het Staatsonderwijs aanvulling kan worden" "Statuten van Het Anti-Schoolwet-Verbond," *De Standaard*, February 8, 1872, 2, Delpher, http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011065322:mpeg21:a0005.

[228] Janse, *De Afschaffers*.

optimism among its founders was so great that they became the first in Dutch history to pledge to submit their petition only after they reached a threshold of 10,000 signatures.[229]

It was exactly this mass aspect of educational agitation that further alarmed more traditional Orthodox Protestant spokesmen.[230] Following his earlier reservations about the mobilization of ordinary people in the April Movement, Groen van Prinsterer became an early skeptic of what he considered an aggressive strategy and tone.[231] Also the wider community of Protestant leaders - P.J. Elout van Souterwoude, M. Bichon van Ijsselmonde and Andries Willem Bronsveld - shared Groen's concern.[232] The proponents of the Anti-School Law League defended their organization by emphasizing its orderly character and the urgency of the education question.[233] For them, the school struggle was not only about the denominational upbringing of individual Orthodox Protestant children, but concerned the religious future of the entire Dutch nation.[234] While critics were right in noting that this was "a time when the number of associations, societies and unions increases in an extraordinary way," their League had the duty to use the potential of mass politics for its sacred mission.[235] In this perspective, the Anti-School Law League stood for more than the cooperation of like-minded individuals to increase efficiency. The organization was based on a general nineteenth-century fascination with quantity, which was shared by the proponents of many political orientations.[236] Its leaders went so far as not only including the disenfranchised, but also accepting signatures of women for their petition. This is remarkable as most political organizations at this time targeted only men.[237] The Anti-Revolutionary spokesman Esser broadly defined the basis of the League in his

[229] "Statuten van Het Anti-Schoolwet-Verbond," 2; Janse, "What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?"

[230] Kuiper, *De voormannen*, 28–31.

[231] Hartogh, "Groen van Prinsterer," 266; Algra, "De weg naar het volk enige opmerkingen over het Anti-schoolwetverbond, van 1872."

[232] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 145–46.

[233] For an analysis of the strategy of Dutch single-issue organizations, see Janse, *De Afschaffers*, 305.

[234] This vision had its roots in the Liberal understanding of citizenship. Lenders, "Van kind tot burger: Lager onderwijs en de vorming tot burgerschap in de negentiende eeuw"; Veld, *Volksonderwijs en leerplicht*, 71–81.

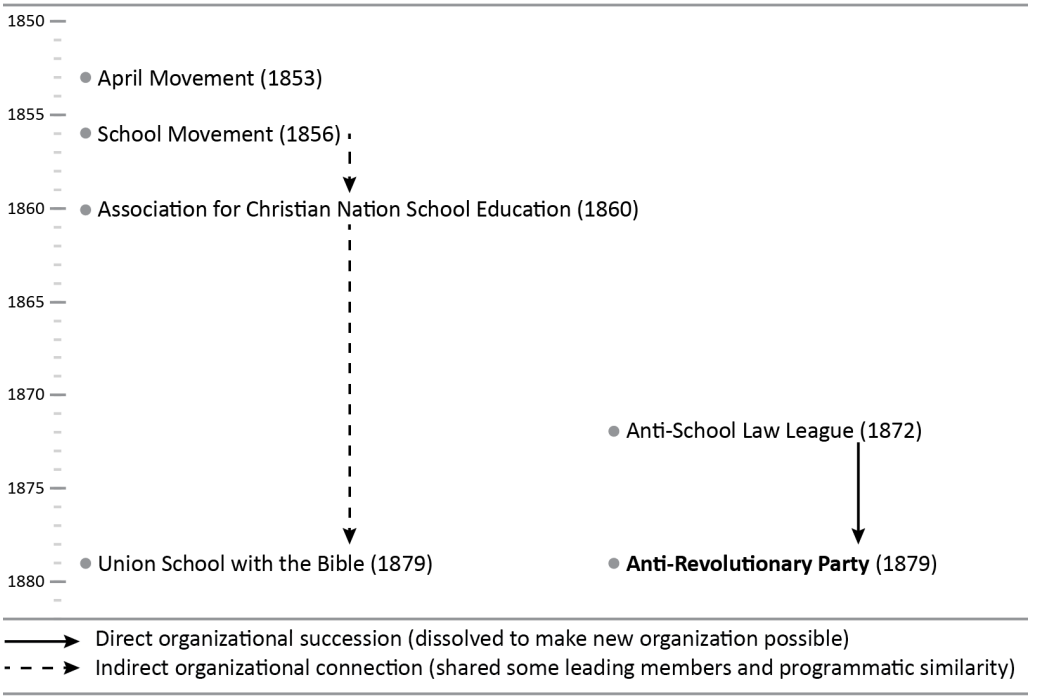
[235] "een tijd, waarin het aantal Vereenigingen, Genootschappen en Verbonden buitengewoon snel toeneemt" J. A. Geerth van Wijk, "Een woord over het Anti-Schoolwet Verbond" (G.J. Reits, 1873), 1, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:xGzvNnqh1TQJ:leesmuseum.bibliotheekarnhem.nl/Books/mp-pdf-bestanden/LM02460.pdf+&cd=4&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=nl.

[236] Haan and te Velde, "Vormen van politiek"; Velde, "Van grondwet tot grondwet"; Janse, "What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?"; Nico Randeraad, *Het onberekenbare Europa: macht en getal in de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2006).

[237] Janse, *De Afschaffers*, chap. conclusie.

brochure *Antirevolutionaire Catechismus* (Anti-Revolutionary Catechism) as "also the people behind the voters."[238]

Graph 3: Overview of organizational development of Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries



It took half a decade before Kuyper could transform the single-issue organization of the League into the party organization of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Although the school movement had ignited enthusiasm for political action, it remained difficult to convince the divided Orthodox Protestants to commit to formal political cooperation. It is even possible that the single-issue character of the Anti-School Law League delayed the foundation of party organization, because it directed attention and resources into the new petition movement, instead of supporting a broader political organization.[239] At the same time, the broad popular approach of the school movement fit Kuyper's political ideology with his focus on ordinary people. The main audience of the speeches and newspaper articles of the party founder were ordinary farmers and the lower parts of the middle classes.[240] In 1878 when a new legislative

[238] "ook het volk achter de kiezers" Janssens, *opbouw*, 106; I. Esser, *Antirevolutionaire catechismus, ook voor het volk achter de kiezers* ('s Gravenhage: H. J. Gerretsen, 1874), http://objects.library.uu.nl/reader/index.php?obj=1874312678&lan=nl#page//12/63/02/126302626888994342157045380978801533077.jpg.

[239] Janssens, *opbouw*.

[240] The phrase "de luyden van kleine en middelbare middelen" appeared in the first issue of Kuyper's newspaper. "De Standaard," *De Standaard*, January 4, 1872, 1, Delpher. For a study of the term "kleine

draft for elementary education was discussed in parliament, the idea of mass petition gained new support in the Protestant community. The reform improved the general state of schools, regulating class size, training of teachers and hygienic standards. When broken down to the practicality of school legislation, this was essentially connected to the distribution of public resources. The problem was that state schools were supported "out of the public cash box" to implement the legally required school modifications.[241] Religious schools did not receive any financial support but had to adhere to the new rules. In short, as the Anti-School Law League explained "[t]he 'Christian' school (…) must be founded and maintained by the private pockets of stakeholders".[242]

In 1878 a committee around Kuyper and Feringa was formed to organize the petition to demonstrate the power of the people.[243] All over the country, supporters were mobilized to sign the "petition (…) whereby His Majesty is asked to not support the bill of lower education of the Second Chamber of the Estates General."[244] Because the organizers submitted the petition only after the parliamentary decision, it had predominantly a symbolic value to establish a counterweight to the political legitimacy of the Dutch Lower House.[245] When parliament did not adjust its course, the petition leaders could argue that the political elite had disregarded the more than 469,000 signatures of Protestant and Catholic families.[246] With this disappointing experience, two different courses of action were chosen. The first stood in the tradition of the social mission of Orthodox Protestantism and led to the union School with the Bible (Een School met den Bijbel) in January 1879.[247] Its members collected and distributed donations for private Orthodox Protestant schools.[248] Another faction of the petition movement decided to take a more radical stance. They used the parliamentary decision as a symbol of political injustice to strength their argument that new methods of political agitation

luyden" and its meaning, see Kuiper, "De weg van het volk"; Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2; van Helden, "De 'kleine luyden' van Abraham Kuyper."

[241] "uit de openbare kas" Wijk, "Een woord over het Anti-Schoolwet Verbond," 9.

[242] "De 'Christelijke' school (…) moet uit de private beurs der belanghebbenden worden gesticht en onderhouden" Wijk, 10.

[243] This happened under the banner of the already mentioned Vereniging voor Christelijk-Nationaal Schoolonderwijs (Association for Christian-National School Education) Kuiper, *De voormannen*, 43; Janssens, *opbouw*, chap. 12.

[244] "smeekschrift (…), waarbij aan Zijne Majesteit gevraagd wordt om de door de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal aangenomen Wetsvoordagt voor het Lager Onderwijs niet te bekrachtigen" A.W. van Beeck Calkoen and T. A. J. van Asch Van Wijk, "Naar den Koning," in *De opbouw van de Antirevolutionaire Partij 1850-1888*, by Rienk Janssens (Verloren, 2001), 148.

[245] Janse, "What Value Can We Attach to These Petitions?"

[246] Figures are calculated on the basis of Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 205.

[247] Translation is from McKendree R. Langley, "Emancipation and Apologetics: The Formation of Abraham Kuyper's Anti-Revolutionary Party in the Netherlands, 1872-1880" (Westminster Theology Seminar, 1995), abstract.

[248] Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 229; Janssens, "Antirevolutionaire organisatievorming 1871-1879," 153–54.

were urgently needed. In 1879 they founded the Anti-Revolutionary Party in Utrecht. The statutes of this first party organization emphasized the belief in organizational power. Through "unification and cooperation" Orthodox Protestants could continue and broaden their political struggle.[249] The purpose of party organization was "to promote the unity of orientation under the Anti-Revolutionaries in the country, and to increase the support of the Anti-Revolutionary principles which is available among voters by stimulating private initiatives in the constituencies."[250] This statement became the leading theme of the new Anti-Revolutionary Party. While the loose group of Anti-Revolutionary parliamentarians had cherished their political freedom and acted cautiously in the school question, Kuyper emphasized programmatic coherence as a means to promote the interests of ordinary Orthodox Protestants in parliament.

3. Federation of German Workers' Associations

3.1 Education as a Uniting Frame

From a current perspective, it might seem as if the road to the democratic mass party was cleared by the changing socio-economic circumstances of the nineteenth century. But in reality, party founders had to overcome numerous obstacles and insecurities. The Orthodox Protestants around Kuyper could not rely only on their determination for political change. They also had to convince their skeptical contemporaries of the necessity of taking political action. In this process the topic of education became crucial because it provided a tangible justification for intensified national cooperation. A second example for the mobilizing forces of education can be found in German history.[251] While Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries struggled for a long time to form a coherent political strategy, developing a shared identity turned out to be an even more profound challenge for German Social Democrats. Activists like August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht had to overcome the political and geographical separation of their followers over the extensive territory of the German states, as well as the restrictive associational laws that obstructed political cooperation.[252] To make matters worse, there was a strong socio-economic

[249] "aaneensluiting en saamwerking" "Statuten van het Centraal Comité van Antirevolutionaire Kiesvereenigingen," March 4, 1879, 1, Politieke Organisaties, Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor het Nederlands Protestantisme.

[250] "de eenheid van richting onder de Antirevolutionairen in den lande te bevorderen, en de kracht die voor de antirevolutionaire beginselen onder der kiezers beschikbaar is, door opwekking van het particulier initiatief in de kiesdistricten, te verhogen" "Statuten," 1.

[251] The topic of education remained important for the workers' movement in the following decades, even though workers were less interested in theory and rather aimed for light entertainment. Dieter Langewiesche and Klaus Schönhoven, "Arbeiterbibliotheken und Arbeiterlektüre im Wilhelminischen Deutschland," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 16 (1976).

[252] In 1832, all political association became prohibited in the German Confederation. Hans-Werner Hahn and Helmut Berding, *Reformen, Restauration und Revolution, 1806-1848/49*, ed. Jürgen Kocka, Gebhardt, Handbuch der deutschen Geschichte 14 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2010), 451. For the difficult situation of

heterogeneity among the potential members who were subject to many different living conditions. In contrast to later periods, employment in factories was the exception rather than the rule. Under the broad category of the working class, domestic workers of the textile industry as well as coal miners earned their living under increasingly restricted and difficult conditions.[253] Eventually the majority of early Social Democrats were economically struggling artisan apprentices and masters.[254] This was probably the reason why at the beginning, German workers' associations were tied to their local context for the purpose of furthering special trades, gymnastics and the distribution of educational writings. The first organizations to go beyond this local focus emerged outside of the German states, also because travelling was a crucial part of the educational training of craftsmen. In the 1830s, travelling artisan apprentices and exiled German Socialists came together in associations in Paris, Brussels, London and a number of Swiss cities.[255] Most famous in this regard was the League of the Just (Bund der Gerechten), which was renamed the League of Communists (Bund der Kommunisten) in 1847. This organization established a secret network connecting France, Switzerland, Germany and Britain on a transnational level.[256]

The first working-class organization on a national scale emerged after the establishment of a parliament for a unified nation state, even if it was only for a short moment in time.[257] In 1848, the Brotherhood of Workers (Arbeiterverbrüderung) was founded in Berlin. This organization remained politically independent from the middle-class parliament in Frankfurt, abstaining from direct political representation. Nevertheless, its size, which historians estimate to have reached the impressive number of 15,000 members, demonstrated that it was possible to found a workers' organization on a national scale.[258] At the same time, the short period of parliamentary activity in Frankfurt encouraged the foundation of the Central

German workers, see also Pollmann, "Arbeiterwahlen"; Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie*, XV; Kupfer, "Die organisatorische Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie"; Lidtke, *Outlawed Party*. Reichard saw these difficult early years characterized by economic challenges and political oppression as a reason for Social Democrats to be a failure from the beginning. Reichard, *Crippled from Birth*.

[253] Kocka, *Lohnarbeit und Klassenbildung*, chap. 5.

[254] For a comprehensive study of the social-economic background of early Social Democracy see Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, 145–228.

[255] For this early history of the German workers' movement, see Birker, *Die deutschen Arbeiterbildungsvereine*; Berger, *Social Democracy*, chap. 2..

[256] Bert Andréas, *Gründungsdokumente des Bundes der Kommunisten (Juni bis Juli 1847)* (Hamburg: Dr. Ernst Hauswedell & Co., 1969), 7–39.

[257] For the emergence of political organizations in this period, see Jonathan Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals: The Democratic Movement and the Revolution of 1848-1849* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Hahn and Berding, *Reformen, Restauration und Revolution, 1806-1848/49*, 554–74; Waling, "1848 Clubkoorts en revolutie"; Frolinde Balser, *Sozial-Demokratie, 1848/49-1863: Die erste deutsche Arbeiterorganisation "Allgemeine Arbeiterverbrüderung" nach der Revolution*, vol. 1, 2 vols., Industrielle Welt 2 (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1962); Offermann, "Die regionale Ausbreitung der frühen deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1848/49-1860/64."

[258] The figure is from Berger, *Social Democracy*, 39.

March Association (Centralmärzverein), which some say was the first German party organization.[259] As the political organization of Moderate Democrats, it had no commitment to working-class independence, but supported its bourgeois parliamentary representatives with a large-scale membership structure. After the end of the revolution, the focus of organizational activity returned to the local level, where workers' associations survived the restoration, even when the post-revolutionary authorities banned the Socialist Brotherhood of Workers.

A decade later, the Liberal middle-class National Association (Nationalverein) was founded in 1859. Pursuing a political course, its members rejected radical transformation of German society. In fact, some members were related to a group of parliamentarians that called itself Prussian Progress Party (Forschrittspartei), which favored a German state under the leadership of the authoritarian government.[260] These Liberal activists feared the revolutionary potential of the masses and opposed working-class mobilization. In this skeptical environment, education became an alternative reason for working-class organization. Initially, however, German Liberals hoped that private initiatives would keep the masses away from political protest. Instead of relying on the state, these bourgeois foremen believed that schooling and training could alleviate working-class misery.[261] As a consequence, the national cooperation of workers was not a primary aim but emerged as a side effect of a seemingly innocent study trip. In 1862 the National Association sponsored a delegation of workers to visit the London World Exhibition.[262] A year later, two participants of this trip, cigar worker Friedrich Wilhelm Fritzsche and shoemaker Julius Vahlteich, decided to organize a German workers' congress.[263] When they asked Ferdinand Lassalle, lawyer and son of a wealthy silk trader, to comment on their idea, they initiated a powerful movement.[264] In his famous *Offenes Antwortschreiben* (Open Response Letter), Lassalle directly attacked the Liberal education initiative and argued that "[a]nd although it is true that now and then somebody climbs up a tower without rope and ladder, and although it is true that individuals have educated themselves without teachers, schools and public libraries (…), these exceptions do not abolish the rule but only confirm it."[265]

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[259] Langewiesche, "Die Anfänge der deutschen Parteien."

[260] A comprehensive study of this political organization has been carried out by Biefang, *Politisches Bürgertum*, chaps. 3–4; Biefang, "The German National Association 1859–1867: Rise and Fall of a Proto-Party."

[261] Birker, *Die deutschen Arbeiterbildungsvereine*, 50–56..

[262] Na'aman, *Die Konstituierung*, 25–26.

[263] "Fritzsche, Friedrich," *Biographien Sozialdemokratischer Parlamentarier in den deutschen Reichs- und Landtagen 1867 - 1933*, accessed April 16, 2018, http://zhsf.gesis.org/biosop_db/biosop_db.php; "Vahlteich, Julius," *Biographien Sozialdemokratischer Parlamentarier in den deutschen Reichs- und Landtagen 1867 - 1933*, accessed April 16, 2018, http://zhsf.gesis.org/biosop_db/biosop_db.php.

[264] Shlomo Na'aman, *Lassalle* (Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1970); Na'aman, *Die Konstituierung*, chaps. 2–3.

[265] Und obgleich es wahr ist, daß hin und wieder jemand einen Turm erklettert haben mag ohne Strick und Leiter, und obgleich es wahr ist, daß sich einzelne gebildet haben ohne Lehrer, Schulen und öffentliche Bibliotheken (…), so heben doch alle diese Ausnahmen ihre Regel nicht auf, sondern bestätigen sie nur. Lassalle, *Offenes Antwortschreiben*, 47.

Lassalle's argument was that real improvement of the socio-economic discrimination of workers was possible only on a structural level with the "support of the state."[266] These considerations transformed the Liberal education mission into a political agenda. In March 1863, the General German Workers' Association (Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein) was founded, and Lassalle became its first president. When the alarmed Liberals of the National Association realized the magnitude of this innovation, their response was a remarkably bold attempt to maintain their influence over the working classes.

3.2 Two National Organizations for German Workers

Three months after Lassalle's founding congress, a group around the publisher Leopold Sonnemann founded a second national organization in Frankfurt am Main.[267] The name of this organization, Federation of German Workers' Associations (Vereinstag Deutscher Arbeitervereine), not only sounded very similar to Lassalle´s General German Workers' Association, it also functioned as a direct competitor for working-class support. Constituted in June 1863, the Liberal organization was committed to an explicitly unpolitical mission and focused primarily on furthering workers' education in local associations.[268] The Federation of German Workers' Associations was the direct predecessor of the Social Democratic Workers' Party. In less than five years, the agitation for working-class education transformed into an openly political organization. From the beginning, the organization's leaders justified their national structure with the need to extend their educational mission. As in the Dutch school movement, the size of the membership became an important argument to demonstrate the potential of cooperation. A rhetoric of quantity was used to justify the new organization. It was no coincidence that the attribute "German" was used in the organization´s name. In a period when the political institutions of the nation were still divided among several state entities, this was a conscious decision to formally connect the scattered local associations on German territory. In this sense, the Federation of German Workers' Associations stood in the European tradition of national conventions where meetings and organizations had mutually reinforced each other.[269] The location of the first meeting, Frankfurt am Main, offered short travel distance to the many delegates from the South German region of the Maingau. Although delegates from Hamburg and Hannover were absent, the organizers announced that a diverse group "from all

[266] "Hilfeleistung des Staats" Lassalle, 47.

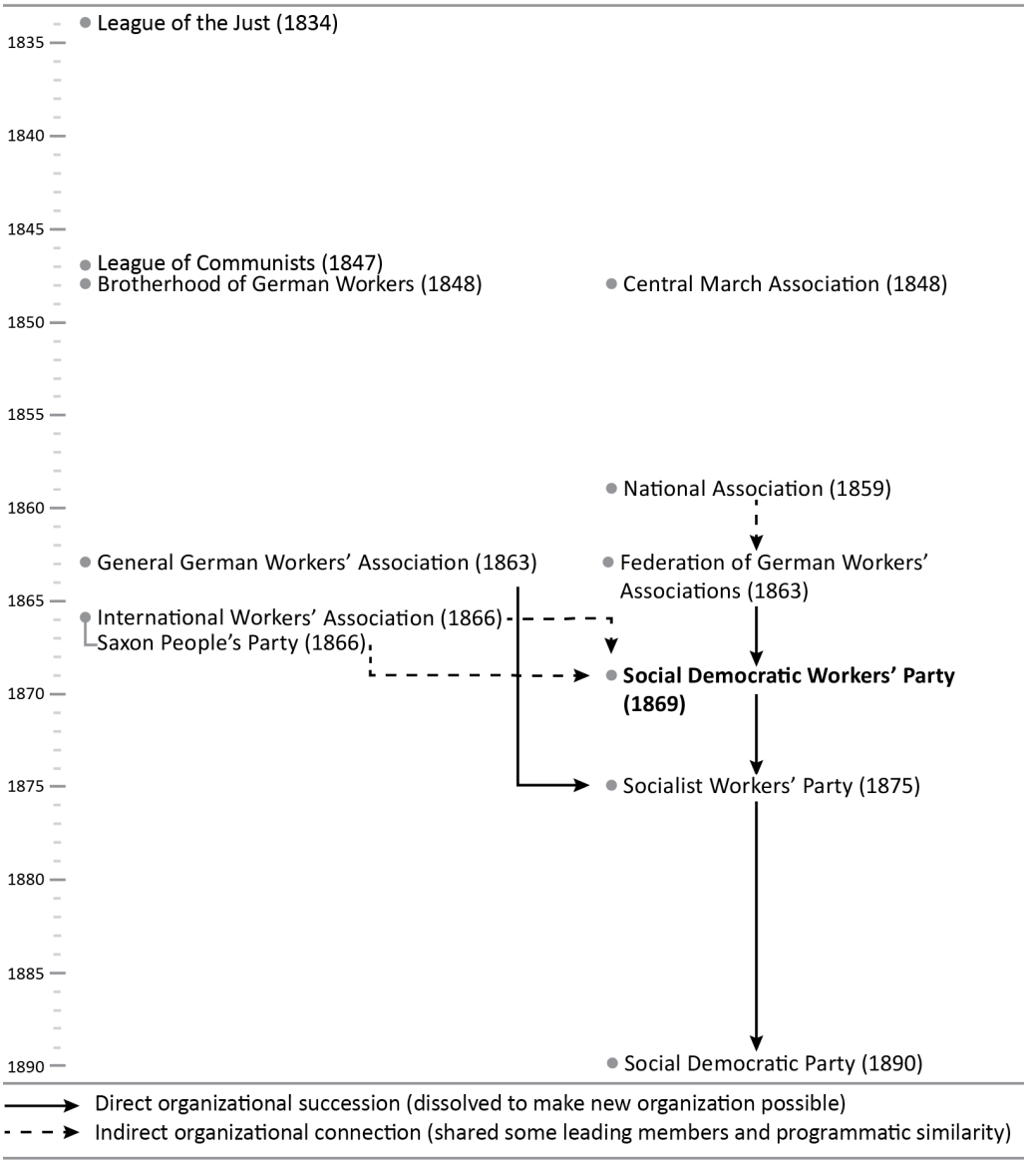
[267] Sonnemann was the founder and editor of the *Frankfurther Zeitung* and a parliamentary representative of the democratic German People's Party (Deutscher Volkspartei). Klaus Gerteis, "Leopold Sonnemann: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des demokratischen Nationalgedankens in Deutschland" (Frankfurth am Main, 1968).

[268] Na'aman connects the unpolitical character of the Federation of German Workers' Associations to the agenda of the organization's leader Sonnemann. Shlomo Na'aman, *Von der Arbeiterbewegung zur Arbeiterpartei: der 5. Vereinstag der Deutschen Arbeitervereine zu Nürnberg im Jahre 1868* (Berlin: Colloquium-Verlag, 1976), 18–19.

[269] Waling, "1848 Clubkoorts en revolutie"; Janse and Velde, "Introduction."

parts of the fatherland" had gathered.[270] This national dimension was formalized by introducing speakers with their place of residence in the minutes of the meeting. In this way, the 110 attendees, who spoke for more than 17,000 workers, could claim to represent the geographically diverse scene of workers' associations of the entire German nation.[271]

Graph 4: Overview organizational development of German Social Democrats



[270] "aus allen Theilen des Vaterlandes" Leopold Sonnemann, *Jahresbericht über die Thätigkeit des Ständigen Ausschusses für den zweiten Vereinstag der deutschen Arbeitervereine* (Frankfurt a. M.: Frankfurter Societätsdruckerei, 1864), 6, http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bibliothek/bestand/z-15523/index.html.

[271] The figure is from Ausschuss des Vereinstages, "Bericht über die Verhandlungen des ersten Vereinstages der deutschen Arbeitervereine," in *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Vereinstage deutscher Arbeitervereine 1863 bis 1869*, ed. Dieter Dowe, Nachdrucke (Berlin: Dietz, 1980), 3.

At the congress delegates explained why national cooperation was a good idea. They were drawn to the assembly by the strong feeling that they were participating in a cause that was greater than their private interests. Each of them had been given the rare opportunity of leaving a mark in history. In the annual report, they articulated this feeling: "finally find the form that can be given to the so far unsuccessfully aspired unification of workers' associations among each other."[272] Chairman, Leopold Sonnemann, said that the new organization was an "organ (…), which could serve as a common focal point for the aspirations of the workers' associations."[273] The ultimate reason for these joined efforts was education. As delegate Bremer explained, education was not only a political tool to transform workers into "free citizens."[274] He also hoped that workers would improve their material situation by attending the classes of educational associations: "All our interests point us to the educational workers' associations, because the individual is not capable of educating himself on his own."[275] Strictly speaking, these statements left open how the goals of education could be reached by national cooperation. But under closer investigation, they are testimonials of the strong sense of solidarity at the congress and point to the great achievements that delegates hoped would emerge out of national cooperation. As Bremer said, each attendee alone was not able to educate himself, but they could overcome these barriers in a national organization. The delegate Bitter from Leipzig summarized the spirit of the congress. Also for him, national organization was the best way to achieve education for workers: "The question is how do we make the educational workers' associations large. Hundreds of thousands should we count in Germany, because the larger the number the faster we come to our goal."[276]

Bitter's reference to the enormous membership numbers of national organizations offers insight into the reasoning behind national cooperation. Like the activists of the Dutch Anti-School Law League, the delegates agreed that the situation of their community needed improvement. Their approach was to start an educational movement on the basis of mass support. Looking at the quantitative scope of the organization, the target number of several hundred thousand was an unrealistic goal because the young organization had slightly more than twenty thousand members in 1864.[277] But this did not stop delegates from expressing their

[272] "endlich die Form zu finden, welche der bisher immer vergebens angestrebten Vereinigung der Arbeitervereine unter einander zu geben war." Sonnemann, *Jahresbericht über die Thätigkeit des Ständigen Ausschusses für den zweiten Vereinstag*, 5.

[273] "Organ (…), welches den Bestrebungen der Arbeitervereine zum gemeinschaftlichen Brennpunkt dienen konnte" Sonnemann, 5.

[274] "freie Staatsbürger" Ausschuss des Vereinstages, "Bericht über die Verhandlungen des ersten Vereinstages," 10.

[275] "Alle unsere Interessen weisen uns also auf die Arbeiterfortbildungsvereine hin, denn der Einzelne ist nicht im Stande, sich für sich allein fortzubilden." 10.

[276] "Die Frage ist, wie machen wir die Arbeiterbildungs-Vereine groß. Hunderttausend sollten wir in Deutschland zählen, denn je größer ihre Zahl, um so rascher kommen wir ans Ziel." 11–12.

[277] The exact figure of 22,463 is calculated based on the list of local branches. Leopold Sonnemann, *Jahresbericht über die Thätigkeit des Ständigen Ausschusses für den dritten Vereinstag der deutschen*

hopes for progress and change. At the congress in Frankfurt, impossible things seemed to be within reach.[278] The basis of this expectation was the rhetoric of quantity that became a tangible experience in the national membership structure of the organization. Even though actual membership numbers were initially surprisingly low, members had the feeling that they were part of a bigger movement. Maybe even more importantly, they shared the expectation that membership numbers would quickly rise and transform the organization into a massive institution. For this purpose, the membership numbers of local associations were meticulously gathered. The existence of these figures alone is an indication of the importance of mass support. Most local associations submitted detailed figures with the exact number. Only in Bromberg had the chairman of the local Craftsmen Association (Handwerker-Verein) Dr. Bange sloppily reported an estimate "of around 500."[279] In Stettin, Leuchner who was chairman of the local Workers' Association (Arbeiter-Verein) had likewise failed to report the correct membership numbers, noted by a question mark in the list of the annual report. The reasons for Bange and Leuchner to abstain from submitting a precise account of their membership size cannot be retrieved from the primary sources. But it is notable that their omissions remained exceptions in the four-page list of local associations. Although still not having achieved the hoped-for hundreds of thousand members, the delegates considered the current scope of their organization as a fact that was worth reporting.

The national dimension was further emphasized by the organization's own press. In 1865 its leaders started to publish leaflets, which were later circulated under the name *Deutsche Arbeiterhalle* (German Workers' Hall).[280] Quoting directly from an issue, the intention of this outlet was "through vivid intellectual exchange to nurture the feeling of belonging together among associations and comrades."[281] Historian Benedict Anderson has described how newspapers were an important aspect in the emergence of national community of the nation state by connecting individuals with a shared political interest.[282] For early parties,

Arbeitervereine (Frankfurt am Main: Frankfurter Societätsdruckerei), 15–18, accessed May 8, 2015, http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bibliothek/bestand/z-15523/3-1865.pdf.

[278] For the meaning of assemblies for democratic political practices, see for other national circumstances and periods Johann N. Neem, *Creating a Nation of Joiners: Democracy and Civil Society in Early National Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Polletta, *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting*; Waling, "1848 Clubkoorts en revolutie," chap. 7; Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, 291–338; Resch and Murr, *Lassalles "südliche Avantgarde,"* 41–42.

[279] "gegen 500" Sonnemann, *Jahresbericht über die Thätigkeit des Ständigen Ausschusses für den dritten Vereinstag*, 15.

[280] Dieter Dowe and Shlomo Na'aman, *Flugblatt vom ständigen Ausschuße des Vereinstages deutscher Arbeitervereine. - Deutsche Arbeiterhalle.* (Mannheim: Dietz Verlag J.H.W. Nachf, 1980), VII–XXXV.

[281] "durch einen lebhaften geistigen Verkehr das Gefühl der Zusammengehörigkeit der Vereine und Vereinsgenossen zu nähren" "Zur Einleitung," *Deutsche Arbeiterhalle*, January 6, 1867, 1–2.

[282] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006). Cox has related this argument to the emergence of party identities with a quantitative analysis of British electoral constituencies where after the removal of the stamp tax, partisan

newspapers played a similar role. Outside of Liberal structures, other politically oriented working-class activists in the German states recognized the importance of newspapers for the creation of a national workers' movement. Best known is probably Wilhelm Liebknecht's countless journalistic activities, which he also continued during his London exile.[283] Liebknecht was also involved in the foundation of the *Demokratisches Wochenblatt* (Democratic Week Paper), whose first issue appeared in 1868.[284] Later he became the editor of the newspaper *Der Volksstaat* (People's State) of the Social Democratic Workers' Party.

Newspapers were also an important factor in the emergence of party organizations in other national circumstances. In the Netherlands and Britain, party organizations emerged after the abolition of the stamp tax, allowing the free and permanent flow of information.[285] In the Netherlands, the Dutch Anti-School Law League did not have its own press organ, but relied on the Anti-Revolutionary national newspaper *De Standaard.* Under the editorship of Abraham Kuyper, the paper functioned as a catalyst of the national community of Orthodox Protestant. By pointing its readers towards the many local meetings of the Anti-School Law League, *De Standaard* showed Orthodox Protestants that they belonged to a larger community that had members all over the country. The future party leader Kuyper was aware of the community-building effects and directly referred to the synchronizing effects of his newspaper. Kuyper argued that, despite their many different local settings, Orthodox Protestants were united in reading the same articles: they responded with the same thoughts - even though most of them

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interests became more outspoken. Cox, "The Development of a Party-Orientated Electorate." See also the Dutch political organization of the Anti-Stamp Tax Association that was formed for an anti-stamp-tax campaign. Janse, *De Afschaffers*, chap. 5. On German territory, the period after the 1848 revolution was shaped by reactionary forces in government that restricted press coverage. Kurt Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse im 19. Jahrhundert*, vol. 2, Abhandlungen und Materialien zur Publizistik 6 (Berlin: Colloquium, 1966), chap. 10.

283 Utz Haltern, *Liebknecht und England: zur Publizistik Wilhelm Liebknechts während seines Londoner Exils (1850-1862)*, Schriften aus dem Karl-Marx-Haus 18 (Trier: Karl-Marx-Haus, 1977), 15–22. Also Lassalle was a keen supporter of the educational function of the press and demanded its economic freedom. Konrad Dussel, *Deutsche Tagespresse im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Münster: LIT, 2004), 83.

284 Dominick, *Wilhelm Liebknecht*, 134; Georg Eckert, ed., *Wilhelm Liebknecht: Briefwechsel mit deutschen Sozialdemokraten*, vol. 1, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der deutschen und österreichischen Arbeiterbewegung (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1973), xxii.

285 More specifically, one of the most underestimated factors of party emergence is the abolition of the stamp tax, which predated the emergence of party organizations. Cox has related the emergence of party identities to the abolition of the stamp tax in 1856. "The Development of a Party-Orientated Electorate." For the transformative influence of newspapers on nineteenth-century politics, see Kevin Gilmartin, *Print Politics: The Press and Radical Opposition in Early Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge University Press, 1996); Aled Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (Routledge, 2016). Also in the Netherlands, the stamp tax (dagbladzegel) was abolished in 1869, inspiring an extension of the format, daily publications and low subscription prices. Joan Hemels, *De Nederlandse pers voor en na de afschaffing van het dagbladzegel in 1869* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp, 1969), 268–74. In the German states, however, the period after the 1848 revolution saw increased press restrictions in states like Prussia. Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse im 19. Jahrhundert*, 2:124–25.

had never spoken to each other in person.[286] The British case of this study, the National Liberal Federation was a direct successor of the National Education League that was manifested in the *Monthly Paper.* As a demonstration of the national scope of the organization and the large size of its support, its editors published lengthy lists of financial contributors and reports of traveling agents and local meetings.

3.3 Politicization

After the foundation of the Federation of German Workers' Associations in 1863, it might seem like a small step from its nationally organized structure to the party organization of the Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1869. One could argue that once the community of German workers was constituted in a formal structure, its leaders could start implementing the political participation of this community. Especially older accounts of this period suggest that this was a natural and gradual development.[287] In reality, it took another six contested years before the famous inaugural congress of the party in Eisenach. Like the many negative voices in the Dutch Orthodox Protestant community, skepticism about political activism was widely shared among German educational activists. At the third annual congress in September 1865, the leaders of the Federation of German Workers' Associations still avoided political statements. Wundt from Heidelberg argued that "the time is not here yet, when the Assembly of Workers' Associations as such, should speak out on specific political principles. I think that if we do not risk political mass agitation, we should also not start such an agitation in our associations."[288]

Wundt directly addressed the congress delegates, reminding them of the non-political character of their organization. They shared the idea that education was the goal of their organization. In contrast, steering the masses towards political protest was a dangerous

[286] Velde, "Kappeyne tegen Kuyper," 129.

[287] See, for instance, the early twentieth-century Franz Mehring who starts his history of German Social Democracy with their "opposition against common suppressers, against the backward classes who derive their demands to political rule from outlived ways of production" *Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie: Von Lassalles "Offenem Antwortschreiben" bis zum Erfurter Programm, 1863 bis 1891*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Dietz, 1960), 6. See also Mayer who argued that the "falling part" of Liberal and Social Democratic activists not be "prevented." *Die Trennung der proletarischen von der bürgerlichen Demokratie in Deutschland (1863-1870).* (Leipzig: C. L. Hirschfeld, 1911), 2. Likewise, Abendroth emphasized the "uninterrupted continuity" of German Social Democracy since 1863. *Aufstieg und Krise der deutschen Sozialdemokratie: das Problem der Zweckentfremdung einer politischen Partei durch die Anpassungstendenz von Institutionen an vorgegebene Machtverhältnisse* (Frankfurt am Main: Frankfurt am Main, 1964), 11.

[288] "Aber die Zeit ist noch nicht da, wo der Arbeitervereinstag als solcher bestimmte politische Principien aussprechen soll. Ich meine, wenn wir eine politische Massenagitation nicht wagen, so sollten wir eine solche Agitation auch in unseren Vereinen nicht anfangen." Dieter Dowe, ed., "Bericht über die Verhandlungen des dritten Vereinstags deutscher Arbeitervereine," in *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Vereinstage deutscher Arbeitervereine 1863 bis 1869*, Nachdrucke (Berlin: Dietz, 1980), 20.

endeavor and could lead to uncontrollable, possibly violent results.[289] In practice, however, the organization's unpolitical agenda was already under pressure. When in the summer of 1865 Sonnemann discussed the question of "wage increase," he not only described the "organized activity of workers to achieve higher wages," but explicitly praised the "direct influence" of the organization on political institutions.[290] As Sonnemann reported, local associations had managed to influence the parliamentary agenda. While this statement still referred to education as a goal of organizational activities, the mentioned debate in the Prussian Assembly of Delegates was described as a "a very informative one."[291]

This reference to political institutions was possible because there were no clear guidelines regarding what the self-declared distance to politics meant in organizational practice. Did the social mission mean that members could simply not exercise direct influence on political institutions or should they also not address any issues that were discussed in parliament? Already in 1865, both possibilities were discussed at the annual congress, but direct encounters with political institutions were still rejected. According to delegate Hirsch, circumstances made a discussion of suffrage rights necessary: "I consider the refusal of electoral suffrage as the last remains of slavery."[292] This was a bold statement because universal suffrage was widely associated with Lassalle's organization of the General German Workers' Association that was still the main competitor.[293] Hence, Hirsch quickly mentioned that his attempts differed substantially. Both workers' organizations focused on the same class, but only the leaders of his organization had understood how to improve the situation of the workers. Instead of focusing on political mobilization, they alleviated the social question by providing workers with the educational means to rise into the middle classes.[294]

In the second half of the 1860s, there were increasing difficulties with separating political claims from the educational mission. A first encounter in this critical course was the leaflet of the second chairman Johann Peter Staudinger, who openly criticized the bloodshed of the Austro-Prussian War. In the text, Staudinger explicitly left the struggle about the consequences of the armed conflict to the "political parties."[295] But he, nevertheless, attacked the Prussian government by criticizing universal male suffrage in the North German

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[289] For a discussion of the perception of violence in connection with early party organizations, see also chapter 5 of this dissertation.

[290] "Lohnerhöhung" organisierte Thätigkeit der Arbeiter zur Erzielung höherer Löhne" "direkte Einwirkung" "Die Lohnerhöhung," *Flugblatt vom vom ständigen Ausschuße des Vereinstages deutscher Arbeitervereine*, June 1, 1865, 2.

[291] "sehr lehrreiche" "Die Lohnerhöhung," 2.

[292] "Ich halte die Verweigerung des Wahlrechts für den letzten Rest (der) Sklaverei." Dowe, "Bericht über die Verhandlungen des dritten Vereinstags," 18.

[293] On the ADAV's organizational structure see Offermann, *Die erste deutsche Arbeiterpartei*.

[294] Dowe, "Bericht über die Verhandlungen des dritten Vereinstags," 19.

[295] "Politische Parteien" Johann Peter Staudinger, "Flugblatt Staudinger: Freunde, Brüder, Arbeiter Deutschlands!," n.d., 1, Frühzeit der Arbeiterbewegung, Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie.

Confederation. For Staudinger, this was a meaningless concession; an appeasement of critical opposition rather than a dedication to true popular politics.

> Effectively, however, not much is won with this electoral law, because the electoral right in this case is only supposed to serve forming an advisory powerless body, while the authority to dispose over the pockets and the working force of the people is left to representations who have been constituted by an artificial electoral system that is nearly excluding of the working class. 296

The radical message of the leaflet caused a small scandal. Hirsch, who had spoken in favor of suffrage at the previous congress, responded furiously. When he learned that Staudinger had not written the leaflet himself, he demanded that the chairman should act according to the "great majority of German workers, a[nd] according to the requirements of the same statute of association."[297] Hirsch's appeal to "keep actual politics away from the association" was successful.[298] At the end of the month, it was announced that "[t]he activity of the association should from now on focus again exclusively on social tasks."[299]

This was only a short-term solution, because outsiders like Wilhelm Liebknecht emphasized the political dimension of the organization's most important topic education.[300] When Julius Vahlteich, a member of the General German Workers' Association, wrote to Liebknecht in 1865, he criticized public schools for preventing working-class mobilization:

> Would indeed somebody be able to prove with reasonable rationale that we could quickly reach revolution also through a purely social movement, that not the reaction is capable of building a sufficient dam through demoralization of the people mainly conveyed by the schools, then I would happily declare my views as false, because if I have to levy something I prefer taking the entire sum instead of instalments, our entire

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[296] Thatsächlich ist jedoch mit diesem Wahlgesetzt noch nicht viel gewonnen, denn das Wahlrecht soll in diesem Falle nur dazu dienen, eine berathende (sic!) machtlose Körperschaft zu bilden, während die Befugniß (sic!), über den Geldbeutel und die Arbeitskraft des Volkes zu verfügen, nach wie vor Repräsentationen überlassen bleiben soll, die vermittelst der künstlichen, den Arbeiterstand nahezu ausschließende Wahlsystem zusammengesetzt werden. Staudinger, "Flugblatt Staudinger: Freunde, Brüder, Arbeiter Deutschlands!"

[297] "große Majorität der deutschen Arbeiter, u[nd] nach Maßgaben desselben Verbandstatuts" 'Max Hirsch to Staudinger', 5 March 1867, in Schraepler, "Der Zwölfer-Ausschuss des Vereinstages Deutscher Arbeitervereine," 244.

[298] "die eigentliche Politik von dem Verband fernhalten" 'Max Hirsch to Staudinger', 5 March 1867, in Schraepler, 244.

[299] "[d]ie Thätigkeit des Verbandes soll sich von jetzt an wieder ausschliesslich der socialen Aufgabe widmen." Leopold Sonnemann, "Protokoll der Sitzung des ständigen Ausschusses deutscher Arbeitervereine zu Cassel, Gasthof 'Ritter', 2/1/2 Uhr Nachmittages," März 1867, 1, A 11, Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie, Bonn.

[300] Liebknecht's political goal of creating a "free people's state" was to be achieved by enhancing the education of workers.
Meid, "Die Volksbildungskonzeption Wilhelm Liebknechts," 315.

development in Germany, however, is not in a way that I could believe that it could happen without one.[301]

These considerations probably inspired some members of the Federation of German Workers' Associations to start connecting their organization to more radical demands. In particular August Bebel became a close associate of Liebknecht and an active representative of an increasingly politicized climate.[302] In 1867 he suggested that the workers "take the question of organization in our hands and thoroughly study it."[303] With regard to the irregularly published leaflets, he demanded a more outspoken political position and style. For him, the moderate tone did not serve the agitation strategy: "with this we antagonize the relevant elements, and others cannot be won by the colorlessness of the reports."[304] In 1867 Bebel became president of the Federation of German Workers' Associations and extended his political activities of the organization. As a member of the Socialist International Workers' Association (Internationale Arbeiterassoziation), he had founded the Saxon People's Party (Sächsische Volkspartei) with Wilhelm Liebknecht.[305] Unlike the South German People's Party (Volkspartei), the Saxon People's party incorporated representatives of the two national workers' organizations.[306] As president of the Federation of German Workers' Associations Bebel initiated a thorough reorganization process to centralize decision-making. After having being elected president, the twelve members of the leadership, which were scattered all over the German states, were replaced with a smaller seven-member committee located in a specific branch (Vorort).[307] This

[301] "Könnte freilich jemand durch vernünftige Gründe beweisen, dass wir auch durch eine rein sociale Bewegung so schnell eine Revolution erzielen, dass uns nicht (….) die Reaction durch Demoralisation des Volkes hauptsächlich vermittelst der Schulen einen genügenden Damm entgegenzusetzen im Stande ist, so würde ich meine Ansicht mit Freuden für falsch erklären, denn wenn ich etwas zu fordern habe so nehme auch ich lieber die ganze Summe anstatt Abschlagszahlungen, unsre ganze Entwicklung in Deutschland ist aber nicht der Art, dass (ich) glauben könnte es ginge ohne solche ab." 'Julius Vahlteich to Wilhem Liebknecht', 19 March 1865, in Eckert, *Wilhelm Liebknecht: Briefwechsel mit deutschen Sozialdemokraten*, 1:23.

[302] Dominick, *Wilhelm Liebknecht*, 121–22; Carsten, *August Bebel*, 29.

[303] "die Frage der Organisation in die Hand zu nehmen und sie gründlich zu studiren" Quoted in Fischer, *August Bebel und der Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine 1867/68*, xxxix.

[304] "damit stößt man den entscheidenden Elementen vor den Kopf, und die anderen sind durch die Farblosigkeit der Berichte nicht gewonnen" 'August Bebel to Johan Peter Staudinger', 4 September 1867, in Herrmann, "Zur Vorgeschichte des Geraer Vereinstags 1867," 206.

[305] For the connection of the Saxon People's Party to workers' education association, see Carsten, "The Arbeiterbildungsvereine and the Foundation of the Social-Democratic Workers Party in 1869."

[306] Dieter Langewiesche, "Zur Frühgeschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 15 (1975): 301–21. For the South German People's Party, see for instance Runge, *Die Volkspartei in Württemberg*; Gerteis, "Leopold Sonnemann."

[307] Dieter Dowe, ed., "Die Verhandlungen des vierten Vereinstages deutscher Arbeiter-Vereine zu Gera am 6. und 7. Oktober 1867," in *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Vereinstage deutscher Arbeitervereine 1863 bis 1869*, Nachdrucke (Berlin: Dietz, 1980), 138; Carsten, "The Arbeiterbildungsvereine and the Foundation of the Social-Democratic Workers Party in 1869," 370.

centralization was highly contested among local associations, but Bebel was committed to a tighter organization, linking organizational reform with increasing politicization.[308]

No longer chairman, but officially titled president, Bebel approached independent associations to join the organization, frequently reminded branches to pay their outstanding membership dues and actively offered advice to local chairmen. When 101 mine workers died in an accident in the Saxon Lugau, Bebel asked local members to financially support the victims' families. This was the first of a series of solidarity campaigns. Soon the president organized support for striking cigar workers in Berlin, the impoverished population of East Prussia and Saxon home workers.[309] In 1868, this agitation gained new relevance when Bebel appealed to his local allies to attend the annual congress in Nuremburg. Expecting a final clash with the opponents of this political course, he mobilized his supporters: "because of the program question, [it might] come to a very lively confrontation."[310] His appeal was to "use their entire influence so that the decisions offer a true picture of the attitude of German Workers' Associations."[311]

This strategy proved successful and the congress voted to join the International Workers' Association and formally take a more contentious political direction. The consequence of this profound reinterpretation of purpose and structure of the Federation of German Workers' Associations was the dissolution of its organization in 1869. From now on, the Social Democratic Workers' Party became the political organization of German workers. The purpose of this newly founded party organization was directly related to the educational roots of the movement. As Bebel explained, education was an essential pillar of the new state: "The people's state shall be tried to be brought about by enlightenment of the masses (…), and this enlightenment can be carried out effectively through the organization (foundation) of party

[308] Herrmann, "Zur Vorgeschichte des Geraer Vereinstags 1867," 153–55; Carsten, "The Arbeiterbildungsvereine and the Foundation of the Social-Democratic Workers Party in 1869," 365. Remarkably, Robert Michels would argue for later decades that institutionalization had led to de-politicisation of ordinary members. Michels, *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie*.

[309] See for Bebel's activities as president, Fischer, *August Bebel und der Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine 1867/68*, XLIVIII–LIV.

[310] "wegen der Programmfrage zu sehr lebhaften Kampf kommen" "ganzen Einfluß aufzubieten, damit die Beschlüße ein getreues Bild der Gesinnung der deutsch[en] Arb[eiter]Ver[eine] bieten" 'Bebel to Carl Bürger', no date, in Fischer, 242.

[311] "wegen der Programmfrage zu sehr lebhaften Kampf kommen" "ganzen Einfluß aufzubieten, damit die Beschlüße ein getreues Bild der Gesinnung der deutsch[en] Arb[eiter]Ver[eine] bieten" 'Bebel to Carl Bürger', no date, Fischer, 242.

branches, trade unions etc."[312] At the founding congress, delegate Klees from Buckau argued that the new party would serve "as preschool for the state which we want to create."[313]

The political organization of Social Democrats was justified by the inevitable struggle of the working classes for social and political equality: "[i]n consideration that the political and economic emancipation of the working class is only possible if it fights together and uniformly, the Social Democratic Workers' Party gives itself a uniform organization."[314] This statement was typical of the rhetoric at the 1869 gathering, but it also needs to be seen as a performative act in itself.[315] Over decades, Social Democrats activists had tried to build a national community in relation to organizational structure, including the Brotherhood of Workers of the 1848 revolution, Lassalle's General German Workers' Association and the Saxon People's Party. The Eisenach gathering has gained so much attention in the literature, because it formalized the politicization of the Federation of German Workers' Associations. But Bebel and his peers were not the only social group going through this process. Dutch Orthodox Protestants justified the creation of the political organization of their national community in a similar way. Regardless of the specific ideological orientation, the leaders of the three parties promised to unite the ordinary people against an unjust political system.[316] Even the Radical Liberals around the entrepreneur Joseph Chamberlain claimed true representation of the working class for their political organization.

The connection between political struggle and organization was the most important selling point of early party organizations. In more abstract terms, the adaption of new institutional goals can be called "institutional conversion."[317] This was not a natural process, but actively shaped by party founders who argued that the emancipation of their national

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[312] "Der Volksstaat soll zunächst herbeigeführt gesucht werden durch Aufklärung der Massen (…), und diese Aufklärung kann wirksam betrieben werden durch Organisation (Gründung) von Parteiverbänden, Gewerkschaften etc." August Bebel, *Unsere Ziele: eine Streitschrift gegen die "Demokratische Correspondenz"* (Berlin: Dietz, 1870), 10–11.

[313] "als Vorschule für den Staat, den wir schaffen wollen." Walsker et al., "Protokoll."

[314] "In Erwägung, daß die politische und ökonomische Befreiung der Arbeiterklasse nur möglich ist, wenn diese gemeinsam und einheitlich den Kampf führt, gibt sich die Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei eine einheitliche Organisation" Dieter Dowe and Kurt Klotzbach, eds., "Programm und Statuten der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei, beschlossen auf dem Kongress in Eisenach 1869," in *Programmatische Dokumente der deutschen Sozialdemokratie*, 2. (Berlin/Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1984), 174.

[315] These sorts of quotes have contributed to the interpretation that the Eisenach congress was the decisive moment where the "independent workers' party" (selbstständige Arbeiterpartei) emerged. Mayer, *Die Trennung der proletarischen von der bürgerlichen Demokratie in Deutschland (1863-1870).*, 1.

[316] Also in terms of socio-economic background, the impoverished intellectual writer Wilhelm Liebknecht and the master carpenter August Bracke did not belong to the industrialized working class.

[317] Kathleen Thelen, "How Institutions Evolve. Insights from Comparative Historical Analysis," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 229.

community required a new model of organization. Their argument contained two elements.[318] First, party founders identified a situation as unjust. They argued that national governments denied their community the rightful place in society and political institutions. As a second step, party leaders declared that the only way to change national politics was through further institutionalization and politicization. Previous organizations might have united the community behind one purpose, but the results of the formal cooperation over education were unsatisfactory. Neither the petition movements of the Dutch Orthodox Protestant Anti-School Law League nor the German Federation of German Workers' Associations was successful in decisively changing the situation of their community, but it did delegitimize the existing political system. In order to stimulate collective action, party founders presented party organization as a necessary innovation: the tool to incorporate the masses into politics. This narrative was convincing because it fit into a changing contemporary understanding of politics. As historian Osterhammel has noted, starting from the French Revolution the public debate was no longer dominated by concerns about just rule. Rather the focus shifted to the question of who should participate in politics, and to what extent.[319] State officials became increasingly interested in the lives of their subjects.[320] Conversely, inhabitants of the geographical periphery increasingly looked to national capitals, judging the performance of political elites.[321]

4. British National Education League

4.1 Birmingham and the Caucus

In Britain, this changing public sphere left a fruitful ground for the political activism of Radical Liberals. The prominent founder of the party organization of the National Liberal Federation was the entrepreneur and political activist Joseph Chamberlain. Already as a young man, he demonstrated his talent to draw attention to the limitations of the existing political system. Despite his status as a successful businessman and political leader, Chamberlain succeeded in presenting himself as a parliamentary outsider, criticizing the Liberal elites in Westminster for neglecting the interests of ordinary people. Like Bebel and Kuyper, he developed a radical language to support the working classes and promised his ordinary followers representation in

[318] This process of framing has also been described for later periods. Snow and Benford, "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest."

[319] Osterhammel, *The transformation*, 593–94; Keith Michael Baker, "Public Opinion as Political Invention," in *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 176–99.

[320] For instance, Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Joyce, *Visions of the People*; David I. Kertzer and Marzio Barbagli, eds., *Family Life in the Long Nineteenth Century, 1789-1913*, The History of the European Family 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 573.

[321] De Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit*.

national political institutions. In 1873, Chamberlain argued that a new organization was necessary for the unprivileged classes.

> The working classes are still without the organization which will give them the full power of their numbers, and enable them to seat their own representatives; but in the meantime they are not likely to give their support and confidence to those who have neglected their petitions and denied their prayers, and whose only claim to their devotion is their reputed possession of the musty title-deeds of Liberalism, which (…) are preserved in the archives of the great Whig families.[322]

Essentially, these words carry the same message as the quote of the German Social Democrats mentioned above. The founders of the Social Democratic Workers' Party argued that the "political and economic emancipation of the working class" from the Liberal bourgeoisie made a uniform party organization necessary. Even the Dutch Orthodox Protestant party leader Kuyper developed with his legendary "kleine luyden" (little people) a similar perception of the discriminated ordinary people.[323] In these three political discourses, the unprivileged masses stood up against selfish political elites.

The local roots of Chamberlain's political activities were situated in Birmingham, where the controversial organization of the National Liberal Federation soon became known as the *Caucus*.[324] At the beginning the term Caucus was not tied to a specific organization, but broadly associated with the intensified use of electoral organization in American politics.[325] The first commentator to use the term in relationship to Chamberlain's organization was the Conservative Benjamin Disraeli. In 1878, Disraeli tried to criticize the tight coordination of voters that was considered by many contemporaries as electoral manipulation.[326] The origins of Chamberlain's organizational model could be found in Birmingham where two local organizations emerged. For one, there was the Birmingham Liberal Association of 1865 whose organizational structure was used as a basis for the Liberal electoral campaign after the 1867 Reform Act.[327] Birmingham had gained three parliamentary representatives, but each individual

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[322] Joseph Chamberlain, "The Liberal Party and Its Leaders," *Fortnighly Review*, 1873, 292, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham.

[323] Kuiper, "De weg van het volk"; van Helden, "De 'kleine luyden' van Abraham Kuyper"; Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2.

[324] Ostrogorski, "The Introduction of the Caucus into England." In the history literature, there is discussion about which specific organization was called Caucus. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978, chap. 7; Herrick, "The Origins"; Tholfsen, "The Origins of the Birmingham Caucus."

[325] In Britain, it was generally believed that the ruthless manipulation of electoral practices had become a dangerous feature in the political system of the United States that was generally seen as corrupt and vulgar. Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*, chap. 3; John Coffey, "Moody and Sankey's Mission to Britain, 1873-1875," in *Citizenship and Community: Liberals, Radicals and Collective Identities in the British Isles, 1865-1931*, ed. Eugenio Biagini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 113–16.

[326] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 124.

[327] Briggs, *Borough and City*, 7, 165. See also Stephens who argues that the Birmingham Liberal Association was founded in close connection with the Reform League. Stephens, "Political and Administrative History."

elector was restricted to two, instead of three, votes.[328] The leaders of the Liberal Association refused to accept this principle, developing a scheme to circumvent the minority clause. The writer and progressive Liberal activist William Harris was the coordinator of this electoral organization, which organized the city's municipal wards as Liberal electoral districts.[329] At annual meetings, each ward elected the representatives of its own committee. Participation was free of charge and open to every citizen who lived in the ward and generally agreed with the objectives and organization of the Liberal Association. Once elected, the ward committees formed a general committee of 400 people (later this would become 600) that elected a smaller leadership committee of 100.[330] Through this organizational structure national elections were coordinated. The voters of each district received meticulous instructions as to which of the three Liberal parliamentary candidates they should cast their two votes for. As the political analyst Ostrogorski pejoratively noted, the slogan was "Vote as you are told."[331]

For the 1868 election some voters were instructed to vote for the Liberal candidates Bright and Dixon, others to focus on Dixon and Muntz. Another electoral group was to cast their ballot for Muntz and Bright.[332] This disciplining strategy proved successful, and the Birmingham Liberals gained three seats in Westminster. Only their failure to gain the majority on the city's school board elections two years later in 1870 suggested that the organizing technique still required some improvement.[333] Therefore, the gifted organizer Francis Schnadhorst was hired to coordinate the practices of Liberal electoral campaigning for the coming decades. Schnadhorst, whose biography still needs to be written, was from a modest family background. His father owned a drapery and hosiery shop.[334] After accepting the position as secretary, he secured the Liberal victory in the school board elections and in the town council of Birmingham in 1873.[335] Frequently depicted in newspapers and cartoons, Schnadhorst became known as the ingenious wirepuller behind the Caucus.

The second organization behind the Caucus had its origin in a campaign that was less outspoken in its political mission and focused on the issue of education. The traditional center of British education protest was Manchester, but Birmingham quickly took the lead in the organized struggle for denominationally neutral primary schools.[336] After several informal

[328] Chris Cook, *The Longman Companion to Britain in the Nineteenth Century, 1815-1914*, Longman Companions to History (London: Longman, 1999), 62.

[329] Harris was known as the "Abbé Sieyès of Birmingham" Briggs, *Borough and City*, 168.

[330] Balfour, *Britain and Joseph Chamberlain*, 92.

[331] Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization*, 1:1.

[332] Briggs, *Borough and City*, 167.

[333] Balfour, *Britain and Joseph Chamberlain*, 92.

[334] Barry McGill, "Francis Schnadhorst and Liberal Party Organization," *The Journal of Modern History* 34, no. 1 (March 1, 1962): 19.

[335] This also had a positive effect on Joseph Chamberlain's political ascent who became the city's mayor in the same year.

[336] Taylor, "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education," 3.

meetings in the first half of the year, the city's leading dissenters around the popular politician George Dixon founded the Birmingham Education Society in 1867.[337] In addition to Liberal convictions of progress that had played such a mobilizing role in the German states, in Britain also religious motives were important.[338] Because most of the politically active families in Birmingham were non-conformists, they were united in their dissent from the Anglican Church. Also Chamberlain and his family invested the enormous sum of £4,500 in the local association.[339] They hoped that a better education system would support the economic progress of the nation.[340] The mission of the Birmingham Education Association was to gather information about the current state of the local school system and develop statistical overviews about the municipal education system.[341] Like the members of the local branches of the Dutch Association for Christian-National School Education and School with the Bible, the Birmingham activists aimed at allocating funding to the improvement of primary schools.[342] They demanded that local authorities be allowed to levy taxes for educational purposes, arguing that more opportunities should be created for children to attend school.[343]

Two years later, the Birmingham Education Association initiated the foundation of the National Education League to formalize its activities for the free and non-sectarian compulsory education of children on the national scale.[344] The plan for this national organization emerged out of disappointment about local initiatives' failure to achieve political change.[345] Drafted in the residence of George Dixon, Birmingham was chosen as the location of the founding meeting. As the popular parliamentary representative of the city, Dixon became the president of the new single-issue organization. Also the two younger co-founders, Joseph Chamberlain and Jesse Collings, were inhabitants of the industrially thriving city.[346] At the first meeting, the Birmingham delegation promised the cheerful participants that this new organization would address the education question on a national level. Their goal was nothing less than a complete reform of the national education system. Already in the invitation to the meeting, Dixon referred to the national scale of the problem that the "new machinery" would address. He

[337] Conrad Hill, *Manor and Borough to 1865*, History of Birmingham 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 382–87; Taylor, "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education," 27–33.

[338] This was a phenomenon more wide-spread in the Anglo-American context. J. P. Parry, *Democracy and Religion: Gladstone and the Liberal Party, 1867-1875* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Stamatov, "The Religious Field and the Path-Dependent Transformation of Popular Politics."

[339] Judd, *Radical Joe*, 46.

[340] Taylor, "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education," 44..

[341] Taylor, chap. 1.

[342] Hill, *Manor and Borough to 1865*, 383, 387–387; Herrick, "The Origins"; Auspos, "Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics," 122.

[343] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 34.

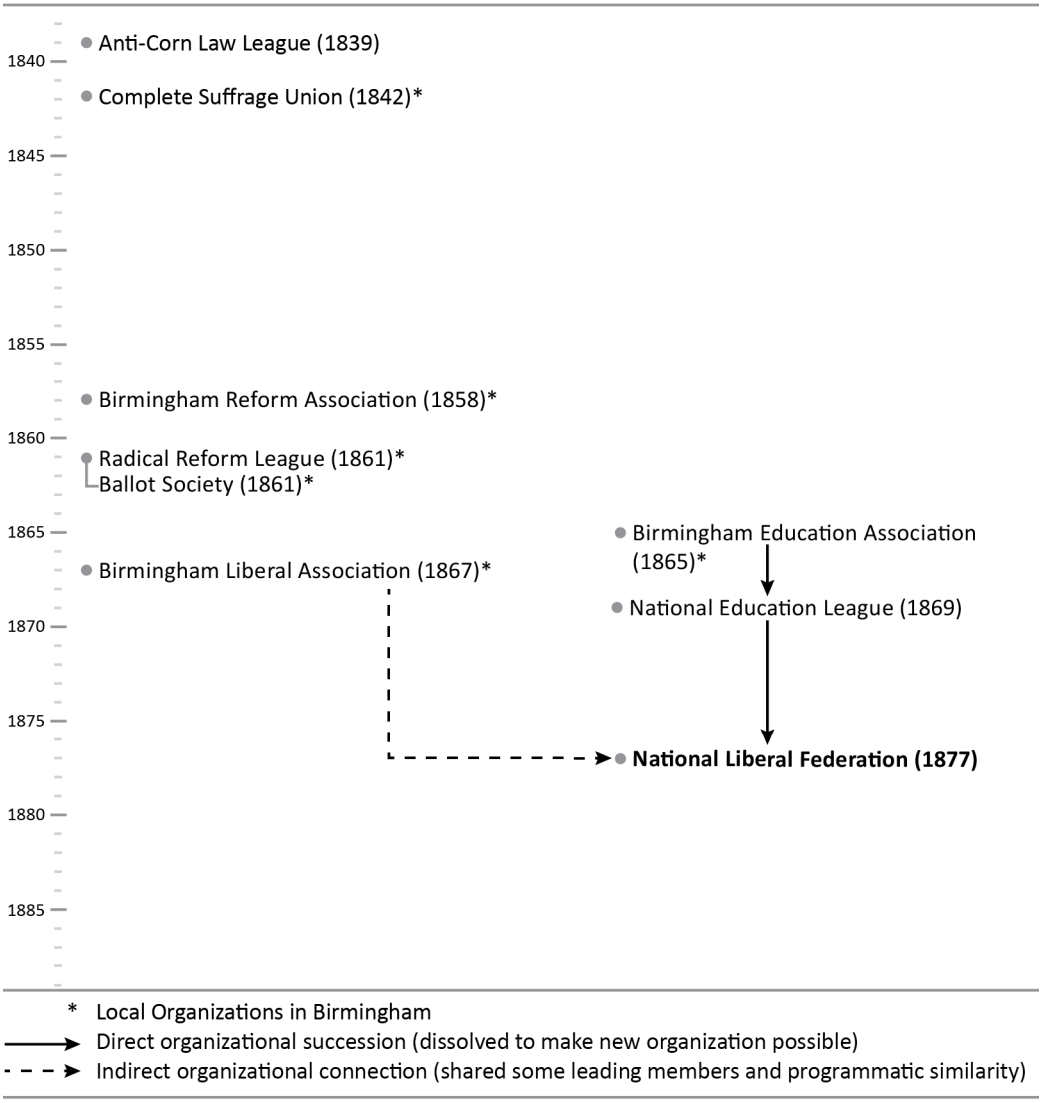
[344] Auspos, "Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics," 185.

[345] Taylor, "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education," 63.

[346] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 36–37. For Birmingham's economic development, see Briggs, *Borough and City*, chap. 3; Watts, *Joseph Chamberlain*.

argued that "no time should be lost in bringing a good education within the reach of (…) the (…) children in the country."[347] After the delegates had gathered in Birmingham, Dixon greeted them as "the eminent men who have come from various parts of the country."[348] He further expressed the hope that the generous financial support of some early supporters would be

Graph 5: Overview of organizational development of British Radical Liberals



[347] National Education League, "Report of the First General Meeting of Members of the National Education League: Held at Birmingham, on Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 12 & 13, 1869" (The Journal, 1869), 4, http://books.google.nl/books?id=VnsWAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false.

[348] National Education League, 9.

"imitated in other parts of the country."[349] In the same tone, Henry Holland, former mayor of Birmingham, referred to the many supporters, who not only included "the ladies and gentlemen present," but also "those friends of education throughout the kingdom who (…) could not attend the meeting."[350] Afterwards, Dixon read out letters from sympathizers all over the country, including from London, Birmingham, Glasgow and Bath.[351]

4.2 Solving the Democratic Problem of the Nation

In remains unclear whether it was Joseph Chamberlain's plan from the beginning to transform the National Education League into a programmatically broader political organization.[352] In the Birmingham Liberal Association he had experienced the potential of organizing voters on a municipal level. Meanwhile, members of the singe issue organization of the National Education League passionately supported the mission of changing the government's position on religiously neutral elementary education.[353] But as early as 1873, Chamberlain aggressively advocated a radical change within mainstream Liberalism in his article about *The Liberal Party and its Leaders*. Making his criticism of the national Liberal leadership appear like a general conflict within the loose group of the parliamentary Liberal Party, he claimed to speak for "[t]he Liberals who are credited with the intention of dividing the party at elections," but were "at least as sensible of the value of Liberal principles and the importance of past Liberal legislation."[354] As the self-acclaimed representative of true Liberalism, Chamberlain criticized the organizational ability of the parliamentary Liberal Party by comparing it to its political opponents: "if Conservatism be, (…) organized selfishness, Liberalism has now become selfishness without organization."[355] In this way, the problems of the Liberal community were directly related to the absence of a coherent political agenda among its parliamentary representatives. As a consequence, the diversion from its primary principles had become acceptable behavior for its leaders and followers: "leaders without a policy and statesmen without principles find their natural result in followers without loyalty and a party without discipline."[356] In this quote, there is a first indication of Chamberlain's main justification for the foundation of this later party organization. The ambitious politician presented coherent organizational structures as the tool to articulate the people's frustration with the Liberal

[349] National Education League, 9.

[350] National Education League, 9. See list of Mayors of Birmingham in Briggs, *Borough and City*, 329.

[351] National Education League, "Report of the First General Meeting of Members of the National Education League," 10.

[352] Auspos, "Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics"; Herrick, "The Origins."

[353] Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure*, 129–31.

[354] Chamberlain, "The Liberal Party," 289.

[355] Chamberlain, 289.

[356] Chamberlain, 289.

political elite. His argument was that their disregard of ordinary people's concerns made it an inevitable necessity to embark on more powerful action and a more compelling organization.

In 1874 the Liberal government called for a national election. This time, the National Education League did not get involved in the electoral campaign and even gave up its political course, after the Liberals were defeated.[357] While the organization's *Monthly Paper* continued to agitate for the education question, it became much more difficult with a Conservative government in power to shape national politics. Hence, the organization shifted its focus to philanthropical activities in the local context. Concentrating on the work in local school boards, its leaders hoped to promote religiously neutral schools in many municipal circumstances. This change in strategy was also related to Chamberlain's new political office as mayor of Birmingham. From this political base, Chamberlain had a new platform to attack the traditional elite in the parliamentary Liberal Party. In his eyes, the recent loss of the elections made a new sort of Liberalism – in content and form - even more urgent.[358] His call for a more radical political agenda was based on working-class demands for reform.

> In summing up the result and experience of the general election, it seems safe to say that the absence of any definite programme certainly intensified the disaster; and that even the adoption of the whole Radical platform could hardly have made it worse. It must not be supposed, however, that this extreme course is even now to be urged on the Liberal leaders; it is only sought to show that, as a mere question of policy, some definite programme is necessary for the reunion of the party, and that it is a pure hallucination to imagine that Liberalism can be made popular by a close imitation of Conservatism.[359]

This renewed attack on the Liberal establishment was accompanied by a remarkable reinterpretation of the role of extra-parliamentary pressure groups. Although still chairman of the executive committee of the League, Chamberlain denounced the phenomenon of the single-issue organization in Britain. For him, these politically aggressive associations had hijacked the electoral campaign and political strategy of the Liberal Party. While the League had already abandoned its strategy to exercise pressure on electoral candidates, Chamberlain aimed for a more general point. As he explained in his article, he did not deny single-issue organizations their right to exist. Rather, they pointed to a larger problem in Liberal politics: the absence of a coherent agenda. Reminding his audience of the grand Liberal victory of 1868, Chamberlain argued that only a strong programmatic alignment in the Liberal Party, could create renewed electoral success:

> In the election of 1868 these voices [of single-issue organizations, A.H.] were silent, for the question on which verdict of the nation was wanted was felt to

[357] Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure*, 137–38.

[358] Auspos, "Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics."

[359] Joseph Chamberlain, "The Next Page of the Liberal Programme," *Fortnighly Review*, October 1874, 413, Cadbury Research Library,University of Birmingham.

> be of sufficient magnitude to justify the postponement of all minor subjects; and it is only when leaders cease to lead that their followers are driven to attempt to campaign on their own account.[360]

Following his own call, Chamberlain founded the thematically broad party organization of the National Liberal Federation in 1877. At the founding congress, he argued that it was time to initiate the organization "on a new basis" so "that the people at large should be taken into the counsels of the party."[361] As NLF president, he explained to the delegates that in previous decades it made sense for "party organization" to "be restricted," because the number of voters was comparatively small.[362] With this argument, Chamberlain referred again to education as a justification for mass politics and his new form of political organization. Like his Dutch and German counterparts, he argued that under the new circumstances, "thanks to the increased intelligence of the people (…), to their increased education," it was time for a new organizational format.[363]

5. Justifying Party Organization

The three party organizations of the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Party, German Social Democratic Workers' Party and British National Liberal Federation went through similar processes of politicization and institutionalization. But in contrast to party founders' narratives, this development was neither inevitable nor an exception. Recent national studies have shown that party founders faced considerable opposition to their suggestions to establish parties as a new form of politics. The active process of reinterpretation of political organization becomes even more apparent in the comparative perspective of this dissertation. For Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries, skepticism about formalizing party organization was related to the distrust of popular politics, especially among the leaders of Orthodox Protestantism, but also German and British political activists opposed the creation of party organization.[364] In this situation, education became the decisive frame that allowed national cooperation under seemingly less controversial banners. Schooling and training was a practice that transformed the lives of nineteenth-century individuals. The creation of national organizations like the Dutch Anti-School Law League, German Federation of German Workers' Associations and the British National Education League convinced geographically separated activists of a shared social identity on the basis of the practical experience of being part of a larger collective. They hoped

[360] Chamberlain, 413.

[361] "Proceedings," 14.

[362] "Proceedings," 14.

[363] "Proceedings," 14.

[364] Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*; Na'aman, *Von der Arbeiterbewegung zur Arbeiterpartei*, 24–36; Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, chap. 6.

that newspapers, conventions and organizations would help them improve their personal and their communities' circumstances.

Education also created a social context where further institutionalization could be presented as a logical step for an unprivileged community. In the case of the Federation of German Workers' Associations, education was meant to prevent political mobilization. But, as in the Dutch and British Leagues, German activists like August Bebel increasingly argued that a more powerful form of organization was necessary to increase the educational efforts of existing national organizations. This enthusiasm for national cooperation was related to the manifestation of the national community in organizational structure and reached a peak when ambitious members expressed their disappointment with the political elites. Increasingly, education became connected to a wider agenda of improving the social status and the political rights of Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries, German Social Democrats and British Radical Liberals. While most members did not want to engage in the political battle directly, people like Abraham Kuyper, August Bebel and Joseph Chamberlain started to demand a more radical form of campaign.

At this stage education again played an important role – this time to legitimate political agitation in national parliaments. From his experience in the National Education League, Chamberlain referred to the growing education of ordinary people to justify their organization for political influence. Like his counterparts abroad, he argued that social inequality was the result of systematic discrimination and thus could not be abolished with conventional means of organization. As leaders of their national community, he and his German and Dutch counterparts invoked a rhetoric of quantity to establish a more immediate link to national parliamentary assemblies. In their perspective, the permanent organizational structure and a broad political program were needed to fight the discrimination against German Social Democrats, British Liberals and Dutch Orthodox Protestants. This argument united the three party organizations of the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Party, the German Social Democratic Workers' Party and the British National Liberal Federation. Despite all the national and ideological differences, education can be seen as the missing link between first organizational experiences and the national party organization.

III. Representation in the Making

1. Three Founding Assemblies

In early August 1869, the founding congress of the German Social Democratic Workers' Party took place in the inn *Goldener Löwe* in Eisenach. Most of the attendees had high hopes for this special meeting. No fewer than 262 delegates had come from every corner of the German-speaking states to finally agree on a plan to improve their political cooperation.[365] Chairman August Geib enthusiastically greeted the meeting and expressed his hope that they would "induce the unity of the party (…) and thereby causing the enhancement and strengthening of the so far fragmented party."[366] But it soon became clear that Geib's optimism was premature. The local daily *Eisenacher Tageblatt* (Eisenach Daily) was so appalled by chaotic assembly that it called the first assembly day "a totally failed one."[367] The party's own report of the congress vividly described the aggressive atmosphere. At some point, the discussions became so loud that neither the chairman's voice nor his bell could penetrate the angry shouts of the furious delegates. When a group forcefully approached the desk of Geib, the entire hall started to tremble. Wine bottles that served as candle holders tipped over, threatening to burn down the inn. A fire could be prevented, but the congress remained divided. At the end of the day, a large group of delegates would march furiously into the August night to leave the assembly for good.

What were the reasons behind the conflict between of the delegates? How could the promising plan of unification end in such an agitated division? There are two ways to explain the escalation at the SDAP founding congress in Eisenach. Traditionally, there is the case-specific view of those scholars who specialize in German history and the early period of German Social Democracy. These studies have shown how the conflict of the early Social Democrats was charged with both disagreement about politics and deeply personal animosities between the proponents of different camps in the workers' movement. The fight in Eisenach emerged between two groups, known as *Eisenachers* and *Schweitzerians*. The *Eisenachers* were the organizers of the congress and received their name from the town of the meeting. Most of the *Eisenachers*, like August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, were associated with the Federation of German Workers' Associations (Vereinstag Deutscher Arbeitervereine), but some were former members of the General German Workers' Association (Allgemeine Deutscher Arbeiterverein). Their opponents were the *Schweitzerians* who were those members of the General German Workers' Association who had remained loyal to the at that time president of the organization Johann Baptiste von Schweitzer. The main political issue between *Eisenachers* and

[365] This figure is from the official report. At the beginning of the congress there were probably a larger number of delegates present. Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 71.

[366] "die Einheit der Partei herbeiführen, die Prinzipienklarheit befördert und damit Hebung und Stärkung der bisher zersplitterten Partei bewirken möge. Walsker et al., 8.

[367] "eine total gescheiterde", "Umschau," *Eisenacher Tageblatt (reprint)*, August 10, 1869, 3 edition, 1.

Schweitzerians was the question of how German workers should respond to the expansive strategy of the Prussian state in the German unification process. As president of the Federation of German Workers' Associations, August Bebel had maintained his anti-Prussian position, which was further supported by the influential supporters of the South German People's Party (Volkspartei) in the organization.[368] This solidified the conflict between his *Eisenachers* and the antagonistic *Schweitzerians* who embraced the Prussian unification plans for the German Empire.[369]

Politics was not the only reason for the tensions between the two organizations. Between Bebel and Liebknecht, on the one side, and Schweitzer on the other, personal animosities intensified the already existing conflict. Schweitzer, in particular, was known for his disreputable character and "moral flexibility, naivety in intrigue and gnawing ambition."[370] The historiography also mentions the suspicious discrepancy between the ordinary working-class followers and the "wealthy man" who managed his organization in "an authoritarian way."[371] In contrast, Bebel and Liebknecht have been described as the sincere working-class representatives who selflessly prevented the Social Democratic movement from abandoning "the right path."[372] It can, however, not be denied that also these two activists contributed to the division of German Social Democracy when they used the annual General Assembly of the *Schweitzerians* in late March and early April 1869 to publicly humiliate Schweitzer. At the meeting, they accused von Schweitzer of the worst possible offense by suggesting that he acted as a covert Prussian "agent of government."[373] The angry *Schweitzerians* responded by

[368] For the VDAV's political position, see Fischer, *August Bebel und der Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine 1867/68*; Herrmann, "Zur Vorgeschichte des Geraer Vereinstags 1867"; Schraepler, "Der Zwölfer-Ausschuss des Vereinstages Deutscher Arbeitervereine"; Runge, *Die Volkspartei in Württemberg*, 62:115–16; Gerteis, "Leopold Sonnemann."

[369] Georg Eckert, "Die Konsolidierung der sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterbewegung zwischen Reichsgründung und Sozialistengesetz," in *Sozialdemokratie zwischen Klassenbewegung und Volkspartei: Verhandungen der Sektion Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung des Deutschen Historikertages in Regensburg, Okt. 1972*, ed. Hans Mommsen (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1974), 45–48.

[370] "Moralische Laxheit, Unbedenklichkeit in der Intrige und zehrenden Ehrgeiz" Gustav Mayer, *Johann Baptist von Schweitzer und die Sozialdemokratie: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung* (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1909), 182.

[371] "wohlhabender Mann" "autoritärere Weise" Carsten, *August Bebel*, 26. In particular, GDR historians have described Schweitzer as an opportunist who cooperated with supposedly dubious figures like Sophie von Hatzfeld against Wilhelm Liebknecht. Karl-Heinz Leidigkeit, *Wilhelm Liebknecht und August Bebel in der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung, 1862-1869*, 2nd ed., Schriftenreihe des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte an der Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig 3 (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1958), 58–60.

[372] "den rechten Weg" in Eisner, *Wilhelm Liebknecht*, 65.

[373] "Regierungsagent" Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*, 227.

denouncing Bebel and Liebknecht as "villains, traitors, scallywags." Bebel got even kicked in the hollow of his knee after he had finished his provocative speech.[374]

When placing the German case along site the British and Dutch ones, these conflicts appear typical for the early phase of party organization but do not necessarily provide a good account of the general process of party formation. Studies that describe the disagreements between early party founders are important contributions to our understanding of the developments behind the formation of individual party organizations.[375] This dissertation, however, studies party formation as a social process that occurred in several European countries. For this purpose, I focus on party founders' ability to make use of the changing discourse and practice of the nineteenth century. The founders of the three cases created their new parties with the promise to improve the political representation of the interests of ordinary people.[376]

Before the founding assemblies, August Bebel, Joseph Chamberlain and Abraham Kuyper had argued that a new sort of politics was needed to better include the interests of ordinary people into political institutions.[377] When finally the time had come to translate these claims into organizational structure, party founders relied on representation as a means to implement their democratic promise. This chapter analyzes the founding assemblies of the three parties to provide a close reading of ideas and practices of democratic representation that were realized in the new organizational format of the political party. There were, of course, numerous differences in the way the delegates realized their claims, but what remains striking are the commonalities in the conceptualization of how to make mass politics work in large

[374] "Schufte, Verräter, Lumpen" Bebel, 227.

[375] Abraham Kuyper was much cherished as a "guide" as well as denounced as a manipulative "despot" by nineteenth-century contemporaries, and later historians. Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, 13. Joseph Chamberlain's biographer Marsh has described an "ambivalence" that inspired early favorable accounts to see him as a "democrat" while Ostrogorski presented him as the manipulative demagogue.Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, xiii; Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, 1932, 1:vii. For example, see Ostrogroski's discussion of the Liberal Association in Birmingham where "Mr. Chamberlain and his friends, far from clearing up this misunderstanding, tried to give currency to the idea that the Association was the source and the necessary instrument of the public prosperity." Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization*, 1:169. Ostrogorski's interpretation was maintained by more recent scholars who noted that Chamberlain acted in a more authoritarian manner than one would expect from a nineteenth-century British Liberal. Balfour, *Britain and Joseph Chamberlain*, xiii.

[376] The claim-making nature of representation has been discussed in detail by political theorist Saward, *The Representative Claim*, 2.

[377] Whereas August Bebel's definition of the working class was so broad that it included everybody "suffering from today's circumstances," Joseph Chamberlain frequently referred to "the great mass of the people" and Kuyper to the "Christian people" who needed better representation. "unter den heutigen Verhältnissen leidend" Bebel, *Unsere Ziele*, 10. Chamberlain, "The Liberal Party," 291. "Christenvolk" "Publieke Eerbaarheid: I. (Ons Program L)," *De Standaard*, January 3, 1879, 1, Delpher.

membership organizations.[378] The three assemblies not only chose a representative structure for their system, but also shared the idea that overly powerful leaders were the most prevalent threat to democratic politics. In this perspective, the conflict in Eisenach was caused not only by the competition between *Eisenachers* and *Schweitzerians*. Delegates also fought over the essential question of how to create a functioning and legitimate form of representation in a national and permanent political organization.

2. The Congress of the German SDAP

2.1 Turmoil in Eisenach

The founding congress in Eisenach was a crucial event in the history of German Social Democracy. The conflict between the two factions from the beginning of the chapter is relevant for this dissertation, because it shows how party founders justified decisions about organizational procedures in the framework of democratic representation. In this sense, the first day of the congress was a struggle over the right of delegates to speak for the working class. In fact, the discussion on the first day focused on two issues that were especially fitting to their argument about political legitimacy: the accuracy of mandates and the election of the board. In order to provide a close reading of the ideas and practices that accompanied the process of party formation of the SDAP, it is necessary to critically evaluate the main historical source: *Protokoll über die Verhandlungen des Allgemeinen Deutschen sozial-demokratischen Arbeiterkongresses* (Protocol of the Negotiations of the General German Social Democratic Workers' Congress). During the congress, the assembly was stenographically recorded, but Bebel, Liebknecht and Werner were in charge of the later editing process.[379] As representatives of the *Eisenachers* they let their faction appear as honest, reasonable and orderly. In contrast, their adversaries, the faction of *Schweitzerians*, were charged with dishonest and improper behavior.

This simple dichotomy in the primary source should be treated with caution, because it diverts attention from the main frame of discussion. It is true that the *Schweitzerians* had no interest in furthering the foundation of a political workers' organization that would compete with their own General Assembly of German Workers. But the hostile attitude of the *Schweitzerians* was confirmed by the congress organizers' handling of the situation. Considering the immediate election of August Geib as chairman of the congress, the initial promises of fair cooperation appeared to be a rhetorical exercise with little practical consequences. For the

[378] Meyer and Rowan have shown that organizations whose structure fits their mission are less efficient in keeping up their legitimacy, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony," *American Journal of Sociology* 83, no. 2 (September 1, 1977): 340–63.

[379] Bebel and Liebknecht determined the interpretation of the Eisenach events also in other publications. See for instance, Bebel's autobiography. Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*.

Schweitzerians, Geib was a traitor, because he had abandoned the General Association of German Workers to join Bebel and Liebknecht in creating the new party in Eisenach. As newly elected chairman, Geib further escalated the situation when he offended his previous comrades. Confining his welcome address to the "former members" of the *Schweitzerian* organization, he excluded all delegates that still considered Schweitzer their natural leader.[380]

In response to this humiliation, the *Schweitzerians* started to aggressively question the legitimacy of the congress. Their first argument targeted the procedure regarding admission to the assembly. In general, the delegates of large workers' meetings were selected in local associations that formalized their choice with a credential letter.[381] Upon arrival in Eisenach, the organizers of the congress had collected the credentials to determine whether they were valid or not. For the *Schweitzerians* this was a reason to loudly start asking whether truly all delegates had a mandate from a local workers' association. Their main allegation was that the *Eisenachers* had abused their position as congress organizers to admit delegates without mandates. Their specific argument was that, instead of a proper credential letter, other documents had been accepted as well: "there are actually people in the hall who have been admitted due to their membership card!"[382]

Whether these accusations were accurate is difficult to establish from the sources. We do not know for certain if delegates were admitted without mandates. More important is, that, seen from a conceptual perspective, the *Schweitzerian* intervention was about more than the accuracy of mandates. In fact, the intensified discussion suggests that different types of procedure could fulfil previously abstract claims about better representation. In this sense, it is no surprise that also the *Eisenachers* addressed the validity of credentials, because they likewise did not trust the other faction. According to the *Eisenacher's* version of the story, an unnamed *Schweitzerian* had artificially expanded the size of his local constituency. The fraud was discovered only because of amateurish execution: a digit had been added with "a pencil" to increase the size of the local branch from 129 to 1290 members.[383]

These statements contained serious allegations with the potential to delay the entire congress. The *Eisenachers*, who had an interest in finishing the discussion about political

[380] "ehemaligen Mitgliedern" Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 8.

[381] This was a procedure that was already applied in the Federation of German Workers' Associations. Credential letters were signed by the secretary or board of local associations. In some cases, additional reliability was established when all local members signed the document, see e.g. "Vollmachten und Telegramme der verschiedenen Arbeitervereine für die Delegierten zum III. Vereinstag deutscher Arbeitervereine," n.d., A10 - A13, Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie.

[382] "sich allerdings Personen hier im Saal befinden, die sind einfach zugelassen worden auf Grund ihrer Mitgliedskarten!" Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 13.

[383] "mit Bleistift" Walsker et al., 3. Bracke was a member of the General German Workers' Association who challenged von Schweitzer's presidency and became a supporter of Bebel and Liebknecht. Jutta Seidel, *Wilhelm Bracke: Vom Lassalleaner zum Marxisten* (Berlin: Dietz, 1966), 43–56.

legitimacy quickly, suggested to first elect the board of the congress to make the process more efficient. Afterwards, in a second step, the credentials could be reviewed by a committee selected by the assembly. For the *Schweitzerians* this was another attempt at manipulating the outcome of the congress. They demanded to reverse the order of procedure and first choose a committee to verify the mandates. This suggestion would have put a hold on all negotiations about the political program and the organizational structure of the new party. The *Eisenachers* had to respond to ensure that the congress could take place and facilitate the foundation of the new party organization. Instead of using practical arguments, however, arguments remained in the frame of proper representation. In fact, delegates on both sides resorted to abstract terms of representation like democracy and dictatorship to support their positions. The former had a positive connotation, referring to the fair representation of local interests, what delegates thought was "right and proper."[384] In contrast, dictatorial was associated with manipulative and unfair procedures. In this way, the *Schweitzerians* could accuse the congress organizers of deliberately enforcing the premature start of the congress. As the *Schweitzerian* Lehder remarked: "This entire approach is to me as if we actually proceed in an exact dictatorial way. Initially, a provisional chair has been mentioned, but it has not been considered at all whether the board is provisory or not. Gentlemen, you have treated the mandates as if you have pried them out of our hands!"[385] Delegate Tauscher complained that "mandates were taken in a way, which I could truthfully not call democratic."[386] The only possible solution was to verify each individual mandate before the selection of the congress leadership: "I protest against every vote before the mandates have been reviewed."[387] In order to express their outrage about what they perceived as crude manipulation, the *Schweitzerians* then started shouting "[n]o dictatorship."[388]

What this conflict on the first day of the congress tells us is that delegates on both sides did not see assembly procedures as simple practical matters. Rather the discussion was charged with the broader meaning of political legitimacy.[389] In other words, the discussion in Eisenach

[384] "recht und billig" Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 9. For a history of ideas of Liberal democracy in the early years of German Social Democracy, see Bärbel Meurer, *Bürgerliche Kultur und Sozialdemokratie: eine politische Ideengeschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie von den Anfängen bis 1875*, Soziologische Schriften 50 (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1988), 196–218.

[385] "Dieses ganze Vorgehen ist mir derartig, als wenn man gerade recht diktatorisch verfährt. Zuerst ist gesprochen worden von einem provisorischen Vorsitz; es ist gar nicht in Betracht gezogen worden, ob das Büro provisorisch sein soll oder nicht. Meine Herren, Sie sind mit den Mandaten derartig umgegangen, Sie haben sie uns aus den Händen gerissen!" Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 10.

[386] "die ich wahrhaftig nicht demokratisch nennen kann" Walsker et al., 11.

[387] "Ich protestiere gegen jede Abstimmung, ehe die Mandate geprüft sind". Walsker et al., 13.

[388] "[k]eine Diktatur" Walsker et al., 11.

[389] Procedures as an instrument of legitimacy have been analyzed theoretically and empirically. See the works of Niklas Luhmann, *Legitimation durch Verfahren*, Soziologische Texte 66 (Neuwied am Rhein: Luchterhand, 1969); Tom R. Tyler, "Procedural Justice, Legitimacy, and the Effective Rule of Law," *Crime and Justice: A Review of Research* 30 (2003): 283–358. Democratic procedures in assemblies had a longer

was not futile but addressed democratic representation as the key issue of party formation. The *Eisenachers* justified their political organization by its ability to unite the German working class. The *Schweitzerians* accepted this frame and responded by challenging the accuracy of the credentials. These accusations were serious, and the *Eisenachers* also came up with examples of mandate manipulation. In turn, the *Schweitzerians'* reaction was an even more serious allegation in which they questioned the way the leadership of the congress was elected. From these fundamentally antagonistic positions, it became impossible to reach a compromise. While the *Eisenachers* managed to found the Social Democratic Workers Party on the third day of the congress, they failed to integrate the *Schweitzerians* into the new organization. It took another six years before the founding congress of the Socialist Workers' Party (Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei) in Gotha managed to unite the scattered Social Democratic movement into a single party organization.

2.2 In Search of the Best Organizational Model

Now let's look at how the discussion at the party congress proceeded after the first congress day. After the *Schweitzerians* had left the congress, the *Eisenachers* continued their discussions on Sunday morning. The discussion about establishing representative structures was not limited to the issue of the procedures of the congress itself, but also focused on the organization of the future Social Democratic party. Bebel, who was the speaker for the first agenda item, initially appeared to set a conciliatory tone for the negotiations about the "program and organization."[390] For him, the new organization had to unite two principles: "It prevents the abuse of power in the hand of a single person and enables coherent action at the same time."[391] Addressing the weaknesses of the *Schweitzerian* and *Eisenacher* organization, Bebel justified his proposal as follows:

> You know how one side accused the other that their organization (General German Workers' Association) was too strict, because according to it, all power lies in the hand of a single individual, which can easily lead to abuse. From the other side it was emphasized that through the abolition of the organization individual associations are granted too much power.[392]

tradition in the German states and were e.g. important in the club movement surrounding the 1848/9 revolutions. Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals*, 208–9; Waling, "1848 Clubkoorts en revolutie," 245–59.

[390] "Programm und Organisation" Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 15.

[391] "Sie verhindert den Mißbrauch der Gewalt in der Hand einer einzelnen Person und ermöglicht zugleich einheitliches Handeln." Walsker et al., 15.

[392] "Sie wissen, wie man von der einen Seite der anderen (Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein) vorwarf, ihre Organisation sei zu stramm, weil danach alle Macht in der Hand eines Einzelnen liegt, was sehr leicht zu Mißbrauch verführe. Von der anderen Seite wurde hervorgehoben, daß man durch Aufhebung dieser Organisation den einzelnen Vereinen eine zu große Machtbefugniß einräume. " Walsker et al., 15.

Bebel remarked that the organization of the *Schweitzerians* had followed a centralized leadership model. But the Federation of German Workers' Associations under his leadership had also weaknesses like the independence of local branches that prevented coherent political action. In order to overcome these deficiencies, Bebel suggested "a third common way" so that the new party could meet "the challenges which can be posed to a good organization."[393] This solution was meant to offer the *Schweitzerians* a respectable compromise. Later, this topic was picked up by Liebknecht who also presented the new party as a level playing field for all German Social Democrats: "we enter jointly into a new organization, after we mutually found our old organization faulty."[394]

These statements cast the *Eisenachers* in a positive light, but the final organizational structure was not as appeasing as they suggested. A first indication of an imbalance was Bebel's announcement that the new party would not be ruled by a single leader, because the "blind obedience, the cult of personality itself is undemocratic."[395] This was an open attack on the organizational model of the *Schweitzerians* as it criticized the office of the president whose powers were seen as undemocratic.[396] Bebel also pointed again to the rumors about Schweitzer's cooperation with the Prussian state to delegitimize his organization.[397] The consequence of these considerations was an organizational model that was essentially a modification of the structure of Bebel's late Federation of German Workers' Association. A board (Ausschuss) of five party members constituted the leadership of the party who decided on all party matters with a simple majority. As in his old organization, board members were required to be inhabitants of the same location (Vorort) and were elected by the members of the hosting local branch.[398] Other selection procedures were rejected for practical reasons.[399] Even the suggestion that the annual party congress elect the board officers did not find support among the delegates. Rather the congress agreed to give all party members the vote to elect their leaders in a general "popular vote of members." In addition, the congress installed a

[393] "einen dritten gemeinsamen Weg" "den Anforderungen, welche man an eine gute Organisation stellen kann." Walsker et al., 15.

[394] "wir treten gemeinschaftlich in eine neue Organisation, nachdem wir beiderseitig unsere alten Organisationen mangelhaft befunden haben" Walsker et al., 15.

[395] "blinde Gehorsam, der Personenkultus ist an sich undemokratisch" Walsker et al., 16.

[396] For a study of the working of the Schweitzerian organisation, see Offermann, *Die erste deutsche Arbeiterpartei*; Resch and Murr, *Lassalles "südliche Avantgarde."*

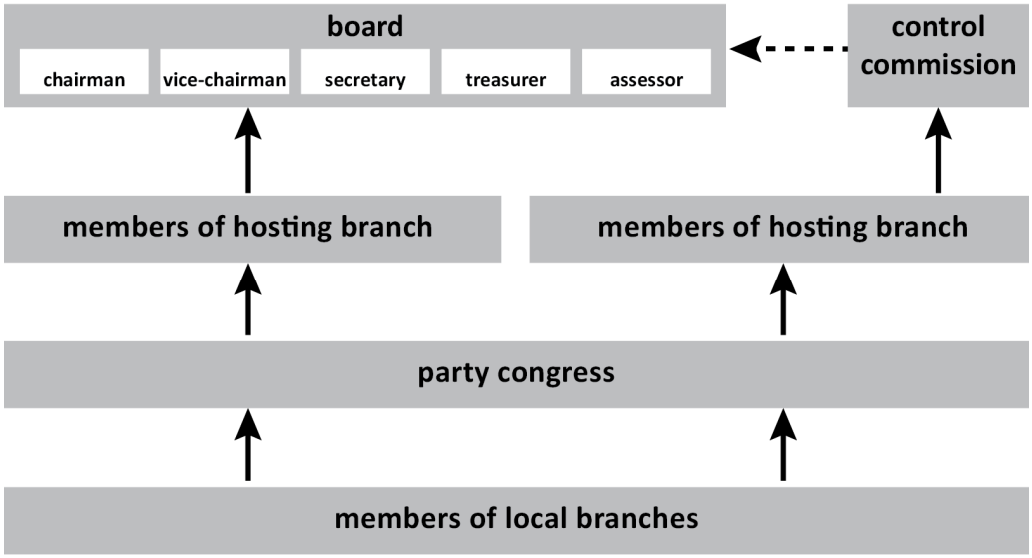
[397] Gustav Mayer confirmed this argument, writing about the end of 1866 that "Und just aus diesen ersten Dezembertagen läßt sich nachweisen, daß Schweitzer den Versuch unternahm, mit Bismarck in persönliche Berührung zu kommen." Mayer, *Johann Baptist von Schweitzer*, 180.

[398] The geographically centralized board was introduced on the fourth meeting of the Federation of German Workers' Associations. Dowe, "Die Verhandlungen des vierten Vereinstages"; Fischer, *August Bebel und der Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine 1867/68*. Also the South German People's Party (Volkspartei) adhered to this organizational model that required board members to be inhabitants of the same location. Gerteis, "Leopold Sonnemann," 146.

[399] "Urabstimmung der Mitglieder" Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 46.

control commission (Kontrollkommision) that served as another measure to prevent a strong leader who was related to Schweitzer's organization.[400] Like the board, the hosting branch of the control commission was selected at the party congress, but its eleven members were elected by the members of the local branch. Its duties were "to review and investigate the management, files, books, finances etc of the board at least once quarterly, is authorized, if it has reasonable cause and the board refuses to relief the irregularities, to suspend individual members as well as the entire board (…)."[401] With these competencies, the control commission was a powerful institution within the SDAP. Eventually, however, the congress decided that the final arbiter between board and control commission was the party congress (Parteikongress), the annual assembly of delegates, for which each local branch could choose up to five delegates.[402] This representative body not only determined the hosting branch of the board, control commission and the next party congress, but also decided "on all party-related questions."[403]

Graph 6: Organizational structure of the German SDAP



Bebel used a seemingly convincing argument to explain why this was the superior organizational model, referring to the associational laws in the German states. In Prussia, but

[400] Dowe and Klotzbach, "Programm und Statuten," 177.

[401] "die Geschäftsführung, Akten, Bücher, Kasse usw des Ausschusses mindestens einmal vierteljährlich zu prüfen und zu untersuchen, und ist berechtigt, falls sie begründet Ursache hat und der Ausschuss die Abhilfe der Unregelmäßigkeiten verweigert, einzelne Mitglieder wie den gesamten Ausschuss zu suspendieren (…)." Dowe and Klotzbach, 177.

[402] Dowe and Klotzbach, 176.

[403] "der Vorort der Partei sowie der Sitz der Kontrollkomission und den Ort für den nächsten Parteikongreß" "über alle die Partei berührenden Fragen" Dowe and Klotzbach, 176.

also in other states, for instance, Bavaria, the cooperation of local associations in larger unions was prohibited and workers' associations for "political, socialist or communist" purposes were banned after the 1850s.[404] According to Bebel this was a valid reason to reject the centralized structure of the *Schweitzerian* organization

> I am willing to admit that if we would have an exemplary state in Germany, as we wish for, the proposal for the organization would have turned out differently. But because we have in Germany very different laws of association, it is necessary (…) that we seek to create an organization that is protected against these laws as much as possible; because you know well that in most German states laws exists, which cannot even be called liberal, let alone democratic.[405]

The example of the prohibited Schleswig Holsteinian Electoral Association (Schleswig Holsteinische Wahlverein) demonstrated the practical application of these considerations. The authorities had prohibited the association because its regional organization was considered illegal. This was an illustrative example, but the delegates remained doubtful about its applicability to the new party. Delegate Ellner remarked that Bebel's suggestion could not guarantee that the new party would not be pursued by the courts. It was naïve to assume that the decentralized structure would prevent prohibition. It was instead likely that the authorities would prohibit each individual local association, leading to a quick "massive dissolution."[406]

In the end, legal arguments did not suffice to win the support of the congress. Rather, Bebel had to invoke the arguments from the beginning of the assembly: the SDAP had to adhere to "the requirements of a Social Democratic organization."[407] This vague normative frame convinced many delegates. An attendee remarked that when the congress wanted to reform the existing political system, their organization had to adhere to their own political principles, because "every honest worker will acquiesce in a democratic organization."[408] In their response to Bebel's proposal, delegates returned to their criticism of the *Schweitzerian* organization as an example of unrepresentative organizational structures. Rüdt from Heidelberg welcomed the new organization and announced the return of his mandates from the association of Worms and Mannheim that tied him to the *Schweitzerians*. In contrast, Ellner remained loyal to von

[404] Katrin Stein, "Parteiverbote in der deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte vom Vormärz bis zum Ende der Weimarer Republik," *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen* 32, no. 3 (2001): 540.

[405] "Ich will zugeben, daß wenn wir in Deutschland einen Musterstaat hätten, wie wir ihn wünschen, die Vorlage für die Organisation anders ausgefallen wäre. Da wir aber in Deutschland sehr verschiedene Vereinsgesetze haben, so ist es notwendig, (…) daß wir eine Organisation zu schaffen suchen, die diesen Gesetzen gegenüber möglichst geschützt ist; denn Sie wissen ja, daß in den meisten deutschen Ländern Gesetze bestehen, die nicht einmal liberal geschweige demokratisch genannt werden können." Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 17.

[406] "Massenauflösung" Walsker et al., 23.

[407] "den Ansprüchen einer sozialdemokratischen Organisation" Walsker et al., 16.

[408] "einer demokratischen Organisation wird sich jeder ehrliche Arbeiter fügen" Walsker et al., 23.

Schweitzer and argued that his organization "is the best which exists at all."[409] Likewise Reichelt from Hannover came to the defense: "[t]hat the General German Workers' Association is against the Zeitgeist has to be decisively contested."[410] These organizational arguments were connected to the belief in the powerful role of organizational structure. There was a sense that the new party prepared the future society in which workers ruled themselves. Schilling from Leipzig summarized this optimistic feeing among delegates by announcing that this "day of today's congress" would be "the most beautiful day of my life."[411] These hopeful sentiments and democratic discourse were shared among the delegates of different political orientations. The inaugural assembly of the British National Liberal Federation also committed its new organization to representation, even though its practical implementation approached representation from a different angle.

3. The Conference of the British NLF

3.1 Celebratory Gathering in Birmingham

National historiographies have emphasized the uniqueness of specific cases of party emergence. The German historian Nipperdey argued that the "problem of organization" was a feature typical for the leaders of German Social Democracy.[412] According to Nipperdey, the comrades around Bebel were committed to organizational structure because they needed to "first create a starting point and power position."[413] Yet, in different circumstances party founders also engaged in long discussions about organization. In the political environment of Britain where political campaigns were less restricted, the question of organizational structure dominated the founding assembly of the political organization of the National Liberal Federation.[414] Like their German counterparts, the Liberals around Chamberlain aimed at creating an organization that would implement their agenda of improving political representation. Although the British party founders avoided the word "democratic," their language was as radical as that of German Social Democrats.[415] Especially the term "popular"

[409] "die beste ist, die es überhaupt nur gibt." Walsker et al., 23.

[410] "Daß der Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein dem Zeitgeist entgegen sei, muß ich entschieden bestreiten" Walsker et al., 27.

[411] "Tag des heutigen Congresses" "schönsten meines ganzen Lebens" Walsker et al., 23.

[412] Nipperdey, *Die Organisation der deutschen Parteien vor 1918*, 293. The same argument is made in Peter Molt, *Der Reichstag vor der improvisierten Revolution* (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1963), 222–28.

[413] "Ausgangs- und Machtpositionen erst schaffen" Nipperdey, *Die Organisation der deutschen Parteien vor 1918*, 293.

[414] For a critical history of the liberal British state, see Joyce, *The State of Freedom*.

[415] In 1880, Chamberlain referred to the "democratic machinery" of the NLF in a letter to the *Times*. Quoted in Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978, 143.

was used to describe organizational structure and procedures.[416] The founding congress in Birmingham became known for its popular character. The public figure of the day was the distinguished Liberal leader William Gladstone who was greeted by a cheerful crowd at Birmingham railway station.[417] Before Gladstone's arrival, the public had already listened to a band playing festive music. The attending ladies wore blue ribbons to express their support for Birmingham Liberalism. Young people sold beer to the waiting audience in streets decorated with colorful banners. When Gladstone's carriage finally moved towards the city center, the masses were "on their tiptoe, both literally and figuratively, to catch if but a glance of the illustrious visitor."[418] After this impressive procession, Gladstone spoke in front of a "Great Meeting" in Bingley Hall that usually served as an exhibition space.[419] Hosting everything from cattle shows to political rallies, this center of social and political life was the considered the appropriate place for the mass audience of an estimated 30,000 people.[420]

In contrast, the assembly during the first half of the day was much more exclusive with more than 350 delegates from 93 locations nominated to attend the meeting.[421] Just as their German counterparts had done, the organizers in Birmingham used a protected setting to ensure the success of their inaugural congress. Here, too, the political mission of the new party was directly connected to its organizational structure. As main organizer, Joseph Chamberlain welcomed the delegates and reminded them of the rapid transformation of British society.

> [t]hanks to the increased intelligence of the people, or, at all events, to their increased education – thanks to the greater interest which, owing to the cheap press, is felt in political affairs – and thanks, above all, to the extension of the franchise, it has now become necessary, as indeed it was always desirable, that the people at large should have a share in its control and management.[422]

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[416] The controversial term "democratic" was associated with the revolutions on the European and American continents. See Innes and Philp, *Re-Imagining Democracy*; Saunders, "Democracy"; Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote*.

[417] Gladstone's rhetorical style has been often compared to that of the German workers' leaders August Bebel and Ferdinand Lassalle. Velde, "Ervaring en zingeving in de politiek," 519; Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2; Eugenio F. Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone, 1860-1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), chap. 7. For an analysis of the religious roots of Gladstone's political style see Parry, *Democracy and Religion*; Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord." See also Gladstone's biography by H. C. G. Matthew, *Gladstone 1809-1898* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[418] "Mr. Gladstone at Birminghan," *Leeds Mercury*, June 1, 1877, 7, British Library Newspapers, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4XmE25.

[419] Russia's war with Turkey explains the exact timing of the foundation conference in 1877. See Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*, 92–93.

[420] "Mr. Gladstone at Birminghan," 7. Bingley Hall had served before as a place for a populist form of activism, even for the evangelical preachers Moody and Sankey in 1875 see Coffey, "Moody and Sankey's Mission to Britain, 1873-1875," 115.

[421] "Proceedings," 9–13.

[422] "Proceedings," 14.

The justification for this proposal had been made earlier in the *Fortnightly Review* – the journal of Chamberlain's friend and later biographer of William Gladstone, John Morley. In his article on the *The Liberal Party and Its Leaders*, Chamberlain had connected normative with practical arguments to demand a new organization for politics. For him, excluding the majority of the British people from the decision-making process was morally wrong. The growing size of the working class required an adjustment of Liberal politics: "The last census shows that nearly three-fourths of the people belong to the wage-earning class, and this great majority is possessed with a deep sense of injustice and wrong, and with a belief that it is the victim of class legislation of an aggravated kind."[423]

Chamberlain was not the first commentator to notice the social changes of his time, but he was remarkably successful in using them as a justification for his plans.[424] Reflecting the general feeling of many delegates at the conference, he pointed towards their feeling that the British political system had a serious problem with representation. An increasing number of citizens had the education and the political means to make reasoned political decisions. Yet, to Chamberlain's disappointment, displayed in his typically dramatic style, the political elite had failed to respond to the changing size and social composition of the people.[425] After years of miscalculated political campaigns, "the time is coming when we must again trust to the popular initiative."[426] The newly founded party organization would establish a new approach to politics based on an advanced form of representation. In short, the practical aim of the conference was "to secure local representative associations, and then to wield them together into a central organization, itself representative in its turn of these popular associations, and forming what I may call a national convention to promote Liberal objects."[427] Using the word convention, Chamberlain connected his new organization to the British tradition of political gatherings, probably also hinting at the controversial party meetings in the United States or the convention during the French Revolution.[428] The delegates supported Chamberlain's promise of

[423] Chamberlain, "The Liberal Party," 292.

[424] Political protests were widely covered in British newspapers, accommodating the Victorian hunger for sensation. Michael Diamond, *Victorian Sensation, or, the Spectacular, the Shocking and the Scandalous in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Anthem Press, 2003), 2. On the discussion about electoral reform, see Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote*. For an example of a philanthropic response to the changing circumstances of the nineteenth century, see Roberts, "Head versus Heart?"

[425] For the history of the parliamentary Liberal Party, see Vincent, *The Formation of the Liberal Party*; Rossi, *The Transformation of the British Liberal Party*; Parry, *The Rise and Fall*, 7–12.

[426] "Proceedings," 17.

[427] "Proceedings," 16.

[428] For the British tradition of conventions and debating societies, see T. M. Parssinen, "Association, Convention and Anti-Parliament in British Radical Politics, 1771-1848," *The English Historical Review* 88, no. 348 (July 1, 1973): 504–33; Miller, "Petition! Petition!! Petition!!!"; van Rijn, *De eeuw van het debat*. In the American context, the term convention was related to party politics, see e.g. Reeve Hudson, "Can 'The People' Speak? Popular Meetings and the Ambiguities of Popular Sovereignty in the United States, 1816–1828 63," in *Organizing Democracy: Reflections on the Rise of Political Organizations in the*

organizational innovation with cheerful acclamations of approval. William Harris, vice-president of the Birmingham Liberal Association, embraced Chamberlain's interpretation that their political orientation needed internal reform, arguing that "it was not that Liberalism was weak."[429] The true problem was that they were "disorganized, and required some new measures of organizing its forces which would be sufficient to control it."[430]

Harris' comment points to the position of Liberals in the political system of Britain. As proponents of the Radical branch of the Liberal movement, they intended to extend their share in the powerful parliamentary Liberal Party. In contrast to the German Social Democrats who had no hope to form a government in the near future, Chamberlain and his peers had a realistic chance of becoming part of a Liberal government. But, despite this different relationship with political power, the Radical Liberals shared Social Democrats' commitment to representation. An important component was establishing proper representative decision-making procedures at the conference in Birmingham. In this context, there was less focus on the accuracy of mandates. British Liberals generally accepted that the presidents of Liberal associations were the natural representatives of their constituencies' interests. Great attention was given to ensuring that delegates had enough time to make their argument. The delegates quickly established that the assembly should vote separately on each resolution so that each of them could make a nuanced decision, rather than credulously voting on the resolutions "in block."[431] Moreover, when delegates thought that the proposed organizational structure did not match the intentions of their constituency, they had the right to propose changes. If these proposals were seconded by another delegate, they had to be discussed at the conference. This was not an empty promise; the report of the meeting shows that this principle was taken seriously. Only after a thorough discussion did the delegates cast their votes.

It is important to note that these formal procedures did not mean that the outcome of the Birmingham conference was completely open. In the literature we find numerous references to the dominance of the Birmingham delegation at the conference. Before the inaugural meeting, Chamberlain had instructed his friend and co-founder Jesse Collings to prevent Manchester and Leeds "to join Birmingham in starting the Federation."[432] Although Collings had partially disregarded this suggestion by making Leeds (and Sheffield and Newcastle) co-inviters to the assembly, Chamberlain did his best to control the admission procedure.[433] Participation in the conference was restricted to delegates who represented associations that adhered to the principles of "popular basis" developed by the Birmingham

Nineteenth Century, ed. Henk te Velde and Maartje Janse (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 63–84.

[429] "Proceedings," 21.

[430] "Proceedings," 21.

[431] "Proceedings," 34.

[432] Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, 1932, 1:259.

[433] Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978, 148.

Liberal Association under Chamberlain's leadership.[434] The implementation of this vague criterion was administered by the conference organizers of the Birmingham group around Chamberlain, who used it to exclude unwelcome associations.[435] Nevertheless, comparison reveals that these sorts of exclusionary measures were not limited to British Liberalism and can even be found in the case of German Social Democrats. In the period before the Eisenach congress, more than sixty Social Democratic activists had signed the call for a unified party.[436] Not all of them were equally involved in the composition of its organizational structure. Bebel was the main initiator and responsible for explaining the new organization to the congress. Together with Liebknecht he had rejected competing drafts like the one proposed by the secretary of the International Workers' Association Johann Philipp Becker.[437] Despite their attempts to control the outcome of the congress, the discussions at the assemblies of the two party organizations show that their founders believed that representation was the most important frame of justification for a political party, but they also acknowledged that its implementation required a functioning organization.[438] To guarantee a successful assembly party founders like Chamberlain and Bebel used their leading role in the movement to channel delegates' debates according to their plans.

3.2 The Danger of Manipulation

Does this mean that the promise of improved representation was only a pretext to achieve political power? The paramount role of the representative frame in Eisenach and Birmingham suggests otherwise. The extensive, serious discussions were necessary, because delegates had internalized the idea that only a representative organization could help reform their political system. This can be also seen in their attempt to implement advanced procedures of representation in the structures of their party organizations. As we will see, there was a general concern about how to regulate the relationship between the central leadership and local branches. The Birmingham assembly, too, feared that powerful leaders could abuse their influence over ordinary members. This concern was rooted in a broader nineteenth-century discussion about the ability of populist leaders to control and manipulate ordinary followers.[439] In the National Liberal Federation this was a pressing issue in regard to the political mission of

[434] "Proceedings," 7.

[435] Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*, 93–95.

[436] Leidigkeit, *Wilhelm Liebknecht und August Bebel*, 185–87.

[437] Dominick, *Wilhelm Liebknecht*, 153–54.

[438] Anne Heyer, "Manipulation or Participation? Membership Inclusion in the Party Organizations of the German Social Democratic Workers' Party and the British National Liberal Federation," in *Organizing Democracy - Reflections on the Rise of Political Organizations in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Henk te te Velde and Maartje Janse (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 185–210.

[439] Biagini, *Currents of Radicalism*, chap. 7; Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*; Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, 300–306.

the organization. Chamberlain had justified the conference by citing the need to empower common Liberals within the parliamentary party. The NLF president had promised that "the candidates and the policy of the party should be acceptable" to ordinary followers who "should take part in the discussions by which (…) candidates are selected and (…) policy is settled."[440] Most attendees of the conference responded to this proposal of improved representation with great enthusiasm. There was a strong element of populism in their understanding of representation. Instead of trusting the political elites, they emphasized the right and the ability of ordinary people to make their own political decisions.[441] Delegate Clark, president of the Leeds Liberal Association, followed Chamberlain in pointing to previous Liberal achievements that "had been accomplished by agitation out of doors, which had forced upon the Government (…) carrying those measures that the people demanded."[442] Following the Radical discourse of this period, for him this strategy was the right one - the people could function as a healthy correction to elitist politics.[443] Other delegates shared Clarke's enthusiasm and praised popular judgment as superior to the decisions of selfish parliamentarians in the House of Commons. Like Chamberlain, they expected that this re-orientation of Liberal politics could change the power balance in parliament to the advantage of Liberals. The delegate Blake told the conference that he won his parliamentary office by embracing popular politics. His electoral campaign was built on "simply trusting the people."[444] This made only one conclusion possible: "[i]n nine cases out of ten the people were right, and they would not trust in the people in vain."[445] When Reverend O'Connor from Manchester offered his support, the conference even secured theological approval. In his enthusiasm, O'Connor told the assembly that "he prayed that the will of the people might be done, because he believed that the will of the people was the will of God."[446] The delegates welcomed this bold statement with loud applause. They shared the general feeling that they stood on the right side of history. Listening to the people brought moral superiority and, hopefully, also parliamentary majority. Yet, the assembly in Birmingham also had to find ways to implement procedures that would enable the participation of ordinary members in the decision-making process. For this purpose, they focused on

[440] "Proceedings," 15.

[441] In the extensive discussion on populism, this is an essential component of every definition. See, for instance, Margaret Canovan, "Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy," *Political Studies* 47, no. 1 (March 1999): 2–16.

[442] "Proceedings," 23.

[443] Saunders, "Democracy."

[444] "Proceedings," 26.

[445] "Proceedings," 26. This sort of populist rhetoric where the people were in the focus of justification could be also found in the Dutch ARP and the German SDAP. For the ambivalent role of populism in democracies, see Canovan, "Trust the People!"

[446] "Proceedings," 35. The phrase Vox populi vox dei originates from an eighteenth-century pamphlet whose authorship is unknown. J. P. Kenyon, *Revolution Principles: The Politics of Party, 1689-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 209–10.

restricting powerful leaders in order to prevent the dominance of a demagogically skilled individual.

In the practical implementation of this principle the delegates in Birmingham differed remarkably from their German counterparts. In Eisenach delegates had also expressed concern about the harmful consequences of an authoritarian president, embodied in the persona of Schweitzer. Rooted in the long tradition of Social Democratic people's assemblies, they intended to make sure that every ordinary member had the opportunity to climb up on the stage and become a leader.[447] Applied to the organizational structure of the new party, this meant that leadership power was shared between different offices in the SDAP board. Additional measures like the instalment of the control commission further manifested the division of power within the future party organization.

The delegates in Birmingham preferred another solution to the problem of powerful leaders that better fit the organizational tradition of Liberalism.[448] This meant that instead of three leading institutions, the NLF relied on two major bodies. The first one was the general committee, which was the body for "any questions" that emerged in the daily routine of the organization.[449] Its members met at least once a year. The general committee included the offices of "a President, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary" and could add up to 25 members to its body.[450] This general committee could be extended by appointing one of those men "who still would help the federation by their knowledge, or sympathy, or purse."[451] The formal functions of the general committee were described by these three rather general points:

1. To aid in the formation of new Liberal Associations based on popular representation, and generally to promote the objects of the Federation.
2. To summon the annual meeting of the Council, or any other general meeting of Council which it may deem proper.
3. To submit to the Federated Associations political questions and measures upon which united action may be considered desirable. [452]

At the conference in Birmingham, the president of the Birmingham Liberal Association J. S. Wright focused on the third point and argued that the general committee was limited to "initiative powers," but the authority to decide on political actions was with the "general body

[447] Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, 300–306.

[448] See Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism*, 174. Concerns about independence were also known to Conservative Party politicians. Vernon, *Politics and the People*, 172–77.

[449] "Proceedings," 33.

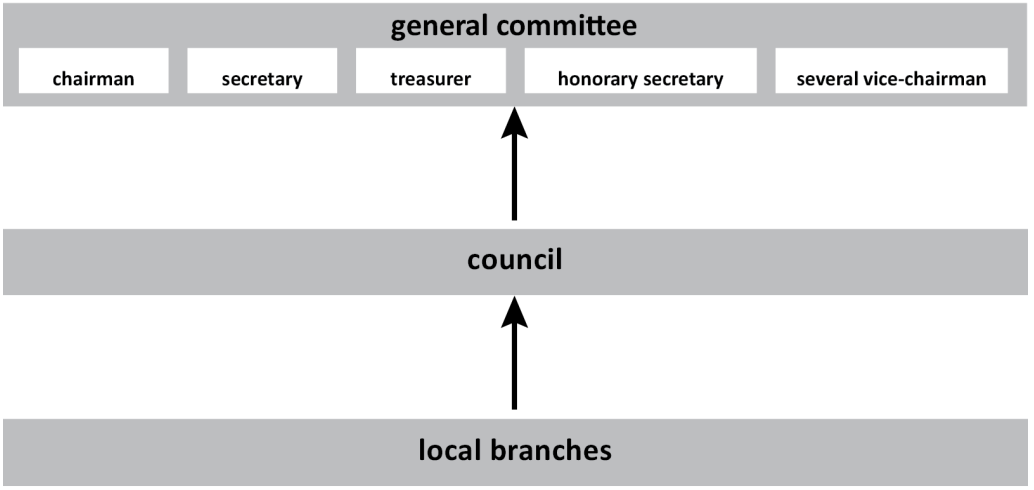
[450] "Proceedings," 4. In 1877, the NLF appointed at its first congress 15 vice-presidents. "Proceedings," 2.

[451] "Proceedings," 33.

[452] "Proceedings," 4–5.

of representatives of different associations."[453] All important matters of the organization were to be determined by the delegates of local associations. The organizational body that brought together the delegates of local associations was called the council. This second important institution was the most comprehensive one, bringing the delegates of the local branches and the officers of the institution together. In one national assembly, this "general body" was supposed to make the fundamental decisions about the actions of local branches at its annual gathering.[454] The council also played the major role in determining the leadership of the organization as its delegates elected the officers of the NLF.

Graph 7: Organizational structure of the British NLF



At the beginning of the conference, Chamberlain had announced that his organization guaranteed independence of local branches and would not interfere with their political orientation. Although the president had earlier written about a new Liberal program, he abandoned this idea for the new organization.[455] For the delegates this commitment to local political autonomy was an important prerequisite of support. Spence Watson, delegate for the Liberal Association in Newcastle-on-Tyne, was relieved when he heard that the NLF granted local association political freedom: "[a]t first he had some fear, when this thing was mentioned to him, lest it should be allowed in any way to interfere with the independence of their local associations. That fear had been very much dissipated."[456] The chairman of the Liberal Association in Portsmouth, Alderman Baker, agreed to "the course now proposed" for the new organization with independent local branches. In fact, his support was "the more heartily

[453] "Proceedings," 33.

[454] "Proceedings," 33.

[455] Chamberlain, "The Liberal Party"; Chamberlain, "The next Page."

[456] "Proceedings," 28.

because (…) they were not under the obligation of accepting a particular programme. (Hear, hear)."[457]

In practice, there was a certain amount of flexibility in the independence of local branches. At the conference, Chamberlain introduced three general political principles to clarify what their approach to Liberalism meant: "the right of every man to participate in the government of the country, on the impartial administration of justice, or the assertion of complete religious equality."[458] These points were not considered an official program, but they can be seen as a means to prescribe the political agenda of the NLF. Chamberlain described their status by announcing that he did not "believe that there is any difference of opinion amongst Liberals in the country upon simple elementary questions of Liberal policy."[459] Not all delegates were willing to accept this argument for their formally independent associations. Davies from Greenwich remarked that "[h]e could not agree altogether with the very admirable speech (…) by their esteemed friend Mr. Chamberlain."[460] The reason for his opposition was that "the principal object of this section was universal suffrage."[461]

Davies' intervention was not successful, and the congress sided with Chamberlain and responded aggressively to Davies' comment with "[c]ries of "No, no."[462] Another delegate immediately intervened and "rose to a point of order" to remind the assembly that "[i]f they were to consider general principles of Liberal policy there would be no end to the Conference."[463] Although applause followed this intervention, Davis made another attempt to express his concerns about the political agenda. But the leaders of the conference were determined to prevent further obstruction and discussion about the highly contested topic of suffrage. After Davis had made his second attempt to express his concerns, we learn from the protocol that Chamberlain as "chairman ruled Mr. Davis out of order, and he sat down."[464] The discussion over the political mission of the NLF was terminated.

Despite its paramount role in Birmingham, independence of local branches was not the only possible tool party organizations had to restrain their political leaders. The diversity of nineteenth-century party organizations becomes apparent if one looks again briefly at the case of the German Social Democrats. For the comrades around Bebel, the political program was a means to strengthen membership influence on the strategy of the party. In Eisenach, Bebel explained that exactly because the SDAP program impeded single-handed leadership decisions,

[457] "Proceedings," 25.
[458] "Proceedings," 17.
[459] "Proceedings," 16–17.
[460] "Proceedings," 34.
[461] "Proceedings," 34. Universal suffrage was a contested issue throughout the nineteenth century, see Saunders, "Democracy."
[462] "Proceedings," 34.
[463] "Proceedings," 34.
[464] "Proceedings," 34.

the congress needed to formalize its political agenda in a written program: "But, my gentlemen, it is equally also necessary, if we want to found a new organization today, that we speak out clearly and certainly about the direction in which our party should be let, that we speak out clearly and certainly about the goals that our party should and must follow."[465] A formally written and detailed political manifesto tied Social Democratic leaders to the decisions of the representative party congress. Delegates had the power to make political decisions. They were the ones to discuss and vote about the specific points of the party's political manifesto. Whereas in Birmingham the NLF delegates embraced their local independence, in Eisenach the existence of a formal Social Democratic program guaranteed the power of local branches and was, therefore, never questioned.

4. The Gathering of the Preliminary Central Committee of the ARP

4.1 Democrats against Aristocrats in Utrecht

Did these considerations about organizational procedures also matter in the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Party? In the previous chapter, I showed that the emergence of the ARP was related to a struggle over the mass mobilization of the Orthodox Protestant movement in the 1870s. Before the foundation of the party in the year 1879, the leader of the Anti-Revolutionary movement, Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, distanced himself from the members of the small parliamentary group of Anti-Revolutionaries. In Groen's view, these parliamentarians did not sufficiently agitate on the most pressing political topic of the time: education. This conflict made coordinated parliamentary action difficult among Anti-Revolutionaries and eventually contributed to the foundation of the party organization.[466] Like their colleagues abroad, Dutch historians have suggested different explanations for the conflict among Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries. Disagreement about the political course was accompanied by a personal dimension, driven by miscommunication, disappointed trust and inflated egos. In particular, Groen van Prinsterer interpreted his former allies' reservations in the school question as a personal betrayal.[467] The father of the Anti-Revolutionary ideology could not accept that his parliamentary faction repeatedly failed to achieve policy change. In response to this growing frustration, but without the direct support of Groen, the younger Abraham Kuyper developed a new approach to politics outside of the traditional elite, campaigning for a political program and a formal membership organization. After Groen's death in 1876, Kuyper used extra-

[465] "Aber, meine Herren, es ist, wenn wir heute eine neue Organisation gründen wollen, auch zugleich notwendig, daß wir uns klar und bestimmt über die Richtung, in welcher die Partei geleitet werden soll, daß wir uns klar und bestimmt über die Zielpunkte aussprechen, die die Partei verfolgen soll und muß." Walsker et al., "Protokoll," 16.

[466] For an overview of the early phase of the ARP, see e.g. Kuiper, *Herenmuiterij*; Deursen, "Van antirevolutionaire richting"; Janssens, *opbouw*.

[467] Hartogh, "Groen van Prinsterer"; Kuiper, *Herenmuiterij*, 16–17.

parliamentary agitation to push for a new approach to political representation - a strategy that was similar to that used by the German Social Democrats. The comrades around Bebel also relied on membership organization to make their voices heard in politics. There was also an important connection between the conflict of Anti-Revolutionaries and Joseph Chamberlain's opposition to the parliamentary leaders of the Liberal Party. The fact that Kuyper was the son of an ordinary Protestant minister and his opponents were primarily aristocrats further escalated the dispute, not unlike the entrepreneurial Chamberlain's struggle with the Whigs in the parliamentary Liberal Party. In all three cases, the disagreement was about the proper form of political representation. The political newcomers demanded from the traditional parliamentary elite a stronger role for ordinary people.[468] Like his German and British counterparts, Kuyper used controversial terminology to emphasize the innovative aspect of his organization. In a *De Standaard* article in 1875, he argued "that no government authority can be held, if it is not carried by the belief in authority by the people," but emphasized that this did not mean that "the popular will" was "the source" of government authority.[469] Even the contested term "democratic" was incorporated into his language, when he wrote as early as in 1874 that "if Europe has a future, then it will be one of democracy."[470] After the foundation of the ARP, he would defend a "Christian-democratic development" of politics against the conservative aristocrats of the party.[471]

Despite this democratic rhetoric, at the ARP inaugural assembly in Utrecht, the delegates were not as committed as British Radical Liberals or German Social Democrats to rigid assembly procedures. The "assembly of the preliminary central committee of Anti-Revolutionary electoral associations" lasted only an afternoon, limiting the discussions to Kuyper's most important agenda items.[472] The ambitious Protestant minister had spent years working towards this meeting at the cost of great personal sacrifices, including a nervous breakdown.[473] His discipline and hard work made Kuyper appear to be the ideal chairman (voorzitter) for the meeting. In this capacity, Kuyper not only offered the obligatory prayer to start the meeting but also delivered the opening speech to the meeting. Like Bebel and Chamberlain, Kuyper justified the new organization by citing the historic struggle of his political community for emancipation. Groen van Prinsterer had been the ideological leader of the Anti-Revolutionaries, but his political mission could not be completed because of a lack of support

[468] Already Chamberlain's first biographer Garvin remarked that in the party founder's life "democracy [had] to become nearly all" in comparison to other lesser issues like religious dissent. Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, 1932, 1:148.

[469] "dat geen regeeringsgezag stand kan houden, tenzij het gedragen wordt door geloof aan gezag bij het volk", "de volkswil" "de bron" "Volkszin," *De Standaard*, August 23, 1875, 1, Delpher.

[470] "zoo Europa een toekomst heeft, dan wacht het die van de Democratie" quoted in Velde, "De domesticatie van democratie," 14.

[471] "christelijk-democratische ontwikkeling" Quoted in Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, 362.

[472] Kuyper, "Vergadering van het Voorlopig Centraal Comité," 1.

[473] Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, 156–69.

and staff. In Kuyper's words, Groen "lacked a corps of officers who could spread his ideas and make them productive among the people."[474] After Kuyper had explained how the gathering stood in the tradition of the Anti-Revolutionary parliamentary politics, the delegates moved to debating the organizational structure of the future party.[475] In this situation, the delegates discussed how to establish fair procedures for discussion to honor their duty to represent their constituency. When Esser suggested voting for the draft of the regulations (concept-reglement) "in bloc", his suggestion was criticized by the other delegates.[476] Fabius from Amsterdam reminded the assembly of their duty to speak for their constituencies; this mandate surely "includes specific discussion of some points."[477]

This was the moment when Kuyper intervened to prevent a detailed and time-consuming debate. As chairman, he proposed a "middle way" between Esser and Fabius that was "to raise the issue not article after article, but free discussion of points mentioned – whose main principles govern the regulations."[478] In order to avoid a detailed debate, Kuyper suggested focusing on the essential points of the program. While in Eisenach or Birmingham delegates would have protested against the considerable restriction of debating rights, the Utrecht assembly accepted the suggestion, not even discussing the possible side effects. To obstruct any opposition, Kuyper had included the various Anti-Revolutionary interests in his proposal, making it easy for delegates to agree to his three points.

1. all political powers are represented: electoral associations, press, dignitaries.
2. no governing, but serving committee! With autonomy of districts.
3. leadership by a small committee: with a smaller one for urgent and secret business.[479]

The first point established a compromise between the electoral associations and the traditional elite of aristocratic parliamentarians. The status of the press as one of the three political powers not only strengthened Kuyper´s own position as editor of *De Standaard*. Editors of Protestant newspapers were also an important group within the Anti-Revolutionary

[474] "miste een Corps van Officieren, dat zijne denkbeelden verbreidde en vruchtbaar maakte onder het volk" Kuyper, "Vergadering van het Voorlopig Centraal Comité," 1.

[475] The sociologist Max Weber established three forms of legitimacy: rational, traditional and charismatic. Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Hauptwerke der großen Denker (Paderborn: Voltmedia, n.a.), 218.

[476] "en bloc" Kuyper, "Vergadering van het Voorlopig Centraal Comité," 3.

[477] "houdt in bepaalde bespreking van sommige punten" Kuyper, 3.

[478] "middenweg", "niet articel na articel aan de orde stellen, maar vrije bespreking van opgenoemde punten – diens hoofdbeginselen beheerschen het reglement" Kuyper, 3.

[479] "1. alle politieke machten worden vertegenwoordigd: kiesverenigingen, pers, waardigheid bekleedend. 2. geen heerschend, maar dienend comité! Met autonomie der districten. 3. leiding door een klein comité: met een kleiner voor spoedeisende en geheime zaken." Kuyper, 3.

movement. Already in the early 1870s, Kuyper had arranged several meetings for them, where the possibility of a political program was discussed and the decision was made to publish Kuyper's proposal in 1871.[480] More problematic were the other two points. The third point of Kuyper´s proposal provided the ARP´s leadership with unusual privileges by granting them decision-making power in the vaguely formulated cases of "urgent and secret business."[481] The relevance of the second point becomes apparent in comparison to the other two party organizations. Evidently, the Anti-Revolutionaries shared their concerns about the manipulation of ordinary people with British Radical Leaders. The Dutch version of leadership restriction was to restrain the central committee to a serving, instead of a ruling, function. In this way, the delegates in Utrecht adhered to an approach similar to that of the NLF in Birmingham. They decided that local associations were independent from central leaders' decisions. The statutes of the ARP demanded that the "affiliation with the central committee" could "never" mean that local electoral associations were expected "to give up a single piece of their autonomy."[482] The regulations further clarified that "Neither the central committee, nor the deputy assembly possess relative to the electoral associations anything else than advisory or contractual competency."[483] For delegates, this proposal provided the appropriate balance of freedom and efficiency. As stated in points two and three local chapters were granted political independence, but the central leadership could respond swiftly in cases of urgency. Immediately after Kuyper had presented these points to the delegates, they were "generally accepted."[484]

4.2 The "Sensitive" Party Leader

Kuyper himself was aware of the explosive potential of his dominant personality and leadership style. In Utrecht, not all delegates were satisfied with the limiting of general discussions. Fabius, who would later be one of the opponents of Kuyper's leadership style, criticized the proposal and demanded clarification about the regulations. Three other men followed his example and suggested some changes. They inquired about the size of the central committee, the specific status of local branches and the number of local constituencies in the deputy assembly. Kuyper had actually triggered this discussion when he argued that only the ARP enabled local followers to be heard in national politics. In the organization of the ARP, this promise was related to the establishment of a representative organizational structure. Like the German SDAP and the

[480] Janssens, *opbouw*, 79–80; Kuiper, *Herenmuiterij*, 18–19.

[481] "voor spoedeisende en geheime zaken." Kuyper, "Vergadering van het Voorlopig Centraal Comité," 3.

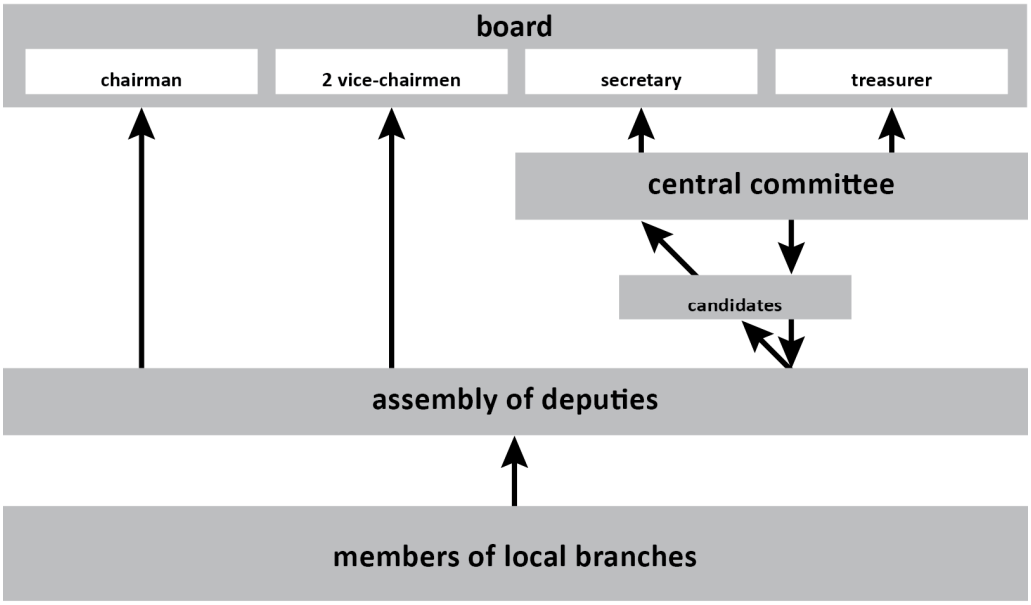
[482] "aansluiting aan het Central Comité" "nooit" "eenig stuk of deel van hare autonomie te hebben prijs gegeven" "Statuten," 5.

[483] "Het Centraal Comité, noch ook de Deputaten-vergadering, bezit ten opzichte der Kiesverenigingen eenige andere dan louter raadgevende of contractueele bevoegdheid." "Statuten," 5.

[484] "algemeen aangenomen" Kuyper, "Vergadering van het Voorlopig Centraal Comité," 3.

British NLF, Anti-Revolutionaries were governed by a general assembly of delegates. This assembly of deputies (deputaten-vergadering) was constituted by the "representatives with voting power" of local associations.[485] In addition, representatives of the press who agreed with the program of the party could participate "with an advisory vote."[486] The deputy assembly was of particular relevance in national election years. In order to conduct a successful electoral campaign, it was supposed to convene "at least four weeks before the day of the elections."[487] The statutes of the ARP determined that these meetings did not select electoral candidates to run under the party's banner. In principle, local associations chose their own candidates. Only when they had problems finding a proper candidate would the central committee be "authorized to recommend candidate"[488]

Graph 8: Organizational structure of the Dutch ARP



Under closer scrutiny, however, it appears that the leading institution of the ARP, the central committee (centraal comité), had exceptional power. Five members of the central committee formed the board (moderamen), they were named after the synodal board of the Protestant church. The officers were the chairman (praeses), two vice-chairmen (assessoren), the secretary (secretaries) and the treasurer (thesaurier).[489] The selection of the members of the central committee was characterized by the idea of centralization. In a biannual rhythm,

[485] "stemhebbende afgevaardigden" "Statuten," 5.

[486] "met adviseerende stem" "Statuten."

[487] "minstens vier weken vóór den dag der verkiezingen" "Statuten," 1.

[488] "bevoegd (…) candidaten aan te bevelen" "Statuten," 6.

[489] "Statuten," 2.

four members left the committee, following a complicated procedure according to the year of their election. The new members of the committee were not elected by the deputy assembly whose choice was limited to the "pairs nominated by the central committee."[490] Moreover, of the five board members, secretary and treasurer were determined by the members of the central committee themselves. Only chairman and vice-chairmen were chosen by the deputy assembly. The officers of the board together with the other eight members of the central committee had "a conclusive vote" at the deputy assembly.[491] They also had the task of negotiating with other political parties in parliament.[492] This means that, in contrast to Kuyper's full-hearted promise of local independence, the parliamentary strategy was determined by the central committee, in particular the board. In fact, the chairman and the two vice-chairmen formed the permanent advisory commission (vaste commissie van advises) that was responsible for "the political leadership of the party."[493] For Kuyper this meant that he had control over the ARP's daily business "under supervision and according to the information of the central committee."[494]

Taking the other two cases of this study into consideration, there are several ways to interpret the inaugural assembly of the ARP. The procedures in Utrecht demonstrate Kuyper's abilities in maneuvering strategically. The Protestant minister had prepared for years to become the leader of Anti-Revolutionaries.[495] Still, at the meeting in Utrecht, Kuyper felt compelled to ask the delegates to approve his leadership. When Esser proposed him as chairman of the new party, Kuyper used the opportunity to publicly display humble restraint. The future party leader dramatically refused the office, demanding the formal confirmation by all attendees. After De Savornin Lohman supported Esser's proposal, the congress elected Kuyper as chairman. Only now Kuyper did accept the vote, but he asked the assembly for a "statement in the minutes that he came to it only after unfruitful resistance."[496] With this event written into the official minutes of the meeting, Kuyper ensured that not only the attendees, but also later generations could learn about his seemingly modest approach to leadership. This procedural approach provided him with legitimacy, even if his election was already decided before the gathering.

Was Kuyper´s concern about fair selection procedures a well-orchestrated theatrical performance or a genuine attempt to introduce democratic representation? If we look at his appointment in isolation, the vote of the influential delegates seemed staged, almost like a

[490] "tweetallen, door het Centraal Comité voorgedragen." "Statuten," 1.
[491] "een concludeerende stem" "Statuten," 2.
[492] "Statuten," 1. "Statuten," 7.
[493] 'politieke leiding van de partij' "Statuten," 2.
[494] "onder toezicht en volgens informatie van het Centraal Comité." "Statuten," 2.
[495] See, for instance, Koch who shows that already in 1869 Kuyper argued for a political party in his correspondence with Groen van Prinsterer Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, 118–19.
[496] "verklaring in de notulen dat hij eerst na vruchteloos verzet daartoe kwam." Kuyper, "Vergadering van het Voorlopig Centraal Comité," 5.

performance of theatrical proportions, devised to legitimize Kuyper's office as chairman. His reluctant response made his candidacy appear as the consequence of his followers' request. Moreover, his three-point proposal fit the scholarly characterization of a manipulative leader who cleverly obstructed any discussion at the inaugural gathering.[497] In this chapter, however, a more nuanced perspective on the role of representative procedures was proposed. Instead of debating the implementation of such claims according to current understanding of democracy, their importance for the discussion at the inaugural meetings has been shown. In this sense, Kuyper's appointment – like the fight about organizational procedures between *Eisenachers* and *Schweitzerians* - was about the best method to organize ordinary people. In Britain, the delegates at the inaugural conference in Birmingham were similarly devoted to their "popular" organization. Chamberlain, who had been a committed mayor of Birmingham, was a man whose "whole sympathy was with the working class."[498] Even if this was only one side of Chamberlain's motives for party foundation, his political ideology did promote the implementation of representative structures. Likewise, from Kuyper's personal correspondence, we know that he was very much aware of his impression on others. The future leader of the ARP sought the respect of his followers, asking for their approval to make his nomination successful. This need for recognition also influenced Kuyper's leadership style. The brilliant political operator was, as a historian wrote, "always very sensitive (…) for the voice of the people."[499]

5. The Meaning of Representative Procedures

In conclusion, men like Kuyper, Chamberlain and Bebel acted according to what they thought was most appropriate in their historical context. For the self-acclaimed representatives of the people this meant that the organizational structure of the party was the manifestation of their promise to improve political representation. At the founding assembly, other topics like efficiency or legal restrictions were mentioned, but most important in the discussions were representation and the various possibilities of its implementation in organizational procedures. In order to understand how party founders justified the structure of their organization, this chapter has identified common discourses that connect party founders in very different circumstances. While the discussions started immediately at the beginning of the SDAP congress, also the assemblies of the British NLF and the Dutch ARP elaborated on the best way to speak for their members. A reoccurring element was that the party should function as the representative organization of the respective community of ordinary people, embodied by

[497] Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*.

[498] James Louis Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain* (London: Macmillan, 1932), 148.

[499] Kuiper, *Herenmuiterij*, 64. The populist rhetoric of Kuyper has been repeatedly described in the literature, for a study of his political style, see Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2. For an international perspective, see Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord."

German workers, British Radical Liberals and Dutch Orthodox Protestants. Although the specific implementation of this idea differed, depending on ideological conviction and the specific situation of party founders, great emphasis was given to the establishment of fair procedures of discussion at the gatherings.

This approach was also applied to the organizational structure of the three parties. It is remarkable how much time was spent discussing the question which organizational procedures were suited best to ensure proper representation. For delegates the most imminent threat to representation was a powerful political leader who could manipulate ordinary members according to his own selfish agenda. In the case of the German Social Democratic Workers' Party, the example of the president of the General German Assembly of Workers Schweitzer gave actual relevance to this concern, but also British Liberals and Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries referred to this threat. While at the founding conference in Birmingham, there were concerns about the dominance of the group around Joseph Chamberlain, in Utrecht Kuyper had to show modesty to convince the attendees that he was a suitable leader. Comparing the discourse in three party organizations, we note different ways to approach the problem of dominant leadership. On the one hand, there was the German Social Democratic approach that relied on strongly formalized procedures and a detailed political program to prevent the leadership of the party from gaining too much power. The founders of the British National Liberal Federation and Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, consolidated the independence of local associations to make sure that the influence of leaders was restricted to an administrative role. Despite the many difficulties in the early years of party organizations, it is important to note that the foundation process of these three cases was dominated by the principles of representation. Remarkably, this early commitment has shaped the literature on early parties that often uncritically accepted the nineteenth-century discourse on representativeness without precisely understanding its contested nature and compelling effects. As the next chapter will show, in the first years after foundation, the commitment to representation developed its own dynamic. There was a constant need to balance the desire to uphold the representative principles of the founding congress against the necessity of maintaining a functioning organization.

IV. Mobilizing and Disciplining

1. Political Community as Family

The representative claims of the inaugural assembly were implemented into the daily practice of the party in the first years after party organization. Among party founders there was a sense of optimism and hope that the masses of ordinary people would soon be heard in national political institutions. But with their large and geographically scattered constituency, political representation was easier said than done. Despite all appeals to the shared interests of Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries, German Social Democrats or British Radical Liberals, developing a common political agenda that could satisfy all followers was a considerable challenge. Party founders agreed that existing social evils had to be abolished. But they differed in their understanding of what constituted political change and how it should be achieved. Men like Abraham Kuyper, August Bebel and Joseph Chamberlain were confronted with the task of finding a way to mobilize the large group of followers into a cohesive political force. One way to emphasize that party members belonged to a political collective was the application of the metaphor of the family. It was no coincidence that Social Democrats called their peers "brothers."[500] This metaphor was powerful and not without empirical basis. In early party organizations, family networks constituted an important pillar for party founders who relied on the support of their fathers, siblings, wives and children in the unstable phase of party emergence.[501] But the community of party members soon became more extensive than an ordinary family, requiring a more sophisticated system of representative decision-making. This chapter uses Max Weber's distinction between traditional, charismatic and procedural authority to analyze the organizational ideas and practices behind the metaphor of the family-like community.[502] This categorization is not meant to establish a new typology or normatively evaluate the representative capacity of party founders. Rather its purpose is to structure the analysis and show what procedures were available to mobilize and discipline party members. As we have seen in the previous chapters, legitimate rule within all three party organizations

[500] See, for instance, Staudinger, "Flugblatt Staudinger: Freunde, Brüder, Arbeiter Deutschlands!" See also the Brotherhood of German Workers and other analyses of early German social democracy: Balser, *Sozial-Demokratie, 1848/49-1863*; Berger, *Social Democracy*; Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*. Another example is the case of the Dutch Social Democrats who used the family as a metaphor for their community. Veldhuizen, "De Partij," chap. 5.

[501] The British Radical Joseph Chamberlain relied on his family to build his business career in Birmingham and in times of political crisis. After his split from the NLF, Chamberlain relied on his brother to build up his new organization. Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 251. Likewise, when the German Social Democratic Wilhelm Liebknecht was imprisoned, his wife helped manage the party correspondence. Bracke to Frau Liebknecht, 23 February 1873, in Eckert, *Aus den Anfängen der Braunschweiger Arbeiterbewegung*, 33. In the Netherlands, Social Democrats relied on family networks to build their organization. Veldhuizen, "De Partij."

[502] Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 218–19.

was based on the tradition of previous political organizations. The chapter focuses specifically on the other two aspects of Weber's categories that distinguished the three early party organizations: charismatic and procedural authority. For this purpose, I first discuss the practices of charismatic representation in the ARP. In a second step, I contrast them with the procedural approach in the German SDAP. In a final step, I show how these two forms of representation could be combined in the hybrid party organization of the British NLF.

2. Charismatic Representation in the Dutch ARP

2.1 Popular Mobilization through Paternalistic Leadership

In less than a decade after its foundation gathering in Utrecht in 1879, the Anti-Revolutionary Party managed to occupy its first cabinet posts.[503] The reasons behind this triumph were manifold, including external political factors such as the widening electoral gap that was triggered by the decline of parliamentary Conservatism. Also the willingness of Catholic parliamentarians to participate in the Anti-Revolutionary coalition helped the party to leave its opposition status.[504] The most decisive factor, however, was the leadership style of Abraham Kuyper, whose charisma attracted the attention of ordinary followers and consolidated their loyal support.[505] This early success came at a price, especially for other influential Anti-Revolutionary leaders from whom Kuyper demanded complete subordination. A first indication of the future dominance of the Protestant minister were the organizational regulations of the ARP that gave an authoritative status to his single-handily composed program: "[e]lectoral associations that send the deputies to the assembly of the Central Committee" were "expected to follow the program" and completely adhere to the more-than-500-page declaration of Anti-Revolutionary principles.[506] Local branches that dared to deviate from this rule were excluded from the party organization.[507] The other side of this authoritative leadership style was the wide scope of Anti-Revolutionary appeal. At the core of Kuyper's political strategy stood a community of followers that was more comprehensive than the small group of members of local electoral associations. While the latter decisively contributed to electoral campaigns, the former

[503] See, for instance, E. H. Kossmann, *De Lage Landen 1780-1940. Anderhalve eeuw Nederland* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1976), 260–64; Velde, "Van grondwet tot grondwet"; Th. B. F. M. Brinkel and J. de Bruijn, *Het kabinet-Mackay: opstellen over de eerste christelijke coalitie (1888-1891)* (Baarn: Arbor, 1990).

[504] De Jong, "Antirevolutionaire partijvorming."

[505] Rienk Janssens, "Eenheid en verdeelheid 1879-1894," in *De Antirevolutionaire Partij, 1829-1980*, ed. George Harinck and Roel Kuiper (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), 73; de Jong, "Antirevolutionaire partijvorming."

[506] "kiesverenigingen, die Deputaten naar de vergadering van het Centraal Comité" "geacht zich bij dit program aan te sluiten" "Statuten," 5. Kuiper, *Herenmuiterij*, chaps. 2–3; Janssens, *opbouw*, 239–41.

[507] Kuyper suggested already at the 1879 inaugural assembly that for these associations there was no option other than "to release" ("los te maken") them. "Vergadering van het Voorlopig Centraal Comité," 4.

constituted the basis of Kuyper's political agenda. Addressing ordinary Orthodox Protestants who did not have a formal role in the decision-making process of the party organization, Kuyper could reach the large constituency of faithful Anti-Revolutionaries.[508]

The mobilization of this extensive group of followers was carried out by the newspaper *De Standaard,* which appeared six days a week and made Kuyper a prominent figure in the daily routine of Orthodox Protestant households. The Anti-Revolutionary press was also a way to increase the feeling of solidarity among followers who usually had no formal membership status in the ARP. The local chapters of the party were initially the exclusive territory of a small group of influential Anti-Revolutionaries. In *De Standaard*, however, Kuyper could connect the ordinary lives of his followers with political topics, creating a common identity for his geographically scattered community.[509] In the first issue of the newspaper, its name and purpose were explained in reference to the Protestant nature of the Netherlands. As in a church prayer, Kuyper asked God "to grant us the holy honor to again hold up the ensign of His word for our Christian people, be of Him our beginning and stand by this work our help in the name of the Lord who created our nation and saved our fatherland."[510]

This quote connected Protestant faith with the political entity of the Dutch nation. God had not only created the fatherland, but the future of the nation also rested in His superior hands. Related to these religious connotations was the constituency of Orthodox Protestants that facilitated Kuyper's claim of representation. In *De Standaard*, his ordinary followers could not only read the regular news, but also follow anniversaries, weddings and obituaries in their community.[511] A popular feature was the listing of vacancies for teachers and domestic servants, like the request of "[a] miss, 23 years old (Chr[istian] Re[formed] fai[th]" who looked for a new occupation, preferably as a housekeeper or "companion."[512] Under this announcement, two advertisements addressed the physical well-being of Orthodox Protestants, praising Hop-Bitter that "rejuvenates" and "Swiss pills of Rich. Brandt" that cured

[508] Velde, "Ervaring en zingeving in de politiek"; Kuiper, "De weg van het volk"; de Jong, "Het antirevolutionaire volk."

[509] Kuyper himself made this connection when he wrote that "Anybody who reads a daily newspaper knows how in the same moment the same speech is read by thousands of others on the same evening" ("Immers wie een dagblad leest, weet, hoe op datzelfde oogenblik door duizenden anderen op dienzelfde avond (…) gelijke toespraak van het blad wordt afgelezen"), quoted in Velde, "Kappeyne tegen Kuyper," 129. The community-building effect of the "imagined communities" in national newspapers has been described by Anderson. *Imagined Communities*. For the history of *De Standaard*, see B. van der Ros, *Geschiedenis van de christelijke dagbladpers in Nederland* (Kampen: Kok, 1993), 25–69.

[510] "(...) vergunt Hij ons de heilige eere, om den standaard van Zijn Woord weer voor ons Christenvolk op te heffen, zij van Hem dan ons begin en sta ook bij dezen arbeid onze hulpe in den Naam des Heeren, die ook onze natie geschapen heeft en ons vaderland heeft gered!" "De Standaard," 1.

[511] Despite the great success of the paper, there were also many Orthodox Protestants who opposed Kuyper's political course. Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*.

[512] "[e]en juffrouw, oud 23 jaar (Chr. Geref. Godsd.)" "gezelschapsjuffrouw" "Advertentien," *De Standaard*, May 15, 1883, 4, Delpher.

the "most hopeless sufferings."[513] These vacancies and medical products were published next to Anti-Revolutionary political activities. When the ARP advertised its upcoming meetings, they were printed in the largest font in the upper middle of the announcements page.

Despite this strong focus on mobilizing ordinary people, most followers had no formal status or influence in the party organization. Local branches compiled membership lists, but members were often local notaries. In addition, although local branches were obliged to submit the number of their members to the central committee, the party leadership seemed to have no interest in publishing a general account of its membership size.[514] As a consequence, the size of the Anti-Revolutionary membership for the early years can only be roughly estimated. While local studies and sources indicate an approximate membership size of around 40 members for local associations, there must have been ca. 520 active members in the entire party.[515] This limited interest in quantification might seem surprising for a "modern" party organization like the ARP.[516] But despite its commitment to large support numbers, Kuyper did not need exact figures to speak for his constituency. For one, it would have been difficult to convince the broad constituency of ordinary followers to formally enlist in the new party organization. In this sense, not having a central record of membership numbers might have even been an advantage for the initially small party. More importantly, however, was the fact that the early ARP relied on a symbolic form of representation where the interests of ordinary followers were united in the persona of the party leader.

This mass appeal without mass membership worked well in practice, in part because of the emotional language that Kuyper used when speaking at large public meetings.[517] In the historical literature, the national activism in support of the South Africans of Dutch descent during the Boer Wars has often been mentioned as a typical example of Kuyper's political

[513] "verjongen" "Zwitsersche pillen van Rich. Brandt" "hopelooste lijden" "Advertentien," 4.

[514] "Elke Kiesvereeniging, die zich aansluit, is gehouden (…) een opgave van haar ledental bij den Secretaris van het Centraal Comité in te zenden" (every electoral association that subscribes is expected to submit an overview of its membership to the central committee"). "Statuten," 7.

[515] This is a very rough estimate since the number of members differed considerably. At the 1881 ARP deputy assembly, 14 delegates represented 13 local associations. These figures exclude representatives of national and regional parliamentary assemblies who were often not members of local electoral associations. In 1879 *De Standaard* even mentioned in its description of the founding congress in Utrecht "electoral associations (…) among which are even some that count 750 members." "Kiesvereenigingen (…) waaronder er zelf zijn die 750 leden tellen". "Het Centraal Comite," *De Standaard*, April 5, 1879, 1, Delpher. In Delft the local electoral association had 38 and 13 external members. A. van der Wees, *1866-1980: Grepen uit de Geschiedenis van de ARP-Delft* (n.p., 1980), 48.

[516] See, for instance, Liagre Böhl, "Hoofdlijnen in de politieke ontwikkeling," 213.

[517] See, for instance, Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 92; Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, chap. 3; Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord"; van Helden, "De 'kleine luyden' van Abraham Kuyper"; Kuiper, "De weg van het volk"; Janssens, *opbouw*, chap. 17.

style.[518] In February 1881, Kuyper joined the Amsterdam Committee for Transvaal (Amsterdamsch Comité voor Transvaal) that organized a large gathering. *De Standaard* only briefly mentioned this first meeting, probably because Kuyper initially disapproved of the populist support for Dutch military intervention in South Africa.[519] When three years later, Patrimonium (the Dutch union of Christian workers) organized a meeting in the Plancius building in Amsterdam, Kuyper had abandoned these doubts. Not only did he become the main speaker, he also used all his rhetorical talents to defend the cause of the small nation in South Africa. While the traditional Dutch political elite had relied on a sober and pragmatic rhetorical style, the controversial ARP leader united the experiences of his audience in his political persona. Kuyper's vocabulary was characterized by a strong emotional component that emphasized the unified political action of the attendees.[520] The speech started with Kuyper telling the audience that he spoke to them "from the heart to the heart."[521] United by their compassion for Krueger and his troops, the speaker and his listeners had followed the distant battle in South Africa "with our heart."[522] This motive dominated the rest of the speech, and the word "heart" was mentioned nineteen times to connect speaker and audience. When Kuyper used the inclusive "our" to describe his emotions, he verbally joined the ranks of his followers. On this metaphorical level, there was no difference in the emotions of the powerful chairman and his audience.

2.2 Resistance to Party Discipline

Not all party members appreciated Kuyper's omnipresent position within the party. In particular, those Anti-Revolutionary activists who were actively involved in the political business of the organization developed a critical attitude. Two years after the founding meeting, a small rebellious faction created an independent electoral association.[523] Presenting themselves as faithful Protestants and loyal Royalists, the defectors called their organization Marnix, after the "bosom friend of our first William," the seventeenth-century Marnix of Saint-Aldegonde, a close

[518] Anne Petterson, *Eigenwijs vaderland. Populair nationalisme in negentiende-eeuws Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2017), 182–83; Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 26–33; Roel Kuiper, *Zelfbeeld en wereldbeeld: antirevolutionairen en het buitenland, 1848-1905* (Kampen: Kok, 1992), 126–28.

[519] Petterson, *Eigenwijs vaderland*, 177.

[520] Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 100.

[521] "uit het hart tot het hart" Abraham Kuyper, *Plancius-rede* (Amsterdam: J.H. Kruyt, 1884), 5, http://archive.org/details/planciusrede00kuyp.

[522] "met ons hart" Kuyper, 6.

[523] In addition to 'Marnix' also the 'Buytendijkians' formed an opposition to Kuyper. See Janssens, *opbouw*, 230–52. For other Protestant alternatives to Kuyper see Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, chapter 7.

associate of William of Orange, alleged writer of the national anthem and devoted Calvinist.[524] The first meeting took place in the *Liggende Os* in Utrecht where 14 men elected Lindeboom and Wierema as president and secretary. Already at this first gathering, they justified their decision to split with the way the ARP was governed. The group had "no peace (...) with the attitude of the central committee and the Anti-rev. electoral associations."[525] In particular, "their attitude towards art. 168 and 194 of the constitution" had alienated the former supporters from the party.[526] They were disappointed that the ARP did not adhere to its mission to restrict the influence of the Dutch state on the Protestant community. Article 194 regulated the influence of national authorities on public schools. Article 168 stated that the salaries of religious authorities like ministers and teachers were covered by the national budget. For the members of Marnix, the ARP ignored its obligations to the free school movement. Even worse, they suspected that the party leader's hesitation was caused by strategic considerations and a desire to retain the support of the publicly funded Protestant clergy.[527]

This programmatic criticism was related to a more fundamental structural problem. The charismatic authority of Kuyper was essential in mobilizing a large group of informal followers, but it obstructed the influence of active members. As chairman of the central committee, Kuyper demanded complete submission to his political course. Those who had different preferences had not many options other than leaving the party.[528] For the men of Marnix, this meant that the different groups in the ARP had made so many concessions that the original position of the party had been abandoned: "[t]he history of the last years had clearly shown that the spokespersons of the antirev. party so deliberately arrange the words that also the mutually exclusive feelings make the impression of unity and we are, thus, condemned to the prison of inactivity."[529]

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[524] "boezemvriend van onzen eersten Willem" "Concept-reglement, met toelichting, van de Chr. Hist. Kiezersbond 'Marnix,'" 1881, 5, http://www.delpher.nl/nl/boeken/view?coll=boeken&identifier=MMUBVU02:000003859.

[525] "geen vrede (…) met de houding van het Centraal Comité en de Anti-rev. Kiesverenigingen" "Concept-reglement," 3.

[526] "hun houding tegenover art. 168 en 194 der Grondwet" "Concept-reglement," 3. The Protestant historian Smitskamp has argued that there were only minor differences between the demands of Marnix and the ARP. H. Smitskamp, "De Christelijk-Historische Kiezersbond 'Marnix' (1881 - ca. 1892)," in *Anti-Revolutionaire Staatskunde*, ed. J. Schouten, vol. 23 (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1953), 87–91.

[527] "Concept-reglement," 15.

[528] Economist Hirschman, who has argued that members of an organization have only three options exit, voice or loyalty. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

[529] "De geschiedenis der laatste jaren heeft allerduidelijkst doen zien, dat de woordvoerders der antirev. partij de woorden met opzet zóó schikken, dat ook de elkaar uitsluitende gevoelens de vertooning van eenheid maken en wij dus tot de werkeloosheid der gevangenis veroordeeld worden." "Concept-reglement," 14.

In his quest to unify the different groups of the Orthodox Protestant community under a single coherent political strategy, Kuyper had lost track of the diversity in the unorganized and rather loose movement.[530] In this way, the men of Marnix offered a crucial observation with their protest. Kuyper regularly neglected party members' concerns about the political course of the ARP when they did not fit his own agenda. Well knowing that sensitive topics could be harmful for internal coherence, he obstructed any discussions about political strategy. Not even the major representative institution of the party could act independently. When in 1881 delegates to the first deputy assembly started to discuss the program of the ARP, Kuyper cut off the discussion. A few days later he announced the installation of a commission to elaborate the contested financial relationship between state and church.[531] When in 1883 the electoral association of Dokkum suggested a discussion of article 168, Kuyper postponed the topic by announcing that this point would be addressed at the following deputy assembly.[532]

It is no surprise that this ruthless imposition of political conformity posed a problem for the young party organization. Although not all opponents of Kuyper chose Marnix' strategy of open confrontation, there was a silent opposition among active Anti-Revolutionaries. Just before the 1881 elections, Kuyper noted the limited enthusiasm among electoral associations for the coming campaign. In many districts, the individual Anti-Revolutionary supporter "sits still way too long."[533] In the same year, the chairman mentioned the problem of "the division that appears in the party."[534] But instead of adjusting his course, Kuyper insisted on ideological coherence, warning about the "in practice appearing phenomenon how (...) our principles have not yet had effect."[535] Blaming his internal critics, he argued that it was necessary for them to commit to the "more serious study of the demands that our principles put to us."[536] In other words, Kuyper's rhetoric of unification demanded full-fledged support. Those who were not unconditional supporters ran the risk of being declared an enemy of their former party organization. This also meant that despite the obvious problems, the party leader played down the division of his party. Its threat to the organization could not be denied, but the scope of dissatisfaction was "in truth still small," especially in comparison to "what can be seen in other parties."[537]

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[530] For the diversity in the Orthodox Protestant community, see Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*.

[531] "Deputatenvergadering, gehouden te Utrecht, in het Gebouw voor Kunsten en Wetenschappen," *De Standaard*, May 9, 1881, 2, Delpher; "Art. 168," *De Standaard*, May 9, 1881, 1, Delpher.

[532] "Deputaten-Vergadering," *De Standaard*, May 17, 1883, 2, Delpher.

[533] "*veel te lang stil zit*""Verloren Districten," *De Standaard*, April 5, 1881, 1, Delpher.

[534] "de verdeeldheid, die zich in de partij openbaart" "Deputatenvergadering," *De Standaard*, September 5, 1881, 2, Delpher.

[535] "in de praktijk openbarende verschijnsel, hoe onder (...) onze beginselen nog niet hebben doorgewerkt" "Deputatenvergadering," 2.

[536] "ernstiger studie van de eischen, die onze beginselen ons stellen" "Deputatenvergadering," 2.

[537] "in waarheid nog klein" "wat onder andere partijen wordt gezien" "Deputatenvergadering," 2.

Kuyper's comparison of the ARP to other political parties only partially captured the situation in the Netherlands. It was true that the secret behind the party's success was its unified nature. But traditional parties like the Liberals did not need a centrally administered organization to win elections. Their political legitimacy was based on a much more traditional form of political authority.[538] Kuyper had initiated a new era where the interests of ordinary Orthodox Protestants replaced the traditional legitimacy of aristocratic candidates. For many Anti-Revolutionaries, this seemed like the end of deferential politics, but in practice Kuyper's charismatic authority created a new hierarchy in the party community where his persona stood above all other Orthodox Protestants.[539] His understanding of mass mobilization demanded internal unity to legitimize the representation of the extensive constituency in the persona of a single leader. Concealing the artificial nature of this political coherence, Kuyper underestimated the possible negative consequences of his political authority. In the 1890s, disappointed Anti-Revolutionaries around Savornin Lohman left the ARP. Their exit shows how charismatic leadership can cause the split of party, even though Kuyper's ARP was able to extend its political power after the exodus of dissatisfied members.[540]

3. Procedural Representation in the German SDAP

3.1 Party Organization under Pressure

In Germany representation took a path unlike the charismatic model of the ARP. Instead of relying on a single powerful leader with a small group of followers, the Social Democratic Workers' Party invited all party members to participate in the planning of its future. In contrast to Abraham Kuyper who, as we have seen, relied on his persona to mobilize and discipline ordinary followers, the leaders of the SDAP used a procedural approach to incorporate the response of their constituency. In other words, German Social Democrats invited party members to climb up the stairs to become speakers themselves.[541] This procedural model was possible because of the different conceptualizations of the immediate audience of the SDAP. In contrast to the national community of Anti-Revolutionaries, German Social Democrats relied on a close community of party members that actively participated in the politics of local branches. This comparably small group of dedicated activists came to their decisions together, choosing

[538] De Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit*, 72–73. In the 1870s a new generation of Dutch Liberals took a more outspoken partisan standpoint. Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom*, 173–80.

[539] Haan and te Velde, "Vormen van politiek," 181.

[540] Janssens, "Eenheid en verdeelheid"; Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, chap. 7; L. C. Suttorp, *Jhr. Mr. Alexander Frederik de Savornin Lohman 1837-1924: zijn leven en werken* ('s-Gravenhage: A.A.M. Stols, 1948), 186–210.

[541] The emancipatory effects of such an approach have been discussed for twentieth-century movements Polletta, *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting*.

from their midst the most capable members to rule the organization for a year or two.[542] In contrast to Kuyper's rule, the SDAP regularly replaced the five members of its board with a new leadership group. While *De Standaard* was controlled by Kuyper, Social Democratic board officers were not allowed to be editors of the party newspaper *Der Volksstaat.* This rule also applied to the control commission that provided another opportunity for party members to rise to the higher ranks of the party. The party congress provided another option for party members to control their leadership. Ordinary members could exercise considerable influence on the assembly, either as one of the participating delegates or by instructing their local representatives about the content of their statements and their votes.

Unlike the ARP, which relied on short deputy assemblies in bi-annual rhythm, the SDAP congresses took place annually and lasted between three and five days. In the early years of the ARP, attendance numbers were low because Kuyper primarily aimed at the coordination of electoral campaigns. Even when ordinary members started to gain a more prominent role in ARP deputy assemblies, their task was mainly to support Kuyper's agenda with cheerful applause.[543] At SDAP congresses, elections were also an important topic, but more importantly, German Social Democrats comprehensively discussed the program and organization of their party. The sophisticated discussion procedures made SDAP assemblies a festive celebration of participatory culture.[544] On the first day, delegates elaborated about and voted on the chairman of the meeting and determined the specific agenda and debating rules. This usually led to a dilemma that delegates had to balance practical considerations of limited time against their desire to include all delegates in the debate.[545] At the 1870 party congress in Stuttgart, for instance, several delegates suggested limiting the length of the debate, but the assembly decided against this rule.[546] This changed two years later in Eisenach, when the congress determined that speakers had to formally register with the chairman and limit themselves to

[542] This flexible leadership structure changed later when the party extended its membership to the industrial working classes, experienced supression under the Socialist Laws, and became more focused on its parliamentary representation. Mittmann, *Fraktion und Partei*, 67–74; Kupfer, "Die organisatorische Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie." For a local study of the impact of the Socialist Laws on party organization, see Karl-Alexander Hellfaier, "Die sozialdemokratische Bewegung in Halle/Saale (1865 - 1890)," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 1 (1961): 69–107.

[543] Janssens, *opbouw*, chap. 17.

[544] This was part of a longer tradition of workers' assemblies and associations. Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, 291–338; Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals*, chaps. 5–6; Waling, "1848 Clubkoorts en revolutie"; Birker, *Die deutschen Arbeiterbildungsvereine*.

[545] Heyer, "Manipulation or Participation?" For a sociological study of this dilemma, see Austin Choi-Fitzpatrick, "Managing Democracy in Social Movement Organizations," *Social Movement Studies* 14, no. 2 (March 4, 2015): 123–41.

[546] "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ der sozial-demokratischen Arbeiterpartei zu Stuttgart am 4., 5., 6. und 7. Juni 1870," in *Protokolle der sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei*, reprint (Glashütten im Taunus: D. Auvermann, 1971), 9, 14, 21.

three statements per theme.[547] But, even under these stricter regulations, the delegates could not bring themselves to limit their discussion time on default. Rather, the majority voted that no debate could be finished until at least one delegate in favor and one against the issue at hand had been heard.

3.2 Internal Power Struggle

The first years of the SDAP were dominated by the Franco-Prussian War that put the procedural representation within the young party under unexpected pressure. Disagreement about the appropriate course for the new political situation led to a dramatic power struggle between its leading members, who all felt entitled to determine the political course of the party. But the emphasis on procedural practices also became a valuable mechanism that guaranteed survival in times of recurring crisis. The founding congress in Eisenach had determined that the local branch of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel was the first chapter to host the SDAP board. Following party regulations, the members of the local branch elected Johann Heinrich Ehlers as first chairman, Samuel Spier as his co-chairman, Wilhelm Bracke as treasurer, Leonhard von Bornhorst as secretary and Friedrich Neidel as assessor. The first practical test for the authority of the Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel group appeared after the Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck skillfully maneuvered the French Emperor Napoleon III into an armed conflict in July 1870. The French army was the military aggressor in the eyes of most Germans, including the political elite and many ordinary citizens.[548]

For the SDAP board, still occupied with unifying its scattered branches into the new party organization, the French mobilization posed a serious challenge. Although the party leadership opposed the autocratic Prussian state, it could not ignore the danger of the French army invading German towns and villages. In these chaotic circumstances, the board decided to refrain from criticizing the defensive response of the German army, even when it acted under Prussian command.[549] The neutral position of the Braunschweig board was not shared by all party representatives. In fact, the party's procedural form of representation facilitated the expression of different opinions, even though the board would soon try to establish control over the course of the party. The most outspoken critics were August Bebel and Wilhelm

[547] "Protokoll über den fünften Congress der sozial-demokratischen Arbeiterpartei zu Eisenach am 23., 24., 26., und 27. August 1873," in *Protokolle der sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei*, reprint (Glashütten im Taunus: D. Auvermann, 1971), 1.

[548] Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie*, 24; Dieter Groh, *"Vaterlandslose Gesellen": Sozialdemokratie und Nation 1860-1990* (München: Beck, 1992), 21.

[549] Eckert, "Aus der Korrespondenz des Braunschweiger Ausschusses der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiter-Partei.," 110. A more favorable account of the years has been dominant in the extensive GDR literature, see Seidel, *Wilhelm Bracke*, 68–76.

Liebknecht, who maintained their critical stance towards the Prussian authorities.[550] When the board instructed Liebknecht to support their call "against all and every brutal presumptions of Casarism" in *Der Volksstaat,* the editor ignored this order.[551] Making their dissatisfaction public, the two parliamentarians Liebknecht and Bebel even refused to vote on the additional military budget in the parliamentary assembly of the *Reichstag*.[552] The Braunschweig board responded furiously to this unauthorized diversion from the formal course. The question was: who was in charge of the party's political course?

On the next day, the two board officers Bracke and Spier wrote to the chairman of the control commission, August Geib, to complain about the "terrible damaging of the party", demanding "energetic action."[553] The typically abbreviated style of the telegram fit the aggressive content of the message that concluded with these instructions: "Call Tonight Control Commission Tomorrow Night Necessary Here You Board. Sunday you Spier Bracke Leipzig Wire Response."[554] The hastily wired words asked Geib to immediately hold a meeting of the control commission and attend a meeting of the board the following day which was to be followed by a trip to Leipzig where Bebel ad Liebknecht were situated. The purpose of this emergency procedure was, as the telegram put it: to "make Liebknecht obey or dismiss him."[555] The board was especially annoyed with Liebknecht, whom they considered removing as editor of *Der Volksstaat.* Although Geib as chair of the control commission refused to further escalate the conflict, the disagreement could not be resolved. At the end of the month, the board complained about the "evil dissonance" created by Liebknecht's self-centered behavior, continuing that "Truly, Geib, it looks bad for the party."[556] Liebknecht, on the other hand, was so enraged about the angry response of the board that he threatened to emigrate to "England or America."[557] In the meantime, the board even sought advice from the trusted authority of

[550] Mehring, *Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie: Von Lassalles "Offenem Antwortschreiben" bis zum Erfurter Programm, 1863 bis 1891*, 2:373–75.

[551] "gegen alle und jede brutale Anmaßung des Caesarismus" 'Der Braunschweiger Ausschuss to Wilhelm Liebknecht', 17 July 1870, in Eckert, "Aus der Korrespondenz des Braunschweiger Ausschusses der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiter-Partei.," 130.

[552] *Verhandlungen des Außerordentlichen Reichstages des Norddeutschen Bundes. I. Legislaturperiod.* (Berlin: Julius Sittenfeld, 1870), 14, http://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de/Blatt3_nb_bsb00018315_00016.html.

[553] "furchtbare Schädigung der Partei" "energisches Handeln" 'Telegramm Wilhelm Bracke and Samuel Spier to August Geib', 22 July 1870, in Eckert, "Aus der Korrespondenz des Braunschweiger Ausschusses der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiter-Partei.," 132.

[554] "Berufe heute Abend Controllcommission Morgen Abend Du nothwendig hier Auschuß. Sonntag Du Spier Bracke Leipzig Drahtantwort" 'Telegramm Wilhelm Bracke and Samuel Spier to August Geib', 22 July 1870, in Eckert, 132.

[555] "Liebknecht fügen oder absetzen" Telegramm Wilhelm Bracke and Samuel Spier to August Geib, 22.7.1870, in Eckert, 132.

[556] "böse Dissonanz" "Wahrlich, Geib, es sieht schlimm aus mit der Partei." 'Wilhelm Bracke to August Geib', 29 July 1870, in Eckert, 133–34.

[557] "England oder America" 'Wilhelm Liebknecht to Wilhelm Bracke', 30 August 1870, in Eckert, 136..

Karl Marx in London, who instructed Friedrich Engels to mediate between board and Liebknecht.[558]

The tense situation within the SDAP was resolved only when the German army defeated the French military forces in Sedan in the beginning of September. As much as international politics had split the young party, the declaration of the Third Republic now united the SDAP. For the German Social Democrats, the Paris Commune made the French state a Socialist project that deserved sincere and public support. As official leadership of the party, the Braunschweig board quickly adjusted its position and published a manifesto "to all German workers" in *Der Volksstaat* to announce its solidarity with the French, and specifically, the Socialists in the neighboring country.[559] Boldly declaring that it would "not tolerate the annexation of Alsace and Lothringia," they directly positioned themselves against the German military forces.[560]

This provocative announcement caused a second crisis for the party, which was now threatened by outside pressure, instead of internal conflict. As a consequence of their criticism of the German army, the military authorities arrested the board members Wilhelm Bracke, Samuel Spier, Carl Kühn, Heinrich Gralle and Leonhard von Bonhorst. The five men were brought to the Fortress Lötzen on the eastern border of Prussia in today's Poland. For several months, the Braunschweig group remained imprisoned; Bonhorst was the last to return by Christmas.[561] In this situation, the procedural practices of the SDAP showed their true strength, because the party had encouraged the creation of a flexible leadership structure. Like the ancient monster Hydra whose heads were cut off by Heracles, the party replaced its violently removed leadership with a new board.

The control commission quickly responded to the new situation and designated Dresden as the location of a provisional board. Announcing in *Der Volksstaat* that "extraordinary circumstances demand extraordinary measures," they also took care of the allocation of the offices.[562] One day after the Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel arrest, they proclaimed that "we have decided to appoint 3 persons in Dresden for the substitute board":

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[558] Engels advised that participation in the national movement was advisable, but the brotherhood between ordinary Germans and Frenchmen should be similarly emphasized. Eckert, 128.

[559] "An alle deutschen Arbeiter" "die Annexion von Elsaß und Lothringen *nicht dulden*" Vorstand, "Manifest," *Der Volksstaat*, November 9, 1870, 1. For a contemporary description of the events, see also Wilhelm Bracke, *Der Braunschweiger Ausschuss der socialdemokratischen Arbeiter-partei in Lötzen und vor dem Gericht* (Braunschweig: Verlag der Expedition des "Braunschweiger Volksfreund, 1872), 7–10.

[560] "An alle deutschen Arbeiter" "die Annexion von Elsaß und Lothringen *nicht dulden*" Vorstand, "Der Volksstaat," 1. For a contemporary description of the events, see also Bracke, *Der Braunschweiger Ausschuß*, 7–10.

[561] Mehring, *Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie: Von Lassalles "Offenem Antwortschreiben" bis zum Erfurter Programm, 1863 bis 1891*, 2:379.

[562] "außerordentliche Zustände erheischen außergewöhnliche Maßregeln" Centralkommission, "An die Parteigenossen," *Der Volksstaat*, September 17, 1870, 3.

Otto Walster as chairman, Köhler as treasurer and Knieling as assessor.[563] This rapid response guaranteed the survival of the party organization in the following months. Less than a week later, the German authorities executed the next "hard strike" and arrested the leading members of the control commission Theodor Yorck and August Geib.[564] Yorck was soon released, but Geib was transported to Lötzen "for the involuntary control of the Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel board" as the report of the control commission sarcastically put it.[565] In December, a third wave of imprisonment followed when the authorities arrested the parliamentarians Bebel and Liebknecht under the same charges as the Braunschweig board.[566] Together with the editor of *Volksstaat* Adolf Hepner, the two men were detained until March 1871 and had to return to prison in September 1872.

The arrest of Bebel and Liebknecht had also an effect on the SDAP's approaching electoral campaign whose success was now threatened by the absence of its popular candidates. Again, the Social Democrats relied on the procedural strength of their party organization. As the control commission reported, its actions were based on ordinary members' request: they "received the wish from different sides to aim for a tighter centralization for the Reichstag election."[567] In February 1871, one month before the election, the control commission relieved the provisional Dresden board of its responsibilities, and Leipzig became the new location of the party leadership. In contrast to the Dresden board, for which the control commission had determined the allocation of offices, the party returned to its original procedures. The allocation of the offices of the Leipzig board happened "of course in consideration of § 12 of the party organization".[568] Relying on the expertise of ordinary members, the party reinstalled its bottom-up approach. The officers of the new board were elected by the members of the local branch in Leipzig.

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[563] "Bezüglich der Parteileitung (…) haben wir beschlossen, 3 Personen in Dresden zum stellvertrenden Auschuß zu ernennnen." "August Geib to G.A. Müller," September 13, 1870, Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR, Bundesarchiv.

[564] "harter Schlag" Centralkommission, "An die Parteigenossen," 3.

[565] "zur unfreiwilligen Kontrolle des Braunschweig-Wolfenbütteler Auschußes" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ der sozial-demokratischen Arbeiterpartei, abgehalten zu Dresden, am 12., 13., 14., und 15. August 1871," in *Protokolle der sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei*, reprint (Glashütten im Taunus: D. Auvermann, 1971), 65.

[566] Hugo Friedländer, *Interessante Kriminal-Prozesse von Kulturhistorischer Bedeutung*, vol. 3, 1–12 vols. (Hermann Barsdorf Verlag, 1911), http://www.zeno.org/nid/20003607089; Mehring, *Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie: Von Lassalles "Offenem Antwortschreiben" bis zum Erfurter Programm, 1863 bis 1891*.

[567] "von verschiendenen Seiten der Wunsch zuging, zu den Reichstagswahlen eine straffere Zentralisation der Partei anzustreben" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 65.

[568] "natürlich mit Berücksichtigung des § 12 der Parteiorganisation" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 66.

3.3 The Disciplining Strength of the Brotherly Community

The Franco-Prussian War also had an impact on the financial strategy of the SDAP. The party depended on the ordinary members of local branches to pay their membership dues on time. Even before the war, this had caused problems with the board reporting that financially "we truly cannot be satisfied with the performances of the party."[569] In 1870 Bebel suggested publishing a list in *Der Volksstaat* of all associations that had failed to pay their dues.[570] Although some delegates opposed this proposal, remarking that this would put further pressure on the empty pockets of working-class families, it was quickly accepted. The SDAP was not the only party organization to use this administrative instrument of public naming. Dutch party leader Abraham Kuyper applied a similar disciplinary method and mentioned in *De Standaard* individual local associations that did not adequately engage in electoral campaigns. The difference with the SDAP was that German Social Democrats used a more positive approach that fit the party's understanding of procedural representation. Unlike the ARP chairman who relied on a top-down approach, the SDAP board gave its members the opportunity to defend their indebted branches.

For the SDAP, a year after its introduction, the list of party branches owing back dues was an important point of discussion at the party congress in Dresden. Delegate Eberlein from Meerane was the first to explain why his local chapter had failed to pay its membership contribution. His statement cited the many difficulties experienced by local branches during the Franco-Prussian War: "when the Reichstag elections took place, the people's electoral association of Meerane was dissolved and in fact by the authoritative decision of the city council. We factually did not exist, and had to file a lawsuit which took a lot of time."[571] Eberlein argued that extraordinary circumstances prevented the Meerane branch from paying its party dues. The financial burden was unreasonably high, because local members had financed a court case for their electoral campaign. Moreover, the group had financially supported Liebknecht, who was the parliamentary representative of their district. This long defense speech at the congress was not the only statement on this topic. Delegates saw it as their responsibility to prevent their local branch from losing the respect of the brotherly community. Despite their contentious political rhetoric, Social Democrats aspired to the bourgeois ideal of respectable members of society.[572] After Eberlein, the delegate Albert from Glachau described to the

[569] "wir wahrlich nicht mit den Leistungen der Partei zufrieden sein können" Bericht des Auschusses der socialdemokratischen Arbeiter-Partei zum Congress in Stuttgart am 4. 5. 6. Und 7. Juni 1870, in Georg Eckert, "Der Rechenschaftsbericht der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiter-Partei für den Stuttgarter Parteitag Juni 1870," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 3 (1963): 507, http://library.fes.de/jportal/receive/jportal_jparticle_00010012.

[570] "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ," 44.

[571] "als die Reichstagswahl stattfand, ward der Volkswahlverein in Meerane aufgelöst und zwar durch Machtspruch des Stadtraths. Wir bestanden faktisch nicht, und mußten einen Prozeß führen, der lange gedauert hat" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 75.

[572] Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, 369–71.

assembly how his association had spent a considerable sum for agitation, even covering the debts of neighboring constituencies. Because of this unusual situation, the Glachau branch had been released from paying its dues by the Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel board. When the congress decided to move to another topic, three additional speakers - Thiele of Leipzig, Engelhard of Zwickau and Imhof of Erfurt – intervened to justify the missing payments of their branches. Finally, Leyendecker terminated the debate with a balanced statement, praising the organization of the party: "Our organization is not deficient if only every member works proficiently on its basis. The organization is not at fault that the fees are not paid, no, it is only the will and the police circumstances that have hindered us."[573]

This sort of explanation was a common rhetorical frame in the SDAP. The oppressive circumstances in Germany enabled members to divert attention from the many internal discrepancies in the party organization. At the same time, although leadership culture differed from that of the Dutch ARP, German Social Democrats suffered from a similar dilemma, being caught between membership mobilization and discipline.[574] The SDAP members, who were responsible for the functioning of the party organization, did their best to keep up the optimistic spirit. Geib, as the chairman of the control commission, praised the metaphorical "cast-iron ship" of the party's "program and its organization."[575] He thought the "current party organization can be called a good one."[576] Other delegates did not hide their frustration over the difficulties of communicating with local branches. As the former chairman of the Dresden board, August Otto Walster told the congress that he had "constantly worried about this matter."[577] Five months in the party leadership had given him less flattering stories to tell: "What was definitely not the case with our party organization was the immediate rapid voluntary intervention of the Social Democrats of Germany, namely in the cities where our party comrades were organized." [578] Here spoke a man whose laborious efforts had not been matched by the necessary support of his peers. Walster clearly felt that his provisional board had done "everything possible to bring our party members to the fulfillment of duties."[579] But his peers had ignored his call for action, not responding to his numerous letters. Even worse,

[573] "Unsere Organisation ist nicht mangelhaft, wenn nur jedes Mitglied tüchtig auf ihrer Basis arbeitet. Die Organisation ist nicht Schuld, daß die Beiträge nicht bezahlt werden, nein nur der Wille und die polizeiliche Verhältnisse sind es, die uns daran gehindert haben." "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 78.

[574] Heyer, "Manipulation or Participation?"

[575] "festgezimmerten Schiffe" "Programms und ihrer Organisation" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 66–67.

[576] "jetzige Parteiorganisation (…) als eine gute bezeichnen zu können" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 66–67.

[577] "tagtäglich seine Sorgen über diese Angelegenheit" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 67.

[578] "Was bei unserer Parteiorganisation ganz unbedingt nicht der Fall war, das war das sofortige rasche freiwillige Einschreiten der Sozialdemokraten Deutschlands, namentlich da, wo unsere Parteigenossen in den Städten organisirt waren." "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 67.

[579] "alles Mögliche (...) um unsere Parteimitglieder zur Pflichterfüllung zu bringen" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 68.

party members, "from all sides, where we had the least expected" accused the Dresden officers of neglecting their leadership duties.[580] Walster's criticism shows that establishing unity among the nationally scattered membership was a complicated task. Party members had to constantly be disciplined to maintain organizational routine, but often their response was insufficient, lacking enthusiasm and commitment. How then exactly did the SDAP manage to mobilize its financially struggling and politically oppressed members during the imprisonment of its most prominent leaders in the early years of party organization?

3.3 A Close Community of Brave Men

The procedural practices of representation enabled the SDAP to focus on its core membership in the oppressive circumstances of the German Empire.[581] The party suffered not only from oppression by local and national authorities, but also the impoverished living conditions and political illiteracy of its working-class supporters caused problems. Immediately after the founding congress, local branches had to be removed from the party's list, because of "reprimands which were exercised partially by the authorities, partially by the employers."[582] An example was the local branch of Gräfentonna that was lost, because of "the great hardship of the workers."[583] Also in other places, workers could not afford the membership fee and had to be suspended from the organization. The board further reported that "the regrettably too low level of education" among its working-class audience made it difficult to recruit new party members.[584] Also the more professional members caused problems, but their actions were more threatening to the party's reputation. In particular agitator Windsheimer and his "various swindles" are mentioned for having caused considerable damage to the SDAP's reputation in Bavaria.[585] Other activists were highly committed to the organization, but broke down under the intensive work pressure. For instance, W. Schmidt who campaigned for the Social Democratic cause in North Holstein had to "travel home – to Hadamar c[lose] to Limburg a[n] der Lahn- for the restoration of his health."[586] When the Franco-Prussian War escalated, things got even more difficult on a general scale. One indication was the decrease in the number of delegates at the party congress, as well as in the number of the members that they

[580] "von Seiten, wo wir es am wenigsten erwartet hatten" "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 68.

[581] State suppression was particularly a problem for the electoral campaign where the lack of financial resources and government persecution became serious problems. Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters*, 48. For the Socialist Laws, see e.g. Kupfer, "Die organisatorische Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie."

[582] "Maßregelungen welche theils die Behörden, theils die Arbeitgeber ausübten" Eckert, "Der Rechenschaftsbericht der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiter-Partei für den Stuttgarter Parteitag Juni 1870," 506.

[583] "der großer Noth der Arbeiter" Eckert, 505.

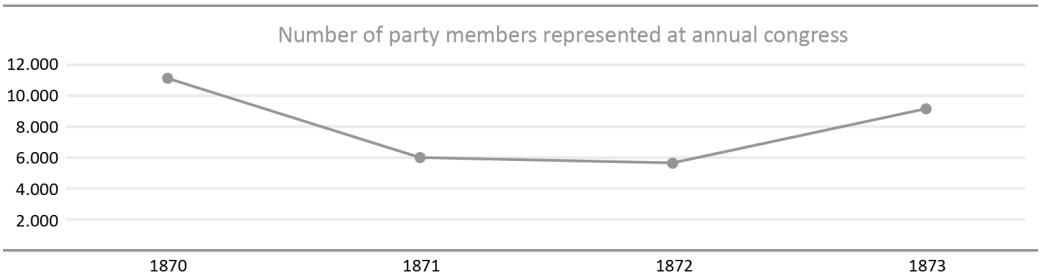
[584] "der leider (…) zu geringe Bildungsgrad" Eckert, 506.

[585] "verschiedene Schwindeleien" Eckert, 504.

[586] "zur Wiederherstellung seiner Gesundheit in die Heimath, - nach Hadamar b. Limburg a/Lahn, - reisen." Eckert, 504.

represented.[587] In June 1870, one month before the declaration of war, a total number of 66 delegates attended the gathering, speaking for more than 11,000 members.[588] In the following year, this number diminished with only 56 delegates travelling to the congress in Dresden. More significantly, they represented only 6,000 members, representing a membership decrease of almost 50%.[589] This trend continued in 1872 with 5,753 members. Only in 1873 would this downward slope be stopped with a rise to 9,224 members.[590]

Graph 9: SDAP membership numbers



Confronted with this pronounced membership decline, the party needed to develop practices that would allow for continued agitation under the increasingly oppressive circumstances of the German Empire. The most important component of its mobilizing efforts was an emancipatory internal party culture that portrayed the party's leading members as heroic survivors.[591] Their brave behavior became exemplary to all party members. Courage and determination were demonstrated when imprisonment was endured. This experience of hardship was used to criticize the existing political order. Standing literally with their backs against the walls of their prison cells, prominent party members launched a public opinion campaign to set their own heroic narrative against the Imperial accusations that they had betrayed their fatherland. In addition to articles in *Der Volksstaat*, the party representatives published brochures and books about their experiences in court. After his arrest, Wilhelm Bracke wrote a brochure about his experience during the trial of the Braunschweig board.[592]

[587] These figures need to be seen as an approximate value of membership numbers, because not all party branches could afford representation at annual congresses.

[588] "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ," 133–34. In the secondary literature, even 13,000 members are mentioned. Franz Osterroth and Dieter Schuster, "4./7. Juni 1870," *Chronik der deutschen Sozialdemokratie (Electronic ed.)* (Bonn: FES Library, 2001), http://library.fes.de/fulltext/bibliothek/chronik/.

[589] "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ."

[590] "Protokoll über den 3. Congreß der social-demokratischen Arbeiter-Partei abgehalten zu Mainz am 7., 8., 9., 10. und 11. September 1872," in *Protokolle der sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei*, reprint (Glashütten im Taunus: D. Auvermann, 1971), 55–56; "Protokoll über den fünften Congress," 80.

[591] See also Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*, 335–37; Kupfer, "Die organisatorische Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie."

[592] Bracke, *Der Braunschweiger Ausschuß*.

Even more attention was given to the high-treason trial against the parliamentarians Bebel and Liebknecht.[593] In particular, Liebknecht used the opportunity to expose a corrupt justice system in a 600-page publication about *Der Hochverraths-Prozeß wider Liebknecht, Bebel, Hepner vor dem Schwurgericht Leipzig* (On the High Treason Trial against Liebknecht, Bebel, Hepner in the Jury Court Leipzig).[594] In this manifesto, it was argued that the evidence presented in court was irrelevant, if not falsified. Neither Liebknecht nor Bebel had shown any initiative for revolution, based on violent overthrow. To the contrary, their "party is truly essentially a party of peace."[595] Well aware of the opportunities of this public forum, Liebknecht explicitly referred to the mobilizing potential of suppression. The brochure finished with the provocative call to the German authorities: "persecute us! Every act of violence gives us greater intensive strength, increases the number of our adherents. This trial is more worth to us than ten years of the most productive propaganda."[596]

This proud attitude of resistance was shared by the rest of the party's leading members. After the imprisonment of the Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel board, Bebel wrote to Geib that "by the way, the blow will be withstood."[597] Also the arrested Braunschweig officers described their difficult situation in a humoristic tone. Published in *Der Volksstaat,* their violent imprisonment sounded like a sociable trip to the east of the Empire:

> Now, that our almost three-day chain jewelry has been taken away after a journey of ca. 136 miles, I send you the conventional greetings of the "board that is prisoner of state" … Wishing you that you might be spared from the same or similar destiny, the Lötzen-Boyen colony of the Braunschweig Seven gives its regards.[598]

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[593] William Harvey Maehl, *August Bebel: Shadow Emperor of the German Workers* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1980), 93–95.

[594] Wilhelm Liebknecht, *Der Leipziger Hochverrathsprozess: ausführlicher Bericht über die Verhandlungen des Schwurgerichts zu Leipzig in dem Prozess gegen Liebknecht, Bebel und Hepner, wegen Vorbereitung zum Hochverrath, vom 11. - 26. März 1872*, ed. Karl-Heinz Leidigkeit (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1872).

[595] "Partei ist ganz wesentlich eine Partei des Friedens" Liebknecht, 550.

[596] "v e r f o l g t u n s ! Jeder Gewaltakt giebt uns größere intensive Kraft, vermehrt die Zahl unserer Anhänger. Dieser Prozeß ist uns mehr werth als zehn Jahre der fruchtbarsten Propaganda." Liebknecht, 558.

[597] "im Übrigen wird sich der Schlag aushalten lassen" 'August Bebel to August Geib', 12 September 1870, in Eckert, "Aus der Korrespondenz des Braunschweiger Ausschusses der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiter-Partei.," 139.

[598] "Nun, nachdem uns beinahe dreitägiger Kettenschmuck nach einer Reise von ca. 136 Meilen wieder abgenommen, entsende ich Dir den biderben (sic!, AH) Gruß des „staatsgefangenen Ausschusses" ... Indem wir wünschen, ihr möget vor gleichem oder ähnlichem Schicksal bewahrt bleiben, empfiehlt sich euch bestens die Lötzen-Boyener Kolonie der Braunschweiger Sieben." Quote is from Centralkommission, "An die Parteigenossen," 3. See also Wilhelm Blos, *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Sozialdemokraten*, vol. 1 (München: Hirt, 1914), n.p., http://www.zeno.org/Kulturgeschichte/M/Blos,+Wilhelm+Joseph/Denkwürdigkeiten+ eines+Sozialdemokraten/1.+Band/Der+Volksstaat. The phrase Braunschweig Seven is probably a reference to the Göttinger Sieben (Göttingen Seven), a group of seven professors who protested against the abolition of the constitution in Hannover in the first half of the nineteenth century.

This "*Galgenhumor",* gallows humor, was a typical response of the SDAP to outside pressure.[599] The members of the party created an alternative reality. In this rhetorical world, chains transformed into jewelry, and the prosecuted could become fearless heroes. Regardless of the severity of the situation, the leaders of the party managed to maintain their dignity, fighting with their wit and intellect against their imprisonment. Endurance under persecution became a demonstration of manly strength that was meant to provide hope to family and party members who were left behind.[600] At the party congress in Dresden in 1871, August Bebel optimistically evaluated the situation. Although the organization of the endangered party had stood at the abyss, its community had gained strength.

> From all sides the social democratic party was slandered; with all means available it was attempted to suppress it (…)! Today where we are gathered for our party congress, we can speak out with pride and satisfaction that everything our enemies did – is far from weakening our lines, lowering our bravery, it has in contrast contributed to increasing our lines and steeling our bravery![601]

Based on the actual membership numbers shown above, Bebel's optimism has to been seen as a wild exaggeration. Instead of increasing its ranks, the party membership considerably diminished under military pressure. Even *Der Volksstaat* had to confess to its members that it had lost more than 300 subscribers because of the "precarious circumstances."[602] What, Bebel had correctly described, however, was the spirit of the delegates. Those activists who had maintained their membership were now more strongly committed to the organization than ever before. For those attending, this annual gathering provided a much-needed relief, after one piece of bad news after another had sent shock waves through their local branches. The fact that the previously imprisoned Bebel could speak to the delegates was seen as a signal of hope, inflicting new energy into the exhausted organization. Like Kuyper, Bebel directly appealed to the hearts of the delegates. But in contrast to the Dutch party founder, the Social Democratic rhetoric was based on the direct involvement of party members in the SDAP. Procedures had helped the party to survive during hardship. Sharing leadership responsibilities among many activists had made them even more dedicated to the contested organization.

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[599] Quote is from Mehring, *Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie: Von Lassalles "Offenem Antwortschreiben" bis zum Erfurter Programm, 1863 bis 1891*, 2:377.

[600] The party community also looked after the family of prosecuted party members. For instance, after the imprisonment of Liebknecht, the board promised him that "for everything else the friends will take care off." ("für alles Andere werden die Freunde sorgen") 'Bracke to Liebknecht', 29 May 1872, in Eckert, *Aus den Anfängen der Braunschweiger Arbeiterbewegung*, 30.

[601] "Von allen Seiten hat man die sozial-demokratische Partei geschmäht; mit allen Mitteln, die zu Gebote standen, hat man sie zu unterdrücken gesucht (…)! Heute, wo wir hier zu unserem Parteikongresse versammelt sind, dürfen wir mit Stolz und Genughtung es aussprechen: alles, was unsere Gegner gethan haben, - weit entfernt, unsere Reihen zu schwächen, und weit entfernt, unsern Muth sinken zu machen, hat es im Gegentheil dazu beigetragen, unsere Reihen zu vergrößern, unseren Muth zu stählen! " "Protokoll über den zweiten Congreβ," 5.

[602] "mißlichen Zeitumstände" Centralkommission, "An die Parteigenossen."

4. Hybrid Representation in the British NLF

4.1 Master and Darling of his Town

While German Social Democrats and Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries adhered to different practices of representation, the British National Liberal Federation established a hybrid model by incorporating features of both the procedural and charismatic model. In the metaphor of the family from the beginning of this chapter, Chamberlain was the charismatic father who spent his work weeks in the capital and saw his family only for the weekends. In the first couple of years, the distance between party leader and headquarters worked well for the NLF. The organization became a powerful political player, and Chamberlain soon secured a government post. After less than two years, the NLF could proudly announce a growth from 46 associations to 101.[603] Chamberlain applauded the organization for its public attention: "Now, we cannot complain, I think, that since the formation of this association, our existence has been ignored – on the contrary we have been the subject of innumerable essays and leading articles, and almost countless speeches from persons in every class, and of very varied extent of information."[604] But with this sudden rise came considerable obstacles in managing the young organization. Despite its remarkable growth, the NLF soon encountered the tension between procedural and charismatic membership participation. While procedural representation relied on the community of members who could all potentially serve as leaders, charismatic representation elevated one man above ordinary activists. Balancing between the two, however, turned out to be an impossible task at least for the young organization under the ambitious Chamberlain. Caught in its attempt to combine a truly "popular basis" with a single charismatic leader, the NLF's hybrid form led to the separation from its prominent spokesman.[605]

In the beginning an early split seemed impossible. Chamberlain was the ideal leader for this new type of political organization. As the prominent representative of Radical Liberalism, he shared many features with the paternalistic Abraham Kuyper who ruled the Anti-Revolutionary Party in the Netherlands. Both men were known for their emotional political rhetoric, commanding immediate public attention.[606] Especially in the NLF stronghold

[603] National Liberal Federation, "First Annual Report, Presented at a Meeting of the Council Held in Leeds on Wednesday, January 22nd, 1879" (The "Journal" Printing Offices, 1879), 10, Proceeding of the Council of National Liberal Association, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[604] National Liberal Federation, 21.

[605] "Proceedings," 7.

[606] Abraham Kuyper's rhetoric has been compared to that of the British politician William Gladstone. Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord"; Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 60. For a comparison between Chamberlain and the popular politician Gladstone, see Graham D. Goodland, "Gladstone and His Rivals: Popular Liberal Peceptions of the Party Leadership in the Political Crisis of 1885-1886," in *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914*, ed. Eugenio F. Biagini and Alastair J. Reid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 134–83. For Chamberlain's

Birmingham, Chamberlain connected his ordinary audience with the high politics of parliament in a single speech. An attentive observer of the public and private man, the young Beatrice Potter described the talented orator's popularity among the inhabitants of the city.[607]

> Chamberlain, the master and the darling of his town is received with deafening shouts. The Birmingham citizen (unless he belongs to the despised and down trodden minority) adores "Our Joe", for has he not raised Birmingham to the proud position of one of the great political centres of the universe![608]

In more private circumstances, Chamberlain evoked respect among his Birmingham followers as well. In the evening of the day of the speech, local NLF representatives assembled for dinner at the Chamberlain estate. While the meal was served "[t]he Chief sat silent" and "[h]is faithful followers talked amongst themselves on local matters (…) and looked at him from time to time with respectful admiration."[609] Chamberlain's closest circle of friends and family had to accept his "insistence on subordination," as his most comprehensive biographer Peter Marsh wrote.[610] Chamberlain's friend Jesse Collings declared his devotion to the party leader's success when he wrote that "[t]here is only one thing I care about that is what you name Chamberlains electors. If I thought I could secure a single vote or give reasons why he ought to have support I would gladly do what I am asked."[611] As he assured in this letter, Collings was determined to adjust his political agitation to the advantage of Chamberlain's electoral campaign. This subordination of close supporters also characterized Kuyper who expected similar devotion from those around him.

What made Chamberlain´s experience different from Kuyper's is that the British politician failed to maintain the powerful position of his Dutch counterpart in his party organization. Ironically, it was the growing success of the NLF that triggered the diminishing influence of the party leader. In its early years, Chamberlain had controlled the organization with a strong Birmingham delegation. Chamberlain as the parliamentary representative of Birmingham was elected as the first president and his allies gained important offices, too. Most importantly, the responsibilities of the influential Francis Schnadhorst, secretary of the

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political style, see also Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism*, chap. 5. Chamberlain's biographer Judd emphasizes his "aggressive personality" Judd, *Radical Joe*, 5.

[607] Potter later married Sidney Webb and became the famous Labour activist Beatrice Webb. She was not only in close contact with the Chamberlain's children, but also had a romantic liaison with their father. Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 227–32. For a study of women and political power in Britain, see Hanneke Hoekstra, *De dictatuur van de petticoat: vrouwen en macht in de Britse politiek 1900-1940* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2011).

[608] Beatrice Webb, "Beatrice Webb's Typescript Diary," February 15, 1869, 363, LSE Digital Library, http://archives.lse.ac.uk/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=PASSFIELD%2F1.

[609] Webb, 366.

[610] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 199.

[611] "Jesse Collings to Schnadhorst," August 2, 1883, Manuscript papers relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections University of Bristol.

Birmingham Liberal Association, were extended to the NLF. In addition, J.S. Wright, president of the Birmingham Liberal Association, was the first treasurer. The future mayor of Birmingham, Jesse Collings was elected as Honorary Secretary. William Harris, Birmingham vice-president, became the chairman of the general committee.[612] Despite its strong Birmingham connection, the NLF's political campaign depended on the support of Liberals in other constituencies. To provide these supporters with an incentive and avoid the impression of an unbalanced leadership, the organization established a leadership principle that was similar to the multiple centers of power within the SDAP. While there is no indication of a direct exchange between the two organizations, they both had roots in the highly formalized culture of meetings, gatherings and conventions of the two countries.[613] The leaders of the SDAP coordinated their actions with different local branches that were in charge of board and control commission, not to speak of the independently minded editors of *Der Volksstaat*. In the NLF, the Birmingham majority in the party's leadership was balanced by the appointment of a growing number of vice-presidents who represented the interests of influential local associations like Newcastle-on-Tyne or Liverpool. Even the Birmingham competitors, Manchester and Leeds, were officially recognized with their delegates Leake and Clarke becoming vice-presidents. In a similar way, the large council meetings took place at locations other than Birmingham.

Although publicly committed to the popular model of his organization, Chamberlain opposed this procedural form of representation and discreetly tried to solidify the central position of Birmingham representatives. This went so far that, four years after foundation, he attempted to drive the Manchester group with their "less robust Liberalism" out of the NLF. [614] Their absence from the annual meeting was to be justified to the other delegates by citing "the pressure of their local work and their active connection with local organizations."[615] Also the lower classes of ordinary people, that Chamberlain invoked so frequently, had little influence in the NLF leadership that was dominated by the Liberal elite of Birmingham. Formally, the organization was, of course, based on "popular" representation, but NLF founders preferred to keep things in their own hands. As the historian James Owen has shown, the popular character of the NLF could even mean a limitation of the number of working-class delegates at annual meetings. The NLF rejected associations with strong labor connections, because they did not

[612] Watson, *The National Liberal Federation*, 21; "Proceedings," 30.

[613] Balfour suggests that Chamberlain had read Marx' Communist Manifesto, but there was a longer tradition of assemblies in both countries that emerged in close connection to parliamentary procedures. Balfour, *Britain and Joseph Chamberlain*, 75. Parssinen, "Association, Convention and Anti-Parliament"; Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit*; Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals*; Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie*; van Rijn, *De eeuw van het debat*.

[614] "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst," April 5, 1883, Manuscript papers relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[615] "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst." Already in 1877, Chamberlain tried to prevent the attendance of delegates from Liberal strongholds like Manchester and Leeds, arguing they would threaten the unity of the Federation. Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*, 94 Footnote 3; Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978, chap. 7.

adhere to the middle-class-dominated Birmingham organizational structure that served as a compulsory model.[616]

Already in the first years after the inaugural assembly, it became apparent that this approach was not sustainable. Chamberlain could not impede the influence of other local associations who used NLF's procedures to diversify its leadership. The national assemblies were hosted not only by Birmingham, but also other cities used the opportunity to strengthen their position within the organization. After gathering in Leeds (1879) and Darlington (1880), the NLF returned back to Birmingham for its third meeting (1881), but then continued to pay attention to its periphery in Liverpool (1881), Ashton-under-Lyne (1882), Bristol (1883), Stoke-on-Trent (1884) and Bradford (1885). More importantly, was the change in the leading offices of the organization. Whereas most working-class representatives had to wait much longer for their inclusion into the higher ranks, more privileged members of Liberal constituencies soon gained influence. The third and fourth NLF presidents were recruited from outside of Chamberlain's sphere of influence: in 1881, Henry Fell Pease, the vice-president of the Liberal Association in Darlington, was elected as president.[617] He was followed in 1883 by James Kitson, who was the president of the Leeds Association.[618]

This shifting power balance was further manifested by Chamberlain's increasing abstention from party business. After the electoral victory in 1880, he had successfully negotiated for a position as President of the Board of Trade in the Gladstone administration. His satisfaction with government office, however, was quickly clouded by increased frustration. As a junior cabinet member, Chamberlain was expected to follow the lead of the more experienced ministers, reducing the chances for his populist campaign for his Radical version of Liberalism.[619] Chamberlain maintained his aggressively populist political rhetoric, but government duties increasingly required his presence in London. This inevitably left more room to others to take care of the daily business of the NLF. Often Chamberlain's private secretary William Woodings had to inquire about party business with Secretary Francis Schnadhorst. This gave Schnadhorst the opportunity to become more independent in his office.[620] As an NLF report put it in 1885:

[616] Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*, 94–95; Griffiths, "The Caucus and the Liberal Party.""

[617] National Liberal Federation, "Fourth Annual Report, Meeting of the Council, Held in Liverpool" (The "Journal" Printing Offices, 1881), Proceeding of the Council of National Liberal Association, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[618] National Liberal Federation, "Sixth Annual Report Presented at a Meeting of the Council Held in Bristol" (The "Journal" Printing Offices, 1884), Proceedings of the Council of the National Liberal Federation, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[619] Michael Barker, *Gladstone and Radicalism: The Reconstruction of Liberal Policy in Britain, 1885-94* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1975), 1–4.

[620] McGill, "Francis Schnadhorst," 38–39.

> the demands upon Mr. Schnadhorst, the secretary of the Federation, have been incessant and severe; and his colleagues in the management cannot too strongly express their sense of the manner in which he has met the numerous claims upon him, or of the value of his services alike to the Federation and the Liberal cause throughout the country.[621]

After this praise, it was explained that Schnadhorst's services were of such a "special and urgent importance" that the secretary had to abstain from a parliamentary career of his own, even though several associations had inquired about a possible candidacy.[622] For Schnadhorst, this abstention was more difficult than he admitted to the public, but in retrospect it was a wise choice. This becomes especially apparent if we consider Chamberlain's diminishing role in the organization. Already in 1881, he told Schnadhorst that political office demanded distance from his role in the NLF: "[i]f our meeting is held about that time I should not like to accept another engagement elsewhere. It does not do for a Cabinet Minister to have too many speeches to make at a time when perhaps he may find it very awkward to know what to say."[623] The overworked cabinet member left the final decision on party matters to Schnadhorst, telling the secretary "[p]ersonally I have no objection to the Annual Meeting being fixed for October."[624] Later Chamberlain assigned the communication about one of the NLF's large conferences completely to the secretary, claiming that the diplomatic Schnadhorst would be more successful in convincing the Liberal Party's great men to speak at a demonstration in Birmingham.[625] Schnadhorst arranged the event. Probably the location was changed to Leeds where John Bright and John Morley attended the conference on parliamentary reform in October 1883.[626]

4.2 The Great Party Split

Chamberlain's diminishing influence in the NLF was further aggravated by his controversial political course. In the mid-1880s, Chamberlain was increasingly occupied by his escalating conflict with Prime Minister William Gladstone. Gladstone was a viable and dangerous opponent of the younger politician. The popular Prime Minister was a skilled statesman; even

[621] National Liberal Federation, "Eighth Annual Report Presented at a Meeting of the Council Held in Bradford" (The "Journal" Printing Offices, 1885), 26, Proceedings of the Council of the National Liberal Association, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[622] National Liberal Federation, 27.

[623] "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst," May 8, 1881, Manuscript papers relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[624] "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst."

[625] "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst," September 4, 1883, Manuscript papers relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[626] "Conference on Parliamentary Reform at Leeds" (The "Journal" Printing Offices, 1883), Proceedings Relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the Organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

more important he had acquired a reputation for moral authority in the Liberal community.[627] Chamberlain underestimated the support and stamina of Gladstone, because he saw himself as the future leader of the Liberal Party, impatiently awaiting Gladstone's retirement. To his friends, the ambitious politician wrote that: "Mr. Gladstone himself has positively, although privately, announced his intention of retiring at the end of the present Session." [628] Careful not to reveal his own ambitions, he argued, more broadly, that it was time to take action: "the Radical Members of the Government will no longer be able to shield themselves (…), but must face their responsibility themselves."[629] In order to prepare the renewal of the Liberal Party, Chamberlain asked his allies to write a number of articles in the *Fortnightly Review*, developing a new Radical program in 1883 and 1884. When a year later, Gladstone decided to call for new elections, Chamberlain used these articles to announce his unofficial program in a number of speeches. Although the Radical politician became more conciliatory towards the Gladstone administration before polling started in November 1885, the public punished the entire parliamentary Liberal Party for its internal division.[630] The announcement of the electoral result was more than "something of a disappointment for the Liberal Party," as the great chronicler of the NLF Watson put it euphemistically.[631] Liberal candidates had lost support in all parts of the country. Only for a fortunate few, including Chamberlain, did the outcome turn out to be favorable.[632] In parliament, however, the Liberal government was left with a small majority instead. For Gladstone this was reason enough to announce that he intended to remain Prime Minister to help navigate his party through the crisis.

This was the moment when Chamberlain started to respond with open opposition to Gladstone's administration. Focusing on the topic of Home Rule in Ireland, he escalated the conflict in a policy area where compromise became difficult because of intense moral connotations. Whereas Chamberlain's main goal was social reform in the entire United Kingdom, Gladstone strongly advocated independent Irish legislation, including an autonomous parliament.[633] In this tense situation, Chamberlain hoped for the support of the NLF. The organization quickly issued a circular to local associations, calling for "the most serious

[627] Goodland, "Gladstone and His Rivals."

[628] "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst," May 21, 1885, Manuscript papers relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[629] "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst."

[630] C. H. D. Howard, "Joseph Chamberlain and the 'Unauthorized Programme,'" *The English Historical Review* LXV, no. CCLVII (1950): 477–91.

[631] Watson, *The National Liberal Federation*, 54.

[632] Recent research event suggests that Chamberlain and his Unauthorised Program decisively influenced the public discourse during the electoral campaign, especially in regard to rural areas. Luke Blaxill, "Joseph Chamberlain and the Third Reform Act: A Reassessment of the 'Unauthorized Programme' of 1885," *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 01 (January 2015): 88–117.

[633] Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism*, 217–74. For a more detailed account of the division in 1886 between Chamberlain and Gladstone, see Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 214–54; Jenkins, *The Liberal Ascendancy*, 203–16; Barker, *Gladstone and Radicalism*, 11–53.

consideration to the Ministerial plans."[634] The procedural aspect of the NLF's organizational model was highlighted when the officers affirmed that

> It is only by such action, and the expression of opinion consequent upon it, that the judgement of the Liberal party can be ascertained in a manner which will entitle it to the consideration of the Government and of Parliament; and in the highest interests of both, and of the country at large, it is necessary that this judgement should be clear, and should not be delayed.[635]

The circular asked each association to vote on the matter of Home Rule in a local assembly, determining the NLF's position on the contested issue. Chamberlain responded to this suggestion by organizing a meeting in Birmingham. It was no surprise that the audience of his political base provided their popular representative with a comfortable majority for his opposition to the Gladstone policy.[636]

But Chamberlain had lost his position as the powerful leader who had once controlled the inaugural conference to his advantage. In his absence, the NLF had grown independent, and its new leadership established contact with Gladstone through Secretary Schnadhorst.[637] Because of the severity of the situation, it was decided to summon a meeting of the large representative body of the NLF to coordinate further action. This general council was not held in Birmingham but confined to neutral territory in the Westminster Palace Hotel in London on the May 5th. The "number of delegates attending was unprecedented," making it difficult for Chamberlain to control the outcome of the event.[638] In front of this large audience, the current president of the NLF, James Kitson, directly blamed Chamberlain for his double strategy. Kitson's argument was that although Chamberlain had promised "confidence in Gladstone," his demand for the "retention of Irish representatives at Westminster" was a clear betrayal of the Prime Minister's policy on Home Rule.[639] This speech impressed the delegates who voted in favor of "the principle of self-government (…) of the Prime Minister."[640] The "great party split" was formalized with the general council quickly confirming its new political allegiance by sending a copy to Gladstone.[641]

After their defeat, Chamberlain's supporters resigned from their offices. The response of the NLF was polite, and they expressed their "hope that the time is not far distant when they

[634] National Liberal Federation, "Ninth Annual Report Presented at a Meeting of the Council Held at Leeds" (The "Journal" Printing Offices, 1886), 13, Proceedings of the Council of the National Liberal Federation, Special Collections, University of Bristol.
[635] National Liberal Federation, 13.
[636] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 242–43.
[637] For Gladstone's relationship with Schnadhorst, see Barker, *Gladstone and Radicalism*, 108–9.
[638] Watson, *The National Liberal Federation*, 55.
[639] National Liberal Federation, "Ninth Annual Report," 15.
[640] National Liberal Federation, 15.
[641] Watson, *The National Liberal Federation*, 59.

will again be willing to co-operate in promoting the work of the National Liberal Federation."[642] This invitation was not extended to Chamberlain, whose return was out of the question:

> The Committee cannot record this fact without expressing their sense of the distinguished services rendered by Mr. Chamberlain in the formation of the Federation, and during the subsequent eight years of its existence; and their great regret that he should have felt it necessary to terminate his connection with it.[643]

This defeat spurred Chamberlain on to the creation of a new organization. Initially, there was little support for his version of Radical Unionism, forcing him to cooperate with his opponents in the Conservative Party.[644] While Chamberlain would eventually defeat Gladstone's Home Rule bill, the former hero of Radical Liberalism had become an outcast in his political community. For his new organization, he had to rely on family members and friends to fill the offices.[645] Even Chamberlain's private secretary William Woodings left his former master to accept a position as special secretary responsible for voter registration in the NLF.[646] Even more painful for Chamberlain was probably the formal integration of the NLF into the parliamentary Liberal Party. Not only did more than seventy MPs and fifty new associations join the NLF after his exit.[647] In addition, the organization moved its offices to London next to its former organizational competitor the Liberal Central Association (LCA).[648] Schnadhorst was appointed to a double role as secretary of both organizations, merging NLF and LCA for a joint electoral campaign. His responsibilities included administrative tasks, but also finances and the selection of candidates of the Liberal Party.[649] The secretary "became practically the official representative of the Federation; the referee to whom all the difficulties and doubts of Liberal constituencies were submitted."[650] Until his decreasing health forced him to resign in 1893, the former Chamberlain supporter remained in the power center of the Liberal Party.[651]

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[642] National Liberal Federation, "Ninth Annual Report," 16.

[643] National Liberal Federation, 16.

[644] See for instance, Birmingham where Conservatives and Liberal Unionists formed an alliance that left the city as a Conservative stronghold after 1890 Christopher Green, "Birmingham's Politics, 1873-1891: The Local Basis of Change," *Midland History* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 1973): 84–98.

[645] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 251.

[646] McGill, "Francis Schnadhorst."

[647] National Liberal Federation, "Ninth Annual Report," 17.

[648] Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978, 349–56. Three years earlier, Chamberlain had called the LCA the organization of "enfeebled Whigs", "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst," October 8, 1883, Manuscript papers relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

[649] McGill, "Francis Schnadhorst."

[650] Watson, *The National Liberal Federation*, 60.

[651] McGill, "Francis Schnadhorst," 38–39.

5. Three Models of Party Organization

The three nineteenth-century party organizations discussed in this chapter offer two lessons. The first is about the diversity of organizational solutions to the challenge of establishing a functioning mass membership organization. The second demonstrates the practical consequences of these solutions. In the Netherlands, the Anti-Revolutionary Party achieved the representation of its constituency through the charismatic organizational model that focused on the omnipresent political leader Abraham Kuyper. The success of the ARP did not depend on the influence of active members in party procedures, but the mobilization of the broad community of Orthodox Protestant farmers, ministers and workers. Despite the occasional appearance of internal opposition within the party organization, for instance by the electoral organization of Marnix, Kuyper succeeded in disciplining the ARP and constituting his position as party leader for the rest of the century.[652] This strong basis allowed the Protestant minister to transform a loosely organized social movement of dissatisfied Orthodox Protestants into an effective political organization whose popular appeal made him Prime Minister at the beginning of the twentieth century.

For the German Social Democratic Workers' Party, this sort of massive mobilization was unattainable in the early years. Although the working classes were the primary object of the party ideology, most workers did not respond enthusiastically to mobilizing attempts, either deliberately abstaining from party membership or not even knowing about the organization. In accord with its commitment to membership participation, the SDAP built a procedural model of organization that focused on empowering ordinary members within its own organization. This turned out to be a valuable strategy, because it created a considerable number of committed and qualified party members. When state persecution became especially grave, the arrested Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel board could be replaced with the provisional board of the party branch in Dresden. In the following years oppression strengthened the identity and bond among party members, alleviating internal conflict in the face of a powerful and dangerous adversary. The leadership of the party understood this mechanism and the need to include their members into its procedures, soon returning to its procedural participation. When the board moved to Leipzig, it was again local members who chose the officers of the leadership of the party. At the party congress in 1871, the party returned to its original procedures and the delegates selected Hamburg as the location of the board, leaving it to local members to determine who exactly would fulfil the individual posts of the leadership.

The study of these two party organizations provides a new perspective for understanding why Joseph Chamberlain failed to maintain control of the NLF. The establishment of a national membership organization required drastic decisions from party

[652] Only when Kuyper became prime minister his leadership could be actively challenged by other Anti-Revolutionary leaders. Roel Kuiper, "Uit het dal omhoog," in *De Antirevolutionaire Partij, 1829-1980*, ed. G. Harinck, Roel Kuiper, and Peter Bak (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), 91–112.

leaders. The Dutch party leader Kuyper ensured the coherence of ARP agitation by becoming the omnipresent leader of the party. The founders of the SDAP were similarly adept: they followed the command of their members, accepting that this inevitably meant limiting their own influence. Chamberlain, however, the man who was so popular for the content of his politics, was not willing to accept such extreme measures in his political organization. He erected a hybrid organization relying both on his charismatic leadership and the procedural inclusion of political activists. This strategy worked as long as the majority of active members agreed with the political course chosen by Chamberlain. Only when Chamberlain started to boldly diverge from the preferences of his followers on the contested issue of Home Rule did the representatives of his organization rebel against their former president. While Chamberlain tried to conduct his charismatic politics like the paternalistic Kuyper, the procedural commitment of his organization forced the controversial politician to withdraw from the NLF in 1886. In the light of Chamberlain's decisive role in establishing the organization, this split was a remarkable process. But it did not mean the end of the party organization of the NLF. Rather it serves, like the examples of the charismatic and the procedural practices in ARP and SDAP, as a reminder of the inherent difficulties of implementing representation.

V. The Role of Elections

1. The Illusion of Electoral Efficiency?

In 1886 the National Liberal Federation assistant secretary, Croxden Powell, summarized the then contemporary perception that the "'National Liberal Federation' (…) is the most powerful organization of the country."[653] For many British commentators, the NLF was the "new electoral power in the land."[654] This perception was strengthened by previous statements of NLF representatives like Henry Crosskey who proudly mentioned the "definite and distinct reputation," which had impressed "friends and foes" alike.[655] Also the political opponents of the NLF accepted its electoral success. For instance, the Conservative *Pall Mall Gazette* worriedly reported that the Birmingham Liberal Association "now nominates almost all members of the town council, the board of guardians, and the school board."[656] This impression vanished in the coming decades, but social scientist Mosei Ostrogorski still became famous by critically noting that the NLF dominated national politics entirely by its "machinery."[657] The historian and later NLF president Robert Watson provided a similar, though more favorable, version of the power of electoral organization that he described as the "force of Liberal unity as organized by such a machinery of associations."[658] Only with further temporal distance did historians start to critically engage with these early descriptions and begin to reject the image of the potent organization of the NLF.[659] In the 1940s, Francis Herrick suspected that Ostrogorski had exaggerated NLF history, giving too much credit to the "inherent vitality of the 'machine.'"[660] More recently, Biagini concluded that Chamberlain had neither the financial means nor the organizational structure to develop an effective electoral campaign organization.[661] This criticism can be confirmed by the Liberals' meagre electoral performance in the NLF home ground of Birmingham. Although the city was already a "stronghold of parliamentary Liberalism" before Chamberlain and his peers started to advance electoral

[653] George Henry Croxden Powell, *National Liberal Organisation* (The National Press Agency, Limited, 1886), 4.

[654] "The Caucus System," *North Wales Chronicle*, August 17, 1878, British Library Newspapers. See also Diamond, *Victorian Sensation*.

[655] Henry W. Crosskey, *The Liberal Association - the "600" - of Birmingham.* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1877), 1.

[656] "The Caucus in England," *Pall Mall Gazette*, August 20, 1878, British Library Newspapers.

[657] Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization*, 1:xvii."

[658] Watson, *The National Liberal Federation*, 37.

[659] Dunbabin, "Electoral Reforms and Their Outcome," 116; Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 1978, 140–54; Rossi, *The Transformation of the British Liberal Party*, 119–20; Tholfsen, "The Origins of the Birmingham Caucus."

[660] Herrick, "The Origins," 113.

[661] Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism*, 167–77.

organization, they had to accept numerous electoral defeats.[662] In the election for the city´s first school board in 1870 the Liberals could not prevent Conservative control of the institution that their National Education League had vigorously promoted.[663] Also in the council elections of 1872, Francis Schnadhorst, the future secretary of the Birmingham Liberal Association, did not succeed in convincing the voters of St. Mary ward of his candidacy.[664] Even for Chamberlain, who quickly rose in the political institutions of Birmingham, this was a difficult year. The ambitious politician could sustain his council seat only after he had formed an alliance with the Labor activist W.J. Davies.[665]

This discrepancy between reputation and actual achievements of political organization does not mean that the belief in its power can be dismissed as an irrelevant historical curiosity. Rather this chapter focuses on the function of the rhetoric of organizational power on institutional consolidation in the first years after party foundation. For this purpose, I study the role of the elections, which has been often described as a decisive factor in the emergence of party organization. Political scientists have argued that party organizations were founded to address the growing number of ordinary voters who emerged after suffrage rights reform.[666] In the historical context of the nineteenth century, however, the situation was more complicated, and elections were only one of many options to exert political influence. In comparison to other more established forms of political participation like petitions or protest, elections were not the easiest choice to exercise political influence. Moreover, in times of limited suffrage, the new party organizations remained in a disadvantaged position because most of their ordinary followers had still not been granted voting rights.[667] If, as in Germany, universal male suffrage was introduced early, political outsiders faced oppression and imprisonment.[668] In other words, for the first years after party formation, electoral activities cannot be treated as a given. One needs to rather ask why party founders increasingly engaged in electoral campaigns? The case

[662] Green, "Birmingham's Politics," 84.

[663] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 50. After School Boards were introduced through Foster's Education Bill in 1870, the National Education League started to agitate against them, because it feared Anglican control over local education funds. Balfour, *Britain and Joseph Chamberlain*, 81–89.

[664] McGill, "Francis Schnadhorst," 19.

[665] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 61.

[666] The political science literature is discussed in more detail in the first chapter of this dissertation. An example of the political science focus on elections and party emergence is Boix and Stokes who argue that parties "developed into gradually more cohesive machines", after "the electorate expanded and elections became clean and truly competitive mechanisms of selection". "The Emergence of Parties and Party Systems."

[667] This was also an argument that party founders used themselves. See de Jong, "Het antirevolutionaire volk."

[668] Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie*; Kupfer, "Die organisatorische Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie"; Wolfgang Schröder, "Wahlkämpfe und Parteientwicklung: Zur Bedeutung der Reichstagswahlen für die Formierung der Sozialdemokratie zur politischen Massenpartei (Sachsen 1867-1881)," *Moving the Social* 20, no. 0 (1998): 1–66.

of the British NLF suggests that the image of electoral power was part of a wider strategy to be recognized as a relevant actor in national politics. At the same time, elections had an internal function as an argument to consolidate organizational structure. It was no coincidence that discussions about candidacies and electoral strategies quickly became crucial components of early party life. For party founders, they offered the opportunity to strengthen their leadership position within the new organizations, both in regard to parliamentary elites and ordinary followers.

2. The Myth of the Electoral Machine: the British NLF

2.1 The Power of Disciplined Organization

Joseph Chamberlain's national career started with the single-issue organization of the National Education League in 1869. While the local Birmingham Education Association had primarily gathered information about the state of municipal education, its national umbrella organization followed an explicit political agenda.[669] At the beginning, the leaders of the National Education League tried to hide its electoral activities by avoiding direct references to elections. The founding meeting generally discussed how to create "an irresistible public opinion" and refrained from publicizing the electoral strategy that it intended to pursue with its financial means.[670] When its *Monthly Paper* praised the "electoral work" of its agents, it had to remind members of the "confidential nature" of these campaigns.[671] This concealing strategy was quickly adjusted when the League assumed a more aggressive political strategy in response to Foster's Education Bill. For the by-elections in Bath in 1873, the organization tried to pressure the Liberal candidate Hayter to support their attack on the government's school legislation. When Hayter refused to cooperate, the League nominated J. C. Cox as an alternative candidate and instructed Secretary Francis Adams and Howard Evens to go to Bath for the purpose of coordinating the campaign in the local constituency.[672]

Upon arrival in Bath the small delegation was drawn into a violent conflict with the supporters of Hayter. A particularly agitated campaigner "threw a quantity of cayenne pepper into the eyes" of the two men, who "were temporarily blinded" and needed assistance on their

[669] A. J. Marcham, "The Birmingham Education Society and the 1870 Education Act," *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 8, no. 1 (1976): 11–16; Taylor, "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education."

[670] National Education League, "Report of the First General Meeting of Members of the National Education League," 5, 10. Auspos, "Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics." Indeed, even the leaders of single-issue organizations had discussed whether their influence on parliamentary candidates was morally desirable and practically effective. Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure*, 32–37.

[671] "Monthly Statement," *Monthly Paper*, January 1873, 38 edition, 1, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham.

[672] Taylor, "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education," 214.

way back to the hotel.[673] The conflict harmed both sides, who had to share the Liberal electorate between their two candidates. As a consequence, the victory went to the Conservative candidate Lord Grey de Wilton.[674] In this situation, Chamberlain used the public attention to position himself as the leader of a powerful political movement. Instead of ignoring the public outcry or apologizing for the escalation of the electoral campaign, he warned that Britain would "see the lesson of the Bath election again and again repeated."[675] This aggressive statement was not a beginner's mistake, caused by inexperience in organizing national political alliances, as some historians have argued.[676] Throughout his career, Chamberlain used provocative rhetoric as an essential component of political strategy. In this way, the Bath incident became an early "*publicity* success."[677] Even if Chamberlain was driven by naivety, he had managed to make education the "prime topic of public discussion."[678] In the following years, electoral volatility further intensified the public discussion about electoral organization. After the defeat of the Liberal Party in the 1874 election, the British public came to believe that it was primarily single-issue organizations like the National Education League that played an important role in the "rapid disintegration" of the parliamentary Liberal Party.[679] Chamberlain followed this logic and wrote that Liberal pressure groups had caused the electoral defeat because they had split the Liberal vote with their strategy of electoral pressure.[680] As a result, he chose an even bolder approach to electoral organization that was embodied by the foundation of the National Liberal Federation in 1877.[681] Instead of diverting attention to the single-issue topic of education, the new party organization aimed at coordinating and directly shaping the electoral campaigns of local Liberal associations. Chamberlain directly connected these intensified organizational practices to the public concerns about new electoral practices. The NLF would become a powerful electoral force, because it represented the "great majority" of the "people."[682]

These claims made the NLF an easy target for the criticism of Conservatives like Benjamin Disraeli. Already in its founding year, Disraeli put the organization in the context of

[673] Howard Evans, *Radical Fights of Forty Years* (London: Daily News & Leader, 1913), 29.

[674] Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure*, 131–34; Parry, *Democracy and Religion*, 381.

[675] The quote is from a letter to the *Spectator* in 1873 in Auspos, "Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics," 191.

[676] See Taylor who wrote that Chamberlain was not a "man in blinkers, unable even to see any point of view but his own." "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education," 86. Also in connection to Chamberlain's activities in the temperance movement, these arguments have been made. James B. Brown, "The Temperance Career of Joseph Chamberlain, 1870-1877: A Study in Political Frustration," *Albion* 4, no. 1 (1972): 29–44.

[677] Parry, *Democracy and Religion*, 381.

[678] Taylor, "Birmingham and the Movement for National Education," 93.

[679] Jenkins, *The Liberal Ascendancy*, 138. See also Parry, *The Rise and Fall*.

[680] Chamberlain, "The next Page." See also Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure*, 9–37.

[681] Auspos, "Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics."

[682] Chamberlain, "The Liberal Party," 292.

the politically corrupt system of the US by comparing it to the American Caucus.[683] The British press followed this lead and attacked the popular element of the NLF as a "transparent sham."[684] Commenting on the local branch of Bradford, the *Ipswich Journal* raised the question "why have so unmanageably large a Committee?" [685] Instead of the 300 people in its leadership, a much smaller committee "of five or seven do it as well as several hundreds."[686] If, however, the purpose was the creation of a broad popular basis, then the question really was "why stop at a Committee of Three Hundred?"[687] If popular participation was the main concern, "why not take in the whole party?"[688] In this case, the party was the community of all Liberals in the country, regardless whether they were Radical or Whig. The NLF, however, assumed a false representative function: it "pretends to be founded upon popular election."[689]

This sort of criticism dominated the debate about the NLF, but it lacked a solid empirical basis. While these commentators fiercely challenged the moral basis of the new organization, they immediately accepted that it possessed the ability to decisively influence elections. As he had done before, Chamberlain actively supported this myth. Responding to Disraeli, the NLF president "accepted the abuse of the Conservatives as a compliment," as his biographer Marsh observed.[690] Offering a reinterpretation of the label Caucus, Chamberlain argued that his critics had misunderstood the American model, "[i]n truth, (…) the caucus protects individuality and secures independence against tyranny."[691] At the same time, he upheld the impression that he was the leader of a powerful electoral force that had "enabled the party to develop its full strength (…)" and "enlisted thousands and tens of thousands of our most active citizens."[692] Right after the results of the 1880 elections were published, Chamberlain claimed that his organization had obtained sixty out of the sixty-seven boroughs of its campaign.[693] From a strictly quantitative aspect, there were enough grounds to question this exaggerated interpretation. One critical observer wrote in the *Preston Chronicle* that "Mr. Chamberlain's figures (…) do not prove much."[694] In total, the Liberal Party had won more than

[683] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 124. For the negative connotations of the US model to Caucus politics see Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*, 103–19; Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism*, chap. 4.
[684] "The Caucus in England."
[685] "The Caucus in England."
[686] "The Caucus - Shall We Have It?," *Ipswich Journal*, January 14, 1879, British Library Newspapers.
[687] "The Caucus - Shall We Have It?"
[688] "The Caucus - Shall We Have It?"
[689] "The Caucus in England."
[690] Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 124.
[691] Joseph Chamberlain, "A New Political Organization" (National Liberal Federation, 1878), 725, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham.
[692] Chamberlain, 730.
[693] Mentioned in Rossi, *The Transformation of the British Liberal Party*, 119. Original article: Joseph Chamberlain, "The Caucus," *The Times*, April 13, 1880, The Times Digital Archive.
[694] "The 'Caucus' System," *Preston Chronicle*, April 17, 1880, British Library Newspapers.

400 seats, making it "more than probable (…) that (…) Mr. Chamberlain's sixty-seven boroughs were prone to the same influencies which have secured their success all over the country."[695]

These empirical observations remained a minority view. In general, the heated debate about the political model of the Caucus had made the organization an electoral power in the public eye. After the defeat of the parliamentary Liberal Party in the previous elections, contemporaries were looking for a reasonable explanation to account for its unexpected success.[696] Although Chamberlain's organization was less effective than most people believed, they saw the narrative of the electoral machine as the more reasonable explanation. In fact, the idea of the electoral power of the Caucus was so convincing that contemporaries wondered whether this organizational model could be applied to other political orientations.[697] One commentator thought that the spread of party organizations was a positive development. He suggested setting up "some similar organization on the part of the Conservative party."[698] But the majority of critics feared that the electoral practices of the NLF provided ambitious politicians with the tools of voter manipulation. Like in an avalanche, those initially small changes of political structure could destroy the entire political system. This led to alarmed warnings that "if we admit the system of government by the caucus on the one side it will speedily climb to power on the other; so that we may see the political life of the country brigaded under the SCHNADHORSTS and HEAVENS."[699]

Schnadhorst and Heavens were the secretaries of the Liberal and Conservative Associations of Birmingham.[700] In particular, Schnadhorst, who was also secretary of the national organizational structure of the NLF, became the personification of this new type of electoral organization. In newspapers, his persona was directly related to the idea of an effective apparatus. Cartoons depicted him as the successful wirepuller behind the industrialized machine of the Caucus. This image summarized the public impression that the NLF enabled skilled administrators to manipulate the electorate like small mechanical components. While it was believed that these practices were extremely effective, their moral aspects and scandal-driven coverage attracted most attention. These continued controversies

[695] "The 'Caucus' System."

[696] Parry, *The Rise and Fall*.

[697] Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism*, chap. 5. See also the German Conservatives who copied the model of the revolutionary clubs in 1848 in Berlin. Waling, "1848 Clubkoorts en revolutie," 253–55.

[698] J.B. Fraser, "The Caucus," *The Ipswich Journal*, December 14, 1878, British Library Newspapers. Probably Fraser became an influential Liberal in Ipswich, which makes his comments dubious. Joy Bounds, *A Song of Their Own: The Fight for Votes for Women in Ipswich* (The History Press, 2014), n.p.

[699] "The Caucus in England."

[700] Historian Owen mentions a Charles Havens as leader of the Birmingham Conservatives Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*, 112.

allowed Chamberlain to assume the position of a nationally recognized political figure that would soon be transformed into an actual government office.

2.2 The Rebellious Side of Mass Mobilization

The widely shared concerns about the electoral practices of the Caucus were related to the fears that the mobilized masses, once mobilized, could engage in violent unrest. On the other hand, the Caucus was often presented as a well-disciplined electoral machine. In general, Victorian political culture in Britain was characterized by an aggressive style, incorporating sharp political debates and regularly also physical force.[701] In the first half of the nineteenth century, disenfranchised citizens used violence to express their support or opposition for electoral candidates in the local context.[702] Also in Birmingham there was a longer tradition of political violence that preceded Caucus politics. Already in the 1830s demonstrations of Chartists could end in a "pitched battle" between 2,000 police men and angry protesters in the Bull Ring.[703] In 1868, a man pretending to be a Liberal canvasser told Birmingham voters that their electoral strategy was adjusted, making the prior voting scheme obsolete. While this was a fraudulent intervention, it was the response of Liberal voters that was seen as the undisciplined side of popular politics. Once the fraud was discovered, no fewer than two hundred Liberals chased the deceiver who had to flee the neighborhood.[704]

After the foundation of the National Liberal Federation, it seemed for a short moment as if the well-organized machine could prevent such spontaneous outbursts.[705] NLF leaders depended on a coordinated and disciplined membership to use the large number of their followers effectively, and respectable behavior was important for the political agenda of Radical Liberalism. Especially with regard to the political campaign on suffrage reform, the orderly behavior of NLF followers could serve as proof of ordinary people's disposition for political participation. In 1881 a large number of NLF representatives attentively listened to Francis Schnadhorst when he discussed the advantages of the *Next Reform Bill* in Newcastle-on-Tyne.[706] For a *Conference on Parliamentary Reform* in 1883 in Leeds, NLF delegates cooperated

[701] Lawrence, *Speaking for the People*, 184; Rosalind Crone, *Violent Victorians: Popular Entertainment in Nineteenth-Century London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012). Vernon has argued that with the emergence of the party, the more spontaneous and uncontrolled outburst of popular emotion became increasingly restrained. Vernon, *Politics and the People*, chaps. 4–6.

[702] O'Gorman, "Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies."

[703] Stephens, "Political and Administrative History."

[704] Briggs, *Borough and City*, 168.

[705] Vernon suggests that after parties brought an end to this sort of unregulated popular outburst, it was increasingly criticized and, more importantly, disciplined by party officials. Vernon, *Politics and the People*, 215–16.

[706] Francis Schnadhorst, "The next Reform Bill: A Paper Read at a Conference of Liberals Held in Connection with the National Liberal Federation at Newcastle-on-Tyne, November 23rd, 1881" January 1, 1881, 12.

with the two organizations of the National Reform Union and London and Counties Liberal Union.[707] The result was an enormous gathering with more than 2,220 delegates, coming from Accrington to Yorkshire, who engaged in a "long and spirited discussion on the question of the urgency of reform."[708] Only two weeks later, another conference was held in Glasgow where the MP Charles Dilke asked the peaceful meeting to support the motions of Leeds.[709] The audience strongly appreciated these respectable efforts and came in their thousands to NLF conferences. A notable moment was the evening of the Ninth Annual Meeting in 1886, when the NLF hosted a public meeting that was open not only to the delegates, but also to local inhabitants with more than 10,000 people attending.[710]

For the general public, these conferences did not appease their fears about violent outbursts of popular politics. The revolutions in France and America had demonstrated that democratic practices not only led to violence, but also inspired the corruption of the political process.[711] In addition, the discussion about the Second Reform Act had strengthened concerns about the fitness of ordinary people to make political decisions. Growing reports about the social conditions in working class neighborhoods seemed to confirm the conviction that they were not ready for such important responsibilities.[712] As a consequence, critics wondered whether parliamentarians of lower social standing would give way to the most vulgar aspect of politics.[713] Even adherents of electoral reform were not sure whether a more inclusive suffrage was desirable.[714] Working class activists, for instance, appeared to be skeptical about assigning the vote to every man, regardless of his employment.[715] Chamberlain actively supported these concerns by discussing political violence in connection with his followers. Although his

[707] "Conference on Parliamentary Reform at Leeds."

[708] Watson, *The National Liberal Federation*, 37.

[709] Watson, 38–39.

[710] Watson, 62.

[711] For history of term and concept of democracy, see Saunders, "Democracy."

[712] Rohan McWilliam, *Popular Politics in Nineteenth Century England*, vol. Taylor & Francis e-Library, Historical Connections (London: Routledge, 2002); Brian Howard Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians the Temperance Question in England, 1815-1872*, 2nd ed., ACLS Humanities E-Book (Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1994); Marcham, "The Birmingham Education Society."

[713] Joanna Innes, Mark Philp, and Robert Saunders, "The Rise of Democratic Discourse in the Reform Era: Britain in the 1839s and 1840s," in *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Age of Revolutions: America, France, Britain, Ireland 1750-1850*, ed. Mark Philp and Joanna Innes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 114–28.

[714] For the development of this idea in the first half of the nineteenth century, see Joanna Innes and Mark Philp, "Introduction," in *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Age of Revolutions: America, France, Britain, Ireland 1750-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2013. A discussion of later developments in connection to the Caucus can be found in Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism*, 169–76. For working-class visions of how to involve the working classes in politics, see Owen, *Labour and the Caucus*, 92–120. For the Second Reform Act Robert Saunders, "The Politics of Reform and the Making of the Second Reform Act, 1848-1867," *The Historical Journal* 50, no. 3 (2007): 571–91.

[715] Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform*, chap. 6.

organization avoided direct calls for unrest, he presented it as a viable possibility in response to prolonged political discrimination. Already before the foundation of the organization, the NLF president experimented with this impression, when he wrote that "[a]narchy and revolution will be impossible when all just claims are satisfied by ordinary constitutional process."[716] This quote was not an appeal for a peaceful political transition. Rather it functioned as a direct threat of civil unrest if working-class demands continued to be ignored. After the Liberal campaign for suffrage rights reform was impeded by the House of Lords, Chamberlain increased political pressure by referring to older practices of popular agitation. In August 1884, he reminded his supporters that "in 1832 a hundred thousand Midland men were sworn to march to London at need."[717] This historical legacy still mattered for the inhabitants of Birmingham: "it would be a mistake to suppose that we are less earnest or less resolute than our forefathers." [718] Chamberlain's political adversaries could not ignore this threat of an angry Birmingham mob targeting the British capital. Conservative leader Lord Salisbury suggested that Chamberlain should be careful lest he return "from his adventures with a broken head if nothing worse".[719] Chamberlain responded in a similar way and proposed that Salisbury should go for a picnic in Hyde Park where a large public demonstration in favor of suffrage extension had taken place earlier.[720]

These threats also had an impact on political practices. In October 1884, the Tories planned a rally with the prominent party members Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Randolph Churchill. Taking place in Aston Manor, the "Aston Riots" were located in the North-East of Birmingham, giving the "working men of Birmingham" enough reason to attack the Tories.[721] At the day of the event, an angry mob "pulled off the coping of the wall" that surrounded the venue of the rally and stormed the event.[722] The violence and the involvement of prominent political figures brought this local incident national attention. The *Spectator* criticized this unorderly form of political expression, writing that

> The real fear which checks the final triumph of Liberalism among the middle classes in this country is not a dread of what the masses will do with their votes, but of what they will do with their fists,—a dread, that is, lest under a Democratic Government law and order should not be adequately maintained.[723]

[716] Chamberlain, "The Liberal Party," 295.
[717] Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, 1932, 1:467.
[718] Garvin, 1:467.
[719] Garvin, 1:467.
[720] Garvin, 1:467.
[721] "The Riot at Aston Hall, Birmingham," 293 Hansard (HC) 1803-2005 § (1884), http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1884/oct/24/public-meetings-the-riot-at-aston-hall.
[722] The Riot at Aston Hall, Birmingham.
[723] "The Riots at Birmingham," *The Spectator*, October 18, 1884, 5, The Spectator Archive.

This was the moment when Chamberlain's public "notoriety" reached its peak.[724] The Tories accused the NLF president and Birmingham MP of having unleashed this working-class aggression. Yet, for Chamberlain, these accusations were not a reason to abandon his aggressive rhetoric. Like the accusations of electoral manipulation, these attacks were a means to gain further political attention. The controversial politician used the tumult in Aston to frame his politics as, what his early biographer Garvin euphemistically called, the struggle of the "People against the Peers."[725] Once the Tories decided to put the riots on the parliamentary agenda, Chamberlain grabbed the opportunity. In a fierce debate, he vigorously defended the aggression of his local followers by blaming the violent outcome of the rally on its Conservative organizers. As he explained, the Tories had earlier obstructed the extension of suffrage rights, leaving the mob no option other than unrest to express their discontent. Attacking Randolph Churchill as the prominent participant of the rally, Chamberlain reminded the House that the Tory MP "at a meeting in Edinburgh, in 1883, declared that he would never give his assent to the franchise until the labourers showed their earnestness by pulling down railings and by engaging the police and the military."[726] The accused Churchill did not have a good counterargument and responded a bit helplessly by asking the speaker "whether it is in order for a Minister of the Crown to put words into the mouth of a Member of Parliament, which that Member of Parliament never uttered?"[727] Repeating the previous argument, Churchill did not respond to the accusation and demanded that Chamberlain had to admit his "direct complicity in these riots."[728]

The accused Chamberlain, however, had no incentive to bring an end to the discussions in parliament. Even the attempts of local foremen to ease the conflict remained without effect. The Birmingham leaders of the Conservative and Liberal organizations, Hopkins and Dixon, did their best to prevent further escalation of the conflict. They exchanged multiple letters to establish a truce, agreeing "to withdraw all reflections" about the involvement of each side.[729] But for Chamberlain, the controversies around Aston had a decisive advantage, giving him reason to repeat his position in parliament. As a result, he was soon recognized as an influential member of the parliamentary Liberal Party. Indeed, in 1880 the NLF leader gained access to the highest political ranks of the nation when William Gladstone invited the inexperienced politician to join his cabinet as President of the Board of Trade. The early appointment of the Radical parliamentarian was inspired by Chamberlain's fame as the "coming man amongst the Radicals"

[724] Jay, *Joseph Chamberlain*, 78.

[725] Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, 1932, 1:quote from 466, see also 466-468.

[726] The Riot at Aston Hall, Birmingham.

[727] The Riot at Aston Hall, Birmingham, 24.

[728] The Riot at Aston Hall, Birmingham.

[729] "George Dixon to J. Satchell Hopkins," February 18, 1885, Manuscript papers relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the organisation of the Liberal Party, University of Bristol Special Collections.

who commanded a powerful electoral force.[730] In this way, the NLF leader became an essential component of British politics, not because of electoral power, but because of the notorious reputation of his electoral practices. The scandals around the disciplined, yet potentially uncontrollable, ordinary followers of this new organization made him a national politician to reckon with, after less than four years of parliamentary experience.

3. Elections as a Mechanism for Internal Consolidation: the Dutch ARP

3.1 A Future in "Darkness"?

There are some remarkable similarities between Joseph Chamberlain and the Dutch party founder Abraham Kuyper. Both men were considered political outsiders in the early stages of their careers. Both tried to convince their parliamentary peers to implement a more radical political agenda. Like Chamberlain, Kuyper benefited from the already existing parliamentary network of his political orientation that provided the ordinary Protestant minister with a direct connection to national politics. Kuyper also resembled Chamberlain in quickly understanding that the established parliamentarians of his political orientation were not willing to follow his provocative demands. Like Chamberlain, Kuyper turned to popular organization to increase his political influence. Arguing that his followers were the ordinary men of the lower classes, Kuyper presented himself as the true representative of his ordinary followers' political interest. He used emotional rhetoric to mobilize Orthodox Protestants, connecting his private life to his public persona.[731] Kuyper, like Chamberlain, experienced fierce opposition to his populist strategy. Many Dutch critics feared that the mobilization of ordinary people could lead to civil unrest, causing violent conflict. Liberal parliamentarians, in particular, disapproved of what they felt was an overly dramatic way of conducting politics.

Since the early nineteenth century, Dutch politics had been dominated by a sober debating style, embodied by prominent Liberals such as Prime Minister Thorbecke.[732] Following Thorbecke's example, the honorary gentlemen of the Dutch parliament's *Tweede Kamer*

[730] "The Caucus - Shall We Have It?" Ostrogorski offers a similar conclusion when writing that the NLF leader presented his "rapid elevation" as "accounted for (…) by the services which Mr. Chamberlain had rendered to the Liberal Party by the introduction of the Caucus, and which Mr. Gladstone was anxious to acknowledge." *Democracy and the Organization*, 1:205. See also Quinault who also argues that "Chamberlain's role in late Victorian politics has generally been exaggerated." T. R Gourvish, Alan O'Day, and Robert Quinault, eds., "Joseph Chamberlain: A Reassesement," in *Later Victorian Britain, 1867-1900* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 70.

[731] Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, chap. 2.

[732] For instance, the Liberal leader Thorbecke was especially valued and influential because he abstained from using a sophisticated oratorical repertoire. Henk te Velde, "Staten-Generaal en Parlament. De Welsprekenheid van de Tweede Kamer," in *In dit Huis: Twee Eeuwen Tweede Kamer*, ed. Remieg Aerts et al. (Amsterdam: Boom, 2015), 167–91. In comparison to Britain, Dutch debating clubs were a domain of the Liberal elite. van Rijn, *De eeuw van het debat*.

preferred political decisions to be based on rational arguments, rather than emotions.[733] This also meant that ordinary people, who lacked the education and civilized behavior of middle-class voters, were considered unfit to judge political questions.[734] When the Liberal newspaper *Het Nieuws van Den Dag* (The News of the Day) discussed the possible consequences of the ARP's electoral campaign, it referred to this breach with the conventional norms of political behavior. The newspaper argued that the ARP had failed to gather support in "the civilized part of the nation."[735] Only naïve and uneducated citizens responded to Kuyper's rhetoric, who was "a born agitator" and campaigned in remote villages, gathering his followers in unsuitable and improper venues such as "churches, sheds, inns and wherever."[736] These backward farmers and "orthodox ministers of the countryside" who "usually do not have a clue about anything," followed Kuyper "obediently, even blindly."[737] Even worse, bringing these people into the political process, Kuyper risked a future "in darkness."[738] Finally, the article painted a bloody doom scenario, arguing that "the bloody feuds of earlier times are near again."[739] The newspaper's blunt reference to the Eighty Years' War was a reminder that religious emotion had already once caused a violent conflict between Protestants and Catholics in the Netherlands.

Kuyper responded to these allegations with an assertiveness that matched that of his British counterpart. Like Chamberlain, the Dutch party leader used the prejudice against his followers for his own political rhetoric. In the historiography, there are numerous examples of Kuyper's emotional rhetoric alienating the established political order.[740] Already during his first parliamentary term in 1874, his overly dramatic speeches and Bible quotes had shocked his fellow parliamentarians.[741] Claiming that "the 'intelligentsia' is not with us, but the other side," Kuyper emphasized the popular element of his support basis.[742] The limited educational background of ARP followers, however, did not mean that they could not constitute an important political force: "unfortunately, among 'even more stupid farmers' are yet also many

[733] Henk te Velde, *Van regentenmentaliteit tot populisme: politieke tradities in Nederland* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2010), 106–12, http://hdl.handle.net/1887/20836.

[734] Haan, *Het beginsel van leven en wasdom*, 100–105.

[735] "het beschaafde deel der natie" "In Duisternis.," *Het Nieuws van Den Dag: Kleine Courant*, June 15, 1879, 2, Delpher.

[736] "een geboren agitator" "kerken, schuren, herghamen of waar ook" "In Duisternis.," 2.

[737] "orthodoxe dominees ten platen lande" "in de regel van 'toeten noch blazen' weet" "gehoorzamen even blindelings""In Duisternis.," 2.

[738] "in duisternis" "In Duisternis.," 2.

[739] "de bloedige veten van weleer zijn weder in aantocht" "In Duisternis.," 2.

[740] Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*; Janssens, *opbouw*; van Helden, "De 'kleine luyden' van Abraham Kuyper"; Kuiper, "De weg van het volk"; Velde, "Ervaring en zingeving in de politiek"; Hoekstra, "De kracht van het gesproken woord."

[741] Daan Beers, "Abraham Kuyper en de zedelijke politiek, 1863-1877" (Leiden University, 2016).

[742] "de 'intelligentsie' is niet bij ons, maar aan de overkant" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 IV," *De Standaard*, January 9, 1879, Delpher.

voters."[743] Later Kuyper modified this argument by stating that ordinary ARP followers were discriminated against by the existing franchise.[744]

Despite these many similarities between the Dutch ARP and the British NLF, Kuyper did not follow his British counterpart in claiming early government office. Even more remarkable, the Dutch party leader downplayed the electoral potential of his organization. After the first parliamentary elections of the ARP, Kuyper argued in *De Standaard* that the organization should not be overestimated. In Britain, Chamberlain had presented the NLF as the decisive force of the 1880 electoral triumph. But Kuyper called for "complete soberness" in the evaluation of the electoral results of 1879.[745] The otherwise so pretentious Protestant minister openly admitted that "in some districts even deterioration" could be observed.[746] There was "progress" (…) but always modestly."[747] In fact, the reports on "the achieved victory" of critics and adherents alike were an "exaggeration."[748] This restrained political strategy was also reflected in the public discourse, in which the powerful metaphor of the "'machine' in politics" for political organizations was remarkably absent.[749] It is true that Kuyper used military terminology to evoke the image of a well-functioning command structure to describe his organization.[750] In the rhetorical world of the Protestant minister, Anti-Revolutionary followers were "troops," middlemen transformed into "officers" and more senior party representatives were even promoted to "old generals."[751] But to many Dutch contemporaries the electoral machine remained a foreign institution, connected to the American party system.[752] When in the 1880s, the machine metaphor finally appeared in the Netherlands, it did not refer to Kuyper but to the Social Democratic leader Domela Nieuwenhuis. The *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad* (Rotterdam Newspaper) that criticized Nieuwenhuis for acting like a mechanical apparatus, repeating the same speech over and over again: "He is a machine, and nothing more."[753]

In comparison to Chamberlain, Kuyper was also remarkably constrained when it came to talking about physical conflicts with other political orientations. This was caused not only by the pragmatic political culture of the Netherlands and the ARP's conservative political

[743] "ongelukkigwijs, zijn er onder die 'nog dommer boeren' toch ook heel wat kiezers" "De Juni-stembus," *De Standaard*, April 14, 1879, 1, Delpher.
[744] De Jong, "Het antirevolutionaire volk."
[745] "volslagen nuchterheid" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 IV," 1.
[746] "in sommige districten zelfs achteruitgang" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 IV," 1.
[747] "vooruitgang" (…), maar altijd matig" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 II," *De Standaard*, August 18, 1879, 1, Delpher.
[748] "de behaalde overwinning" "overdrijving" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 IV," 1.
[749] "'machine' in de politiek" "De 'Machine' in de Politiek," *De Grondwet*, January 30, 1883, 1, Deplher.
[750] Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap*, 61.
[751] "troepen" "officieren" "oude generals" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 IV," 1.
[752] "De 'Machine' in de Politiek."
[753] "Hij is een machine, en niets meer." "Binnenland," *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, November 15, 1884, 1, Delpher.

orientation.[754] In fact, Orthodox Protestants had occasionally used violent force to reach their goals.[755] One of the rare reported engagements of physical encounters that involved Anti-Revolutionaries occurred in the process of the *Doleantie* when Kuyper split from the Dutch Reformed Church in 1886. The situation escalated when Kuyper and his followers sawed an opening into the door of the council chamber in the New Church in Amsterdam. After this incident, students of the Anti-Revolutionary Free University guarded the door "armed with bats," defending the church for an entire year after the incident.[756] The nineteenth-century Dutch Liberal press responded in high alarm, interpreting the event as a "*coup d'état,"* criticizing the "attack" on social peace "through the party of Kuyper" and its "violent occupation of the New Church."[757] Later historiography, however, describes the event as "a lengthy exchange of views that avoided the use of force" and occurred in the orderly way typical for the "Dutch manner."[758]

There were two reasons for Kuyper to be more careful about invoking heated public controversies over the political power of mass organization. For one, the electoral system of the Netherlands was more restrictive than Britain's, making it more difficult for newcomers to gain electoral support. While 30% of the British male population had the vote, in the Netherlands it was about 11%.[759] In addition, Kuyper did not possess Chamberlain's strategic advantage of being connected to a parliamentary party with government experience. Until the 1880s, Anti-Revolutionary parliamentarians had been a small minority, without a realistic chance of gaining cabinet offices in the Liberal-dominated government.[760] It took another decade, and the support of the despised political Catholicism, to establish a cabinet under the leadership of the Anti-Revolutionary MacKay to govern the Netherlands.[761] Parliamentary opposition was, however, not only a consequence of the political circumstances of the ARP. The main reason for following an "anti-ministerial" approach had to do with the party leader's specific approach to the role of party organization.[762] Kuyper himself explained in *De Standaard*

[754] For a critical discussion of violence and Dutch political culture, see Connie Kristel and J. C. H. Blom, *Met alle geweld: botsingen en tegenstellingen in burgerlijk Nederland* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2003).

[755] The April Movement had shown that Dutch Protestants not only relied on orderly behavior, but could also use more contentious forms of protest. Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, 32–34. See also the 1872 riots between Protestants and Catholics – F. Groot, "De strijd rond Alva's bril. Papen en geuzen bij de herdenking van de inname van Den Briel, 1572-1872," *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 110, no. 2 (January 1, 1995).

[756] "gewapend met knuppels" Koch, *Abraham Kuyper*, 265.

[757] "aanslag" "door de partij van Kuyper" "gewelddadig bezit genomen van de Nieuwe Kerk" "De geheime Vergadering van Dr. Kuyper," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, January 27, 1886, 1, Delpher.

[758] Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper:*, 149.

[759] De Jong, Kolk, and Voerman, *Verkiezingen op de kaart*, 18. Rokkan and Meyriat, *International Guide to Electoral Statistics*, 1:330, 333.

[760] Deursen, "Van antirevolutionaire richting."

[761] Brinkel and Bruijn, *Het kabinet-Mackay*.

[762] "anti-ministerieel" "Centraal-Comité," *De Standaard*, August 20, 1879, 1, Delpher.

that the ARP had to ignore "the governmental territory" in order to focus on influencing the "popular spirit."[763] Kuyper justified his preference for opposition by citing the general state of the Anti-Revolutionary community. There was a "temporary separation" between the party in "the land" and in "the house."[764] For Kuyper, the Anti-Revolutionary aristocrats in parliament had failed to connect to their ordinary supporters. They had disregarded "every attempt and intend to act as a 'connected complete' organ in parliament of what stood behind them in the land."[765]

To overcome this internal division, Kuyper suggested three points. First, parliamentarians needed to be more modest and work together as one party, leaving their "proud" position behind.[766] Second, this united parliamentary group had to reconnect to ordinary supporters in "the land."[767] This included accepting Kuyper's political program, attending the deputy assembly and cooperating with the press organs of the ARP. Finally, the parliamentary party needed to follow an independent political course, different from those of other parliamentary groups to provide the ARP with a distinct ideological orientation and policy. Published in *De Standaard,* the tone of these three points sounded more like a military command than a suggestion. Even Kuyper recognized that his proposal could offend his political allies. Downplaying the magnitude of his demands, he wrote "that nobody will find us high-minded if we limit the minimum of our expectations to these three points."[768] Eventually, however, for Kuyper, the situation was clear: Anti-Revolutionary parliamentarians had to better connect with the popular base of their politics. Only when the ARP developed a more coherent political strategy could it become a powerful political force.

3.2 The Party in Parliament vs. the Party in the Land

After the foundation of the ARP, Kuyper not only became the mastermind behind the ideological agenda, but also increasingly coordinated the internal structure of the party. In this position, he became the connecting element between aristocratic parliamentarians and their voters. To improve the electoral position of the ARP, Kuyper established a coherent political strategy. This meant that the independent behavior of Anti-Revolutionaries needed to be

[763] "volksgeest" "het regeringsterrein" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 I," *De Standaard*, August 13, 1879, 1, Delpher.

[764] "tijdelijke seperatie" "het land" "de Kamer" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 III," *De Standaard*, August 25, 1879, 1, Delpher.

[765] "van elk pogen of bedoelen om als 'aaneengesloten geheel' orgaan in het parlement te zijn van wat achter hen stond in het land" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 III," 1. The distinction between the party in parliament and the party in land originates from the French expression of pays reel and pays legal

[766] "hoogmogenden" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 IV," 1.

[767] "den lande" "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 IV," 1.

[768] "dat wel niemand ons hoogeischend zal vinden, indien we het minimum van onze verwachtingen beperken tot deze 3 punten." "De antirevolutionaire partij ná Juni 1879 IV," 1.

coordinated according to the interest of ordinary voters. The consequence was the strengthening of his position as the representative of ordinary people. For the aristocratic parliamentarians, this meant a restriction on their political independence. From the beginning, the political course of the party was shaped by the party organization in which parliamentarians had limited influence. Already for adjustments of the party program, a two-thirds majority of the Deputy Assembly was needed. Parliamentary representatives were a minority at these bi-annual gatherings and had no possibility to influence the political agenda that they were supposed to represent in the *Tweede Kamer*. When at the end of the decade, the ARP moved its offices to the building of *De Standaard* in Amsterdam*,* Kuyper's grip on the party was further extended.[769]

In this centralization process, elections provided Kuyper with a pretense to intervene in local electoral associations and influence the selection of Anti-Revolutionary candidates. According to the statutes of the ARP, local branches were independent and could "never be expected (…) to give up a single piece of part or their autonomy."[770] In other words, only local members were supposed to determine the nature of the electoral campaign, including their parliamentary candidates. This also meant that the central committee could not nominate candidates for a constituency where a local branch had already chosen its own candidate. In public, Kuyper accepted this rule, but in the organizational practice of the ARP it became clear that candidates needed the approval of the central party headquarters to run under the party's banner. In addition to the article about independence, the regulations asked for the following: "[e]lectoral associations who send deputies to the central committee are expected to subscribe to the program."[771] As president of the central committee, Kuyper made it his responsibility to inquire regularly with local middlemen about a candidate's fitness to win elections. He also used his office to control their commitment to the party's more-than-500-page manifesto.[772] Before the 1881 election, an article in *De Standaard* explained what this meant for local associations. Potential Anti-Revolutionary parliamentarians had to affirmatively respond to four questions:

1. Does he want to be candidate?
2. Is he Anti-Revolutionary?
3. Does he accept the program?

[769] Janssens, *opbouw*, 272–76.

[770] "nooit geacht (…) eenig stuk of deel van hare autonomie te hebben prijs gegeven" "Statuten," 5.

[771] "Kiesvereenigingen, die Deputaten naar de vergadering van het Centraal Comité zenden, worden geacht zich bij dit program aan te sluiten." "Statuten," 5.

[772] Kuyper, *Ons program*.

And 4. Will he, if elected, join our parliamentary club?[773]

If candidates wanted to gain the support of the newspaper and the financial support of the central committee, they had to publicly declare themselves Anti-Revolutionaries according to Kuyper's interpretation of th term. As the historian Janssens has shown, these questions could be interpreted in different ways, depending on the candidate's relationship with the specific local associations.[774] When in the city of Groningen the lawyer Van Swinderen refused to publicly commit to the ARP program, Kuyper did not intervene, and the candidate was excluded from the Anti-Revolutionary campaign, according to party regulations.[775] For candidates who were closer to Kuyper´s sphere of influence, exceptions were granted as in the small town of Goes. Pompe van Meerdervoort had earlier hesitated to place his candidacy under the roof of a common program that seemed to him like signing an "imperative mandate."[776] Initially, this was unacceptable to the central committee that decided to abandon Pompe, like van Swinderen. But Kuyper, as chairman of the central committee, intervened. Without consulting with the local electoral association, he offered Pompe a compromise: instead of fully committing to the program, he could vaguely agree to the major points of the Anti-Revolutionaries.[777]

Considering Kuyper's charismatic representative organizational model discussed in the previous chapter, his behavior might seem like an exception among early party founders. But also in the case of the British National Liberal Federation, the organization's leadership used elections to establish a more coherent political strategy among its local associations.[778] Together with the help of Secretary Francis Schnadhorst, Chamberlain regularly disregarded this commitment to popular control. The organization had no political program that committed candidates to a political course, but new candidates needed Chamberlain's recommendation if they wanted to run in a NLF constituency.[779] Despite differences in political rhetoric, the party organizations of NLF and ARP underwent a similar internal centralization process. For party leaders like Chamberlain and Kuyper, elections provided a suitable opportunity to exercise

[773] "1. Wilt gij candidaat zijn? 2. Zijt gij antirevolutionair? 3. Aanvaardt gij het Program? En 4. sluit ge u, gekozen zijnde, aan bij onze Kamerclub?" "Verloren Districten," 1.

[774] Janssens, *opbouw*.

[775] Janssens, 184–90.

[776] "mandat impératif" Janssens, 197.

[777] Janssens, 196–200.

[778] The question of mandates' independence dominated many discussions in this period, inspiring political philosophers until today. Hanna Pitkin, "Representation," in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, ed. James Farr, Russell L. Hanson, and Terence Ball, Ideas in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 142–44.

[779] Chamberlain e.g. intervened in the East Worcestershire election writing to Schnadhorst that he "entirely differ[ed]" with him about electoral strategy, and thus proposed that he "must be overruled." "Joseph Chamberlain to Schnadhorst," April 25, 1879, 1, Manuscript papers relating to Francis Schnadhorst and the organisation of the Liberal Party, Special Collections, University of Bristol.

control over the established elite of their political orientation. Faced with different starting positions in their respective political systems, the two men developed different ways to instrumentalize electoral campaigns for their struggle for internal cohesion. While the British Liberals could gain government office by transforming the party into an electoral machine, the Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries took a more modest position in public. In other words, for Chamberlain, the image of the electoral machine of the Caucus was useful as it provided him with direct access to national political institutions. In contrast, in the Netherlands with its tradition of less aggressive political rhetoric, Kuyper focused on strengthening his position within the party organization. In times of electoral campaigns, the Protestant minister exercised pressure on the aristocratic parliamentarians of his political orientation. As we have seen, for Chamberlain, the image of the efficient electoral machine became a pretense to exercise control over the local branches of his organization.

4. Parliament as a Stage: the German SDAP

4.1 A Revolutionary Party's Perspective on Elections

Did this process of internal consolidation also influence the Social Democratic Workers' Party in the oppressive circumstances of the German Empire? For many Germans, the introduction of universal male suffrage in the North German Confederation had initiated an era of popular participation.[780] But Social Democrats could not immediately make use of this opportunity and remained a marginalized minority in parliament. For the party, electoral campaign was not a question of whether to accept government office, but rather about the general desirability of political participation.[781] Wilhelm Liebknecht summarized this feeling and argued that parliament was not the place where "history" was "made," but the stage for "comedy."[782] Instead of serving the people, parliamentarians were actors who followed the script of the Bismarck administration. They "say and do what the prompter whispers, sometimes loudly tells, them."[783] Once elected, SDAP representatives were confronted with a hostile assembly, which made it difficult to achieve any political results.[784] Parliamentarians of other political orientations not only verbally interrupted Social Democratic speeches, but even started a brawl when Bebel and Liebknecht entered the parliamentary stage.[785] Also outside of parliament,

[780] Anderson, *Practicing Democracy*.

[781] This attitude became more moderate over time, but the dilemma between keeping up the membership organization and parliamentary representation dominated the party throughout its history. Mittmann, *Fraktion und Partei*, 67–74; Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie*, chap. 3.

[782] "Geschichte" "gemacht" "Komödie" "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ," 13.

[783] "sagen und thun, was der Souffleur ihnen zuflüstert, mitunter auch laut zuruft" "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ," 13.

[784] Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie*; Pollmann, "Arbeiterwahlen"; Groh, *Vaterlandslose Gesellen*, 20–25.

[785] Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie*, 43–55.

party members operated in an environment where there was no sympathy for oppositional forces. The German authorities actively obstructed the daily business of the party, preventing the foundation of new chapters, party meetings and electoral campaigning.[786] Party members were seen as unpatriotic and treated "as radical revolutionaries who would take to the barricades."[787] Persecution also had a devastating effect on the personal lives of party leaders. Chamberlain and Kuyper may have risked their personal reputation, but Bebel and Liebknecht were imprisoned and banned for political agitation.

In light of their numerous experiences of oppression, it is no surprise that German Social Democrats were skeptical about, if not directly opposed to, participation in elections.[788] Especially, Liebknecht, who had witnessed the failure of the Frankfurt Parliament in 1849, openly advocated a radical approach to social injustice. He demanded that the SDAP "appropriate the state and found a new one that does not know class domination."[789] This militant statement went beyond government reform, arguing for the complete reorganization of state institutions. As Liebknecht said, "[n]ot only the content, but also the form of the state is of essential importance."[790] Even the more moderate Bebel occasionally engaged in revolutionary appraisal. In the 1867 *Reichstag*, he proudly declared that he stood for "the same principles" as the 1848 revolution.[791] When in 1871 the Paris Commune gained control over the city, German Social Democrats publicly applauded their French comrades.[792]

Despite this revolutionary ideology, SDAP members became quickly involved in the electoral process, devoting their resources to campaigning. This was a contested strategy, provoking many internal discussions. Wilhelm Liebknecht proposed radical abstention from

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[786] Pollmann, "Arbeiterwahlen."

[787] Vernon L. Lidtke, "German Socialism and Social Democracy 1860 –1900," in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Political Thought:*, ed. Gareth Stedman Jones and Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 791. Also see Groh, *Vaterlandslose Gesellen*, 20–25.

[788] Socialist historians were fascinated by the relationship of early Social Democrats with parliament. Eisner, *Wilhelm Liebknecht*, 36–38. Likewise GDR historians have commented on this question, admitting that the relationship of the party with parliament was "ein kompliziertes Problem" Gustav Seeber, *Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie und die Entwicklung ihrer revolutionären Parlamentstaktik von 1867 bis 1893. Einführung in die originalgetreue Reproduktion des Buches "Die Sozialdemokratie im Deutschen Reichstag"* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1966), 11.

[789] "des Staats bemächtigen und einen neuen begründen, der die Klassenherrschaft nicht kennt" "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ," 11.

[790] "[n]icht blos der Inhalt, sondern auch die Form des Staats ist für uns von wesentlicher Bedeutung" "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ," 11.

[791] "für die selben Principien" *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstages des Norddeutschen Bundes. 1. Legislaturperiode - Session 1867*, vol. 1, 1867, 457, http://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de/Blatt3_nb_bsb00000438_00483.html.

[792] In particular the Braunschweig Manifesto of the SDAP board around Wilhelm Bracke gained public attention. The authorities arrested Bracke and other leading party members transporting them in chains to the eastern provinces of the German Empire. Bracke, *Der Braunschweiger Ausschuß*. For an analysis of the meaning of the Paris Commune see Bos, *Bloed en barricaden*.

Reichstag politics by returning his *Reichstag* mandate after his election.[793] But Bebel convinced his friend of the advantage of parliamentary representation. As he reported in his autobiography, the "purely negating position" of Liebknecht "had never become decisive for the party."[794] In fact, even before the foundation of the SDAP, the two activists had actively campaigned for a mandate. When in 1867 universal male suffrage was introduced for the constitutional assembly of the North German Confederation, Bebel, Liebknecht and Robert Schraps ran under the banner of the Saxon People's Party (Sächsische Volkspartei).[795] On this first attempt, only August Bebel and Schraps managed to gain seats. But in August of the same year, the Saxon People's Party had already extended its representatives with Liebknecht who eventually also accepted his mandate. During the 1871 elections, voters punished the radical position of Social Democrats towards the Franco-German War. Only August Bebel, by then member of the SDAP, was re-elected, leaving Wilhelm Liebknecht without his former parliamentary seat.[796] But in the next elections in 1874, the tide turned with parliamentary representation increasing to seven mandates. In addition to Bebel, also Liebknecht, August Geib, Johann Most, Julius Motteler, Julius Vahlteich and Johann Jacoby were elected. One of the reasons for this small triumph was intensified electoral activity. While 80 Social Democratic candidates had run in the election of 1871, their number more than doubled to 184 in 1874.[797]

4.2 Liebknecht's Usefulness Principle

The reason for this increased electoral activity was a remarkable orientation of the SDAP towards parliamentary politics. In contrast to ARP and NLF, Liebknecht and Bebel combined their parliamentary duties with a strong engagement in their party organization. When August Bebel was elected to the constitutional assembly of the North German Confederation, he reported to have felt "the need to give a bigger speech."[798] In fact, his local supporters were "most eager" for this moment and had inquired when their representative would finally appear

[793] Wilhelm Liebknecht, *Ueber die politische Stellung der Sozialdemokratie insbesondere im Bezug auf den Reichstag* (Berlin: Verlag der Expedition des "Vorwärts" Berliner Volksblatt, 1869), 12.

[794] "rein negierende Stellung" "für die Partei nie maßgebend geworden" Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*, 298.

[795] Pollmann, "Arbeiterwahlen."

[796] Also Reinhold Schraps was elected in 1871, but although he was a member of the Saxon People's Party, Schraps did not join the SDAP. "Reinhold Schraps," *Biographien Sozialdemokratischer Parlamentarier in den deutschen Reichs- und Landtagen 1867 - 1933*, accessed October 21, 2011, http://biosop.zhsf.uni-koeln.de/biosop_db/biosop_db.php.

[797] These figures probably include those candidates who were generally considered Social Democratic, but not members of the SDAP, for instance ADAV representatives. The parliamentary guide does not differentiate between SDAP and ADAV. Ritter, *Wahlgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch*, 121. The most extensive electoral campaign happened in Saxony where the party founded local electoral committees in every constituency, distributed electoral pamphlets and organized electoral assemblies with party speakers. Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters*, 64–67.

[798] "das Bedürfnis, eine größere Rede zu halten" Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*, 282.

on the parliamentary stage.[799] In response to this local interest, the SDAP parliamentarian started to organize voter assemblies to report about his parliamentary experiences.[800] For Bebel, parliament was a means to an end because it demonstrated the success and the political power of party organization.[801] Instead of aiming for legislative reform, he primarily focused on strengthening the coherence of the political community of early Social Democracy, because members could take pride in the performance of their representatives. Coordinated campaign efforts had brought the ordinary carpenter Bebel into the high halls of political power. On the steps to the *Reichstag*, he could literally run into figures of national political reputation like Prince Frederik Charles (Friedrich Karl) of Prussia, the "highest of the social step ladder."[802]

Seeing parliament as an opportunity to gain publicity for the Social Democratic agenda soon convinced party members who initially were less enthusiastic about parliamentary representation. Even the old-revolutionary Liebknecht acknowledged that parliament provided a unique opportunity to the newly founded SDAP. As Liebknecht said, not moral arguments, but "practical, (…) tactical considerations" had convinced him to adjust his hostile position and called his new political position the "usefulness principle."[803] For Liebknecht, parliamentary office became a means to gain public attention and attract supporters: "[e]lections create at least a certain excitement that we have to use for agitational purposes."[804] This conviction was also incorporated in the party's conceptualization of political change. After the formal constitution of the German Empire in 1871, its representatives gave up the hope of overcoming the existing circumstances any time soon.[805] In Liebknecht's words, the term revolution had two essentially different meaning that had to be carefully distinguished.

> For one this might be understood as the simple fall of government, which might be the result of a short street battle. This is the narrow meaning of the word. The broader contains the entire development process of an entire social organism that has to create the respective form of state for itself. And this revolutionary process, which also does not rest during peaceful periods, can surely be advanced, but cannot arbitrarily be reduced to a discretionary time minimum by a miraculous recipe.[806]

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[799] "sehnlichst" Bebel, 282.

[800] Bebel, 287.

[801] In the words of the historian Schröder, parliamentary representation allowed the small party "zur Repräsentanz der gesamten Arbeiterbewegung oder gar der Arbeiterklasse aufzusteigen." Schröder, "Wahlkämpfe und Parteientwicklung," 1–2.

[802] "der sozialen Stufenleiter Höchste" Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*, 278.

[803] "praktischen, (…) taktischen Rücksichten" "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ," 13. "Nützlichkeitsstandpunkt" Liebknecht, *Ueber die politische Stellung*, 6.

[804] "Die Wahlen erzeugen immerhin eine gewisse Aufregung, die wir zu agitatorischen Zwecken benutzen müssen." "Protokoll über den ersten Congreβ," 13.

[805] Schröder, "Wahlkämpfe und Parteientwicklung."

[806] "Einmal versteht man darunter den einfachen Sturz einer Regierung, der das Ergebniß einer kurzen Straßenschlacht sein kann. Das ist der engere Sinn des Wortes. Der weitere umfaßt den ganzen Entwicklungsprozeß eines neuen Gesellschaftsorganismus, der sich die entsprechende Staatsform zu

In the 1870s, the second peaceful meaning of revolution became increasingly important. Like the Anti-Corn Law League, German Social Democrats aimed for a reform of the political system. If SDAP members talked about revolution, they referred to the long-term transformation of society. This meant that the party could function simultaneously as "revolutionary party" and "a party of peace."[807] The task of Social Democracy was "to remove the barriers which stood against the natural development of society and state."[808] The state was a living organism that could function independently of the current formal institutions. As Liebknecht said, without the "mechanical apparatus, the machinery, the courtrooms and caserns" the "real state" would be able to endure.[809] He believed that "[t]he state - that is just all of us; we millions of people that are united in a political community."[810] For the SDAP, it was not the political institutions of the state, but the community of members that were the basis of politics.

The purpose of parliamentary representation was to facilitate the consolidation of the identity of the members as part of the Social Democratic community. This was also a prominent theme in the numerous publications of the SDAP. In order to increase working-class attention, *Der Volksstaat* frequently reported on parliamentary developments to its 6,000 subscribers.[811] Calls to participate in the elections were accompanied by references to the moral superiority of Social Democratic candidates against the questionable motives of political adversaries. When Bebel's candidature was promoted, the paper not only praised Bebel's commitment to the German nation, but also denounced Liberal hypocrisy:

> We want to be represented by a man who sincerely loves the German fatherland, and who is determined to supports its advancement on the path of order and freedom ("freedom that I mean" right, dear bourgeoisie? The freedom to exploit the workers!), by a man who cares strongly about the wellbeing of all and not the interests of a single class.[812]

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schaffen hat. Und dieser revolutionäre Prozeß, der auch in den friedlichen Perioden nicht ruht, kann wohl beschleunigt, nicht aber willkürlich durch irgend ein wunderthätiges Rezept, auf ein beliebiges Zeitminimum reduzirt werden." Liebknecht, *Ueber die politische Stellung*, 10.

[807] "revolutionäre Partei""eine Partei des Friedens" Liebknecht, *Leipziger Hochverrathsprozess*, 541, 550.

[808] "die der naturgemäßen Entwicklung von Gesellschaft und Staat entgegenstehenden Schranken aus dem Weg zu räumen." Liebknecht, 540.

[809] "mechanischen Apparat, die Maschinerie, die Gerichtsstube und Kaserne" "wirkliche Staat" Liebknecht, 540.

[810] "[d]er Staat das sind eben *wir Alle*; wir Millionen Menschen, die zu einer politischen Gemeinschaft vereinigt sind" Liebknecht, 554.

[811] Subscription figure is from Blos, *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Sozialdemokraten*.

[812] Wir wollen durch einen Mann vertreten sein, der das deutsche Vaterland aufrichtig liebt, und dessen Fortschreiten auf den Bahnen der Ordnung und Freiheit ("Freiheit die ich meine" nicht wahr, liebe Bourgeois? Die Freiheit, den Arbeitern die Haut über die Ohren zu ziehen!) zu unterstützen entschlossen ist, durch einen Mann, dem das Wohlergehen Aller und nicht das Interesse einer Klasse am Herzen liegt." "Zur Wahl Bebel's," *Der Volksstaat*, August 1, 1873, 3. "Freedom that I mean" is the title of a popular song

After it became apparent that Bebel's parliamentary election had to be repeated because of a court decision, the voters of the district were reminded of their "threefold duty."[813] Not only did they have an obligation to their representative who had bravely endured imprisonment in his fight for working-class interests. They were also obliged to remain loyal themselves, using universal suffrage as a "weapon" to "opening the arena again."[814] Most importantly, however, was voters' duty to the "workers' party," which was in danger of losing its only parliamentary representative.[815] By all means possible, the party had to prevent being muzzled by its "enemies" of "the ruling classes."[816] Bebel further specified the role of elections in his brochure about *Die Sozialdemokratie im Deutschen Reichstag* (Social Democracy in the German Reichstag). The conclusions from his experience were presented soberly, and he openly admitted to readers that the popular parliamentarian did not expect to "rearrange the power structure."[817] Parliamentary representation had the purpose of appealing to "the working people (…) to raise its voice" for political change.[818] On the stage of the *Reichstag*, the small party had the opportunity "to talk to the millions who sadly do not see that they are in chains because of their unfortunate infatuation and naïve ignorance."[819] In response to this important mission, local party members were willing to support their parliamentary representatives with a financial allowance. Bebel, for instance, could not afford the train ticket from Leipzig to Berlin, regularly prohibiting his participation in parliamentary debates. But his local party branch, which "belonged to the poorest in Germany", decided to support the economically struggling craftsman.[820] Similar initiatives helped Liebknecht whose campaign could count on financial support from party supporters abroad.[821] In 1874 the SDAP formalized the financial support for parliamentary representatives. The representatives of local branches voted in favor of a small financial compensation (Diät) for their parliamentarians to formalize the parliamentary representation of their young organization.[822]

(Freiheit die ich meine) whose lyrics were written by Max von Schenkendorf for the German Campaign against Napoleon. The text was first published in 1815. Michael Fischer, "Freiheit, die ich meine," *Populäre und traditionelle Lieder. Historisch-kritisches Liederlexikon*, 2008, http://www.liederlexikon.de/lieder/freiheit_die_ich_meine.

[813] "dreifache Pflicht" "Wähler des siebzehnten sächsischen Wahlkreises!," *Der Volksstaat*, November 1, 1873, 1.

[814] "Waffe" "die Arena wieder zu öffnen" "Der Volksstaat," 1.

[815] "Arbeiterpartei" "Der Volksstaat," 1.

[816] "Feinde" "der herrschenden Klassen" "Der Volksstaat," 1.

[817] "die Machtverhältnisse umzugestalten" August Bebel, *Die Sozialdemokratie im Deutschen Reichstag*, vol. I. (Berlin: Buchhandlung Vorwärts, 1907), 66.

[818] "das arbeitende Volk (…) um seine Stimme zu erheben" Bebel, I.:66.

[819] "zu den Millionen zu reden, die leider noch in unseligen Verblendungen und naiver Unwissenheit die Fesseln nicht sehen" Bebel, I.:66.

[820] "die mit zur ärmsten in Deutschland gehörte" Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben*, 293.

[821] "Zum Wahlfonds Liebknechts," *Der Volksstaat*, January 25, 1873, 4.

[822] See also Molt, *Der Reichstag*.

4.3 Internal Opposition to Reichstag Participation

Early electoral campaigns were the basis for the SDAP's long and successful history in- and outside of parliament.[823] They also were an essential component of internal conflict. Finding a coherent political course and strategy was not easy for a comparably large number of active members. In 1873 the decision of the prominent Social Democrat Wilhelm Bracke to run in three electoral districts (Braunschweig-Blankenburg, Wolfenbüttel-Helmstedt, Sandersheim-Holzminden) caused an internal conflict. Familiar with the political conditions of his hometown, Bracke formed an alliance with the Liberal middle classes in the Democratic Electoral Association (Demokratische Wahlverein).[824] As a local leaflet announced, the Braunschweig campaign targeted not only the working class, but also "citizens, farmers, civil servants and workers."[825] The cooperation with the middle classes seemed promising when Bracke's candidacy was approved in "a large number of assemblies (…) with a storm of applause."[826] For the leadership of the SDAP, however, the alliance with one of the political adversaries of their political orientation was problematic. The party newspaper *Der Volksstaat* criticized Bracke for what it thought was a naïve strategy. While the electoral alliance undermined Social Democratic ideology, there was little prospect of winning the Braunschweig seat. *Der Volksstaat* argued that the middle classes would never support a candidate who "was recognized as a Social Democrat, (…) 'infamous', so that not the most tamed program would be able to blur his standpoint. The hope to lure the less far-going peasants and petty bourgeois would therefore be a vain one."[827]

Although Bracke had a good relationship with Wilhelm Liebknecht, the Braunschweig candidate failed to convince his skeptical comrade of the wisdom of his electoral strategy. As the editor of *Der* Volksstaat, Liebknecht criticized what the Bracke called an "extravaganza" in private letters.[828] A month later, Liebknecht made this concern about the "superfluous electoral association" public in *Der Volkstaat*.[829] Even worse, Bracke's alliance was denounced as a "breach of program, which the party must not acquiesce."[830] The accused Bracke did not accept these allegations and used his position as editor of the *Braunschweiger Volksfreund*

[823] In 1912 the Social Democrats became the strongest faction in parliament.

[824] Bracke was born into "gutbürgerliche Verhältnisses" in Braunschweig on the 29th Of May 1842. Seidel, *Wilhelm Bracke*, 9.

[825] "Bürger, Landwirthe, Beamten und Arbeiter" "Reichstagswahlen Herzogthum Braunschweig" (Zentral-Wahlkomitee zu Braunschweig, 1873), 5, Nachlass Wilhelm Bracke, Stadtbibliothek Braunschweig.

[826] "einer großen Anzahl von Versammlungen (…) mit stürmischen Beifall" "Reichstagswahlen," 4.

[827] "als Sozialdemokrat so bekannt, (…) 'berüchtigt', daß kein noch so zahm gehaltenes Programm seinen Standpunkt zu verwischen im Stande wäre. Die Hoffnung, die minder weitgehenden Kleinbauern und Kleinbürgern damit zu ködern wäre, also eine eitle." "Correspondenzen," *Der Volksstaat*, February 15, 1873, 3. See also Eckert, *Aus den Anfängen der Braunschweiger Arbeiterbewegung*, 35.

[828] "Extravaganz" 'Bracke to Liebknecht', 19 March 1873, in Eckert, *Aus den Anfängen der Braunschweiger Arbeiterbewegung*, 34.

[829] "überflüssigen Wahlverein""Politische Übersicht," *Der Volksstaat*, January 3, 1873, 2.

[830] "Programmverletzung, welche die Partei sich nicht gefallen lassen darf" "Der Volksstaat," 3.

(Braunschweig People's Friend) to directly address his local followers.[831] In a local assembly, the Braunschweig branch confirmed their support. Even *Der Volksstaat* had to publish the local motion. Suspending its accusation, the newspaper accepted that the party congress was the "highest authority."[832] With the support of his local comrades, Bracke could maintain his electoral strategy. While in 1873 he did not win the *Reichstag* mandate, he gained a parliamentary mandate in 1877.[833]

In the case of Braunschweig, the party leadership tried to enforce political coherence by intervening in the electoral campaign of a local branch. A year later, another conflict emerged about electoral strategy with another electoral candidate. This time the board of the party did not oppose but rather demanded parliamentary representation for its local candidate. As an icon of the Democratic opposition of 1848, Johann Jacoby seemed like an ideal candidate for the young SDAP. The old-revolutionary had joined the party in 1872, soon serving as a candidate in the 1874 election in thirteen electoral districts. In addition to Breslau, Köln, Saxony-Weimar, Saxony and Württemberg, the prominent activist ran in two districts in Düsseldorf and all six in Berlin.[834] For Jacoby's fourteenth district in Leipzig (Saxony 13), where the chances of a Social Democratic victory appeared most promising, the party leadership had planned a thorough campaign. Yet, Jacoby refused to address his voters in a local assembly, because his candidacy was not meant to convince voters, but was a symbol of his "protest against the Bismackery and against the entire current ruling system of government."[835] Finally Jacoby warned Geib that: "in the case of election –the free decision about acceptance or decline of the mandate is mine."[836]

These abstract considerations became a concrete problem when the Social Democrats unexpectedly won the elections in Leipzig. The unforeseen victory was a triumph for party members which responded with great enthusiasm and pride. In particular, the local branch in Leipzig had worked hard for the campaign's success, wrote to Jacoby: "[w]ith the array of all

[831] The first issue of the *Braunschweiger Volksfreund* appeared on the 15th of May 1871 and soon became a daily newspaper. Bracke had supported the newspaper with his own financial means, founding his own printing house to publish the paper in September 1871. Seidel, *Wilhelm Bracke*, 50–54.

[832] "oberste Instanz" "Der Volksstaat," January 3, 1873, 3.

[833] Georg Eckert, *Wilhelm Bracke: 1842 - 1880*, Niedersächsische Lebensbilder 4 (Hildesheim: August Lax, n.d.), 9.

[834] "Johann Jacoby," *Biographien Sozialdemokratische Parlamentarier in den deutschen Reichs- und Landtagen 1876-1933 (BIOSOP)*, accessed September 20, 2016, http://zhsf.gesis.org/ParlamentarierPortal/biosop_db/biosop_db.php.

[835] "Protest gegen die Bismackerei und gegen das ganze jetzt herschende Regierungssystem" 'Jacoby to August Geib', 30 December 1873, in Edmund Silberner, ed., *Johann Jacoby Briefwechsel. 1850-1877*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Sozialgeschichte Braunschweig (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1978), 608.

[836] "im Fall der Wahl – die freie Entscheidung über Annahme und Ablehnung des *Mandats* mir vorbehalte" 'Jacoby to August Geib', 30 December 1873, in Silberner, 608.

forces we have brought it so far that you prevailed in the Leizpig district."[837] In the same letter, the sensitive issue of accepting the parliamentary mandate was immediately mentioned: "in the name of many party comrades, namely on behalf of my friends Liebknecht and Bebel" Jacoby was asked "to not decline the mandate."[838] Also the national party leadership joined the circle of congratulating comrades and similarly petitioned Jacoby to reconsider his previous remarks. Secretary Geib reminded the candidate of the extraordinary opportunity that his electoral victory had unlocked. In parliament the popular Democrat could help increase the political legitimacy and national recognition of the SDAP: "With your voice our party's cause in the Reichstag achieves a meaning like never before. It manifests that we are the true heirs of the old democracy, which we have been denied without you."[839]

This argument focused on the broad symbolic power of parliament. For the party leadership this meant that the elderly Jacoby was not even expected to regularly attend parliamentary debates: "[f]rom our side, I do not really deem it necessary to attend all meetings uninterruptedly."[840] For Jacoby, this sort of pragmatic compromise was only a reason to further strengthen his opposition. With the stubbornness of decades-long political activist, he repeated his moral argument: "I cannot act differently than according to my own convictions."[841] It was true that his candidacy had served the purpose of "electoral agitation and the thereby to be achieved extension of the party," but he was committed to avoiding the "actor-like appearance" in parliament.[842]

In contrast to the Braunschweig campaign of Bracke, the SDAP leadership was determined to get this rebellious candidate into parliament. When Jacoby tried to announce his decision to resign to his followers, *Der Volksstaat* postponed the publication of his letter. One day later, a group of Leipzig Social Democrats telegrammed to Jacoby to warn him about the consequences of his abstention. Their word choice reflected their grave concern – there was

[837] "[m]it Aufgebot aller Kräfte haben wir es bis dahin gebracht, daß Sie im Leipziger Landkreis (…) gesiegt haben." 'Wilhelm Blos to Jacoby', 31 January 1874, in Silberner, 614. For Blos see his autobiography Blos, *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Sozialdemokraten*.

[838] "namens viele Parteigenossen, namentlich im Auftrage meiner Freunde Liebknecht und Bebel" "das Mandat *nicht* abzulehnen" 'Wilhelm Blos to Jacoby', 31 January 1874, in Silberner, *Johann Jacoby Briefwechsel*, 615.

[839] "Mit Ihrer Stimme erlangt unsere Parteisache im Reichstag eine Bedeutung wie nie vorher. Es wird dadurch bekundet, daß wir die wirklichen Erben der alten Demokratie sind, was man uns ohne Sie stets streitig zu machen suchte." 'August Geib to Jacoby', in 1 February 1874 in Silberner, *Johann Jacoby Briefwechsel*.

[840] "Ich halte es überhaupt nicht für nötig, unsererseits ununterbrochen den Sitzungen beizuwohnen." 'August Geib to Jacoby', 1 February 1874, in Silberner.

[841] "ich kann nicht anders handeln als nach eigener Überzeugung" 'Jacoby to Wilhelm Blos', 3 February 1874, in Silberner, 616.

[842] "Wahlagitation und der dadurch zu erzielenden Verbreitung der Partei" "schauspielartigen Auftretens" 'Jacoby to Wilhelm Blos', 3 February 1874, in Silberner, 616.

fear that the district could be lost "forever."[843] The prominent Saxon party member Julius Vahlteich wrote to Jacoby as well in "greatest horror."[844] Also this letter was an appeal to the candidate's sense of duty as Vahlteich argued that Social Democrats were "newcomers on parliamentary territory" and "need (…) your support."[845] To the disappointment of the comrades, these letters failed to convince Jacoby. In February, the candidate finally returned his mandate to the Imperial authorities. In his published resignation letter, he repeated his previous arguments, reminding his voters of his morality that had guided his campaign from the beginning: "In advance convinced of the impossibility to reorganize the military state into a people's state with the parliamentary method, I cannot change my mind to participate in negotiations whose failure stands for me without any doubt."[846]

This explanation could not appease the voters in Leipzig. When the election was repeated, Jacoby financially supported Wilhelm Bracke, who was the new candidate. But the Social Democrat from Braunschweig had no chance outside of his hometown and lost the elections.[847] This disappointing result permanently damaged the relationship between the electoral candidate and the party. After the elections, *Der Volksstaat* blamed Jacoby for the catastrophic defeat and wrote that, instead of honoring the will of his voters, Jacoby's resignation was a selfish compliance to the existing order. Metaphorically this meant that the former candidate would "voluntarily surrender himself with tied hands to the enemy," abandoning the party's strategy to use parliamentary representation as the "most efficient means of popular enlightenment."[848] Even though Jacoby tried to justify his actions once more, the damage could not be repaired. In the SDAP's popular agenda, *Volksstaatkalender* (People's State Calendar), Jacoby's name was erased from the canon of heroic personalities. In 1875, the editorial office replaced Jacoby's entry with the Greek philosopher Heraclitus.[849]

5. The Internal Function of Elections

The first activity that comes to mind when thinking about parties today is elections. During elections parties compete for the necessary votes to obtain parliamentary majorities and government offices. For the first party founders, however, the choice was less obvious. In

[843] "für immer" 'Blos, Fink, Hadlich and Ramm to Jacoby', 4 February 1874, in Silberner, 618.

[844] "größten Schrecken" 'Julius Vahlteich to Jacoby', 4 February 1874, in Silberner, 618.

[845] "Neulinge auf parlamentarischem Gebiet" "bedürfen (...) Ihrer Unterstützung" 'Julius Vahlteich to Jacoby', 4 February 1874, in Silberner, 618.

[846] "voraus von der Unmöglichkeit überzeugt, auf parlamentarischem Wege einen Militärstaat in einen Volksstaat umzugestalten, kann ich mich nicht dazu entschließen, an Verhandlungen teilzunehmen, deren Erfolgslosigkeit für mich außer Zweifel steht." 'Jacoby an seine Wähler', 3 February 1874, in Silberner, 617.

[847] "Die Mandatsablehnung Johann Jacoby's," *Der Volksstaat*, February 20, 1874, 4.

[848] "sich freiwillig mit gebundenen Händen dem Feind überliefern" "wirksamste Mittel der Volksaufklärung" "Der Volksstaat," 1.

[849] 'Guido Weiß to Jacoby', ca. 21 October 1874, in Silberner, *Johann Jacoby Briefwechsel*, 628.

nineteenth-century Europe, access to parliament was restricted by limited suffrage as in Britain or the Netherlands. Where suffrage rights were generously granted, parliamentary power was restricted by a powerful executive like under the German chancellor Bismarck. In addition, party founders faced hostility, sometimes even oppression. In this situation of limited political opportunity, elections were used for three different purposes. The first purpose seems to resemble the current function of election, but as a means to political power elections need to be interpreted in their historical context. While the electoral success of the British party founder Chamberlain was limited, he actively stimulated the impression of commanding an electoral machine to convince the public that the organization was a powerful political force. As a consequence, scandal-hungry contemporaries, repelled by Chamberlain's political style, paid much more attention to the NLF than its political strength deserved. What is remarkable, in this aspect, is that critics did not attack Chamberlain's exaggeration of electoral power, but rather targeted the democratic deficit of his organization, arguing that naive voters were manipulated into mindless political action. These accusations illustrated two contemporary concerns about popular politics. On the hand, the British public was alarmed about the disciplinary power of the machine or the Caucus. Chamberlain's critics feared, on the other, that the party founder might lose control of his agitated followers. For them, the masses also always incorporated the notion of the mob. As easily as ordinary people had decided to obey their populist leaders, they could also lose all discipline and violently destroy the country.

The second function of elections can be discerned from the experience of the Anti-Revolutionary Party in the Netherlands. Electioneering stimulated the internal coherence of early party organizations. In contrast to his British counterpart, the Dutch party leader Abraham Kuyper avoided any sort of exaggeration about the electoral potential of his party. For the Protestant minister, government office was neither realistic nor attractive. Rather he focused on the internal consolidation of his party organization. In this process, it was especially important to bring aristocratic parliamentary representatives in line with the political program of the ARP. Using electoral strategy as a pretense, Kuyper regularly intervened in the campaigns of local associations, exercising influence on the selection of candidates. Demanding that ARP candidates of the old political elite publicly embrace the party program, he extended his influence in the party organization.

From the experience of the German Social Democratic Workers' Party, another internal function of elections for early party organizations can be discerned. While the SDAP was committed to revolutionary ideology, its members became soon active participants in electoral campaigns. This break with previous ideas about parliamentary abstention was explained by citing the public function of the *Reichstag*. Well aware that they did not have enough support to change the political situation in the short term, Social Democrats like Bebel and Liebknecht expected to mobilize working-class support from the stage of parliament. This intention demanded a coherent political strategy that accepted neither close cooperation nor complete opposition to the existing political order. In other words, in regard to the control of the electoral

strategy of local branches, the Social Democratic leadership used the same arguments as its counterparts in Britain and the Netherlands. They celebrated every electoral victory as a triumph of the ordinary people. In a time when democracy was more utopian theory than practical experience, this was a viable strategy that helped maintain the organizational structure until political change was feasible.

VI. Conclusion

This book started with the question whether we have reached the end of the democratic membership party. This is the impression one can get from the alarmed analyses of the current mass media. In these worried reports, parties have become an endangered species worthy of protection. Like polar bears whose natural habitat is melting directly under their paws, parties have lost their traditional membership basis in specific social groups. Scholars have noted that parties experience decreasing membership numbers and might be transforming into institutions of the state.[850] The consequences of this development are hard to predict. But there is an overall consensus that the crisis of the party can be understood as a crisis of democracy. If parties no longer fulfil the mediating function between civil society and the state, democracy will be deprived of an important representative mechanism.[851] This idea that parties perform a key democratic function goes back to some of the very first party founders in the second half of the nineteenth century. Men like Bebel, Kuyper and Chamberlain justified their new model of political organization by claiming to provide the representation of ordinary people in national politics. They argued that the growing numbers of the working class, their improved education or need for religious education demanded the integration of the masses into the political process. This narrative was so appealing that it even shaped the later academic literature.[852] This teleological perspective made it seem as if party emergence was a logical, maybe even inevitable, consequence of the changing socio-economic structure and political institutions of the nineteenth century.

In this dissertation, I have approached party organizations from a different perspective. Instead of accepting party emergence as a natural development, the analysis started with the observation that party organizations were founded in the same period under different ideological banners in different circumstances in Germany, Britain and the Netherlands. The main research question was: why and how did the first party organizations emerge? In order to respond to this question, the dissertation analyzed the ideas and practices

[850] This idea has been developed in detail in Seymour Martin Lipset, Stein Rokkan, and Robert R. Alford, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (New York: Free Press, 1967). Also see Biezen, "Political Parties as Public Utilities."

[851] This is the famous argument of Katz and Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy"; Peter Mair, *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy* (London: Verso, 2013). See also for a crisis of political parties and alternative institutional mechanisms. Crouch, *Post-Democracy*; Pierre Rosanvallon, *Democratic Legitimacy: Impartiality, Reflexivity, Proximity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011). A more critical view can be found on the empirical and theoretical implications of membership decline in Ruud Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel? A Comment on the Notion of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 2, no. 4 (January 10, 1996): 507–23; Kitschelt, "Citizens, Politicians, and Party Cartellization"; Biezen, "Political Parties as Public Utilities"; Enroth, "Cartelization versus Representation?"

[852] Duverger, for instance, mentions as influential for his classic work both Robert Michels and Mosei Ostrogorski.

of party founders. While today the diminishing size of party membership is a growing concern, early party leaders recruited a surprisingly small number of members. The reason for this was not a lack of appreciation of quantity. To the contrary, nineteenth-century party founders argued that members' role in the structure of their parties gave them the right to participate in the political process. And yet, the first party organizations reached only hundreds or thousands, instead of the envisioned hundreds of thousands. Moreover, the size of the membership party was not always a first priority. The founders of the National Liberal Federation (NLF) and the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) abstained from creating or publishing a central membership register, while the Social Democratic Workers' Party (SDAP) mainly used them to collect membership dues.

If the first modern parties did not conform to the ideal of large membership organization, what does this mean for their self-acclaimed status as democratic organizations? To understand the role of democracy in early party organizations, I have studied early party organizations through the lenses of rhetoric and practice. In this perspective, the emergence of the party was not a natural process, but actively supported by a small group of committed activists. In contrast to the conventional explanation for party emergence, parties' ability to reinterpret existing circumstances into a hopeful opportunity structure played an important role in the foundation process. Against the opposition of their peers, party founders created a narrative about a new system of representation as a pressing necessity and party organization as the proper course of action. Not only German Social Democrats, but also Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries and British Radical Liberals believed that the new organizations were powerful instruments, providing a sense of feasibility. Tailored to the nineteenth-century belief in the power of the masses, party founders promised their ordinary followers that a better society was possible. This narrative of the early party organization was not a deception. Like many myths, it was tied to a tangible experience in organizational practices. As the analysis of the three cases shows, party founders had important reasons to fulfil their promise of democracy. Not only had they mobilized their members with this narrative, they also needed to justify their actions to themselves.[853] At the same time, they were faced with the challenge of molding a geographically divided membership into a political organization with a broad political program. Their original conceptualizations of democracy in which ordinary members were directly represented in the decision-making process did not fit the reality of their large membership organization.

1. Transnational Dimensions of Party Formation

The transnational dimension of party emergence becomes apparent when analyzing party founders as agents of a similar process in different national circumstances. At first sight, the

[853] See this essay about leaders' commitment to legitimacy. Rodney Barker, *Legitimating Identities: The Self-Presentations of Rulers and Subjects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

results of the approach seemed to be disappointing. With the exception of the example of Kuyper's report in *De Standaard* about the trial of Bebel and Liebknecht, there are no direct indications that the founders of the three cases knew about each other. But the reference to the two German Social Democrats by the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary newspaper suggests a more indirect connection. Indeed, party founders participated in a European intellectual sphere that shaped their understanding of the potential of organization. This is one of the main reasons why men like August Bebel, Joseph Chamberlain and Abraham Kuyper decided to use a pre-existing organizational structure outside of parliament for their mission to establish a more immediate link between ordinary people and parliamentary representatives.

The first chapter explored the reasons for this commonality by combining theoretical approaches with the historiography of the three parties. The emergence of party organizations in these different circumstances was part of a common phenomenon that had its roots in the nineteenth-century enthusiasm for organizing. Despite their different ideological settings and widely differing national backgrounds, the founders of the SDAP, NLF and ARP knew and admired the British Anti-Corn League that had impressed European contemporaries with its successful campaign against the import restriction on grain. The fact that a Tory government had complied in the face of extra-parliamentary pressure made the League a shining example of organizational power. While the political success of the League was in many aspects exceptional, its organizational model could not be applied to other circumstances without adjustment. In this sense, the League gave party founders a specific example of the power of organization, but its practices had to be adjusted to each movement's tradition and political culture.

The belief in the power of organization had also a much more concrete dimension in the personal lives of early party founders. As young men, Bebel, Chamberlain and Kuyper had become members of local associations like the Commercial Educational Workers' Association in Leipzig, the Debating Society in Birmingham or the Christian-Historical Debating Club in Utrecht. These local associations not only had a sociable function and provided an invigorating environment where motivated and disciplined young men could acquire essential leadership skills for future political offices. Public speaking was one aspect of local associational culture, but soon party founders accepted administrative responsibilities, after they had risen to the upper ranks of local associations. Moreover, local associations provided the opportunity to gain the respect of peers. For party founders, organization was both the abstract myth of the powerful yet unreachable Anti-Corn Law League, as well as the practices of local associations in the daily lives of party founders. Their experience of working together for a common goal gave the distant example of the Anti-Corn Law League a direct meaning in sociable routines.

2. Education as the Missing Link

The first organizational experiences of party founders were not necessarily political in the strongest sense of the word. The second chapter shows that, even when party founders joined

national organizations that united local associations under a common organizational banner, they could not easily transform their organizational practices into political parties. First, not all organizations had a political agenda. The German Federation of German Workers' Associations was a non-political organization whose purpose was to prevent further radicalization of workers. Its founders hoped that the opportunity of social mobility could become an attractive alternative to political protest. The British National Education League was most explicit about its political mission to represent the interest of the religious minority of non-conformists. The Dutch Anti-School Law League was contested among Dutch Orthodox Protestants who were skeptical about the association mania of their time. The second important feature that distinguished the new parties from previous national organizations was their broad political agenda. This was a significant adjustment from the single-issue organizations of the Dutch Anti-School Law League and the British National Education League.

How can we explain the transition from these earlier forms of national organization to the first party organizations? A comparison of the three organizations suggests that education was an important yet understudied link between previous associations and the first party organizations. In addition to organization (discussed in the first chapter), the idea and practices of education made party organization a thinkable practice. The three countries shared a strong nineteenth-century belief in the power of education to improve society not only to train workers, but also as a requirement for broader political participation. The nineteenth-century discussion about suffrage rights, for instance, focused on the question whether the new voters were educated enough to make a responsible decision.[854] In this and other ways, there was a dimension of social mobility inherent in discussions about education that inspired national organizational activities in the three countries. This was especially visible in the Federation of German Workers' Associations where most local associations were committed to workers' education. The German case also shows how education was not only a rhetorical frame, but also an actual experience, both on the individual as well as collective level. For German workers, membership in educational associations provided the possibility of social improvement, but discussions about education also cast light on their shared interest in working together for a common good. This combination of individual experience and collective discourse also shaped the missions of the British Liberals and the Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries. The two single-issue organizations united the national constituency of Orthodox Protestants and Radical Liberals behind their mission of school education to cater their religious convictions. Their struggle was not limited to local constituencies: the growing role of state authorities inspired activists to cooperate on a national scale. In addition, mass in the sense of quantity became a relevant argument that was directly tied to the movement's political legitimacy. The members of the Federation of German Workers' Associations, Anti-School League and National Education League believed that by working together they could improve the situation of German workers, Dutch Orthodox Protestants and British Liberals respectively. For this purpose, they needed to

[854] Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote*.

reach a great number of people. The scale of the movement was an important indicator of their success.

In these large - though strictly speaking - not mass communities, party founders like Bebel, Kuyper and Chamberlain soon rose to the highest ranks of leadership. From their prominent positions, they argued that the organizations of their national communities constituted a move in the right direction, but had not reached their goal yet. If education, and more generally living conditions, were increasingly determined by state authorities, then it made sense for ordinary people to more directly influence the political decision-making process. Because the future of the nation was a popular concern, this argument could take different dimensions depending on the specific national context and ideological convictions. The British National Education League believed that state authorities should support public schools whereas the Dutch Anti-School Law League demanded independence from state control. In the Federation of German Workers' Associations there was an increasing demand to combine the social agenda of the organization with a more explicitly political one. At this moment, the foundation of early party organizations became a tangible possibility that would soon seem an imperative necessity.

3. The Founding Process of Early Party Organizations

For party founders, the social background of their followers was less important than their quantity. This essentially egalitarian notion distinguished the German SDAP, British NLF and Dutch ARP from traditional conceptions of representation and mobilized their followers. The third chapter analyzed how this representative claim was implemented in the organizations' practice. The inaugural assemblies of the three party organizations show that the emancipatory message of education was translated into a broader criticism of existing social and political structures. Ordinary men could not only rise above their social status in schools and associations, but also gain control of political institutions. The delegates at the founding assemblies were thrilled by the idea that the people could have more influence in the political process. Instead of focusing exclusively on the role of representatives, they also thought about the role of the represented. The first point of their discussion was: how to organize the decision-making procedure at the assembly itself? For the delegates of the SDAP in 1869, the conflict between *Schweitzerians* and *Eisenachers* escalated over the issue of representation when one side accused the other of dictatorship. But it was not only the German SDAP, famous in the literature for its organizational structure, that tried to implement representative structures.[855]

[855] Largely uncontested, former generations of party scholars have argued that the "the technique of organizing mass parties was invented (…) by the socialist movement." Maurice Duverger, *Party Politics and Pressure Groups : A Comparative Introduction* (New York: Crowell, 1972). See also Nipperdey, *Die Organisation der deutschen Parteien vor 1918*.

Also at the meetings of the British NLF and the Dutch ARP establishing a representative organization was the issue that mattered most to delegates.

When it came to implementing this proud commitment, party founders turned to the organizational tradition of their political ideologies. The three inaugural assemblies agreed that for the new system of representation to function properly, they needed to protect their members from the manipulation of powerful leaders. German Social Democrats used a thorough political program that tied its leadership board to the decisions at the annual congress. Congress delegates were directly elected by the members of the local organizations. In contrast to the *Schweitzerian* General German Workers' Association, the *Eisenacher* SDAP was not ruled by a single and powerful political leader. The board of the party consisted of five members whose hosting branch was determined by annual congresses and whose officers were elected by local members. In the early years of the SDAP, the board was replaced in an annual rhythm. It was also controlled by the control commission, whose location was likewise determined at the annual congress.

The NLF delegates in Birmingham in 1877 developed a different procedure to realize their representative ideals. They saw themselves as the avant-garde of democratic renewal when they optimistically welcomed the popular character of their organization. The general principle was similar to the SDAP's commitment to avoid powerful leaders, but they approached leadership from the liberal tradition of political autonomy. Instead of binding their leaders to a political program, they formally stipulated that local branches were independent from the political decisions of the general committee. Local autonomy was also an important topic at the party congress of the ARP in Utrecht in 1879, where Abraham Kuyper announced that local associations would remain independent from the party's leading central committee. At the same time, the ARP also incorporated a mechanism that was similar to German Social Democracy. Years before the inaugural assembly, Kuyper drafted an extensive political program that was much more authoritative than that of the German SDAP. Kuyper used this political manifesto as a pretext to directly intervene in local party chapters. He demanded that electoral candidates publicly commit themselves to the political principles of the ARP. In this case, political representation of ordinary people meant that the aristocratic elite of the ARP had to follow the instructions of the new party leader.

4. Three Models of Representation

These different representative principles were continued in the specific organizational practices of the three parties after the inaugural assemblies. The fourth chapter discussed how the idea of representation was implemented in organizational routine. Using Max Weber's three categories of legitimacy: tradition, charisma and procedure, different ways to implement democratic promises of representation were shown. While these three categories are ideal types and do not completely resemble the experience of the three party organizations, they

give an overall impression of their representative practices. Here as well, tradition provided orientation to develop practices of political representation. Differences emerged in the categories of charisma and procedures that dominated the representative structure of ARP, SDAP and NLF. Protestant minister Kuyper was, from the beginning, the most visible representative of the religious ARP. His first period as an MP (1874-1877) was a personal disappointment. Hence, he did not strive for parliamentary office, but focused on ruling the party organization. His preferred instrument for that was his newspaper *De Standaard*, published six days a week. The role of prominent editor allowed Kuyper to embody the religious convictions of ARP members in his private persona. His emotional language appealed to them and provided them with the feeling that their interests were represented in politics.

While the ARP's charismatic form of representation might seem like a mockery of current conceptions of democracy, the procedural model of the SDAP could look like the most democratic organizational structure. In contrast to the Anti-Revolutionary leadership, where a small elite around Kuyper made all important decisions, the group of Social Democratic members, which directly influenced the decision-making process, was more extensive. This had the advantage that the pressured party organization could rely on a wide range of motivated and prepared members when the national authorities started their imprisonment campaign. Direct participation not only inspired loyalty, but also prepared many members for leadership duties. When military and civil forces targeted Social Democratic leaders, other party members were ready to take over administrative responsibilities. In theory, each ordinary member of the party had the opportunity to become a political leader after his local association was elected as the hosting location of the board. But in practice this representative model was also based on a comparatively small group of members. When in the following decades the membership of the SDAP grew, its leadership circle became more exclusive. Michel's famous iron law of oligarchy is an early account of this process.[856] In this sense, German Social Democracy approached the model of the ARP in its later years. While Kuyper's critics argued that he did not include ordinary followers in the procedures of the organization, his politics reached a larger constituency of ordinary people outside of his party organization than Bebel and Liebknecht in the early phase of their political career.

The British NLF shows that a large group of followers could also be mobilized with a more thorough incorporation of procedures and charisma. Historians have noted that the electoral success of the NLF was less substantial than most nineteenth-century contemporaries believed. But the charismatic persona of Joseph Chamberlain provided the controversial party organization with the reputation of electoral influence. After only a few years, Chamberlain became president of the Board of Trade in Gladstone's cabinet in 1882. At the same time, the party organization of the NLF increasingly walked a path independent of its famous founder. Already at the inaugural meeting, the party had presented itself as an organization that

[856] Michels, *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie*.

incorporated the interests of activists outside of Birmingham. When the heads of Liberal branches extended their influence over the organization, they made use of formal procedures. In a dramatic showdown, a general assembly in London adjusted the motion of the former NLF president to support Gladstone's Home Rule. The defeated party founder Chamberlain was forced to leave his party organization, making room for a new and increasingly diverse group of political leaders.

What can we learn from the comparison of the representative model of the three party organizations? First of all, there are different ways to implement representative claims in the organizational model of the democratic party. For early party founders, translating their democratic promise into organizational practice was a difficult task. The interests of the communities of German Social Democrats, British Radical Liberals and Dutch Anti-Revolutionaries were divided. In this sense, the idea that a single organization could represent these different interests was an appealing promise for the myth of mass participation.[857] In this impossible situation, party founders developed different strategies to incorporate their followers into the political behavior of their organization. Despite all limitations, they made democracy work in a time where there was no experience of involving ordinary people in national political institutions. Studying their practices in connection with their ideas shows that the mythical element in democratic procedures was present in parties from the beginning. At the same time, party founders managed to involve in the political process a considerable group of those formerly excluded, decisively contributing to democratization.

5. The Functions of Elections

In the traditional literature, the extension of suffrage rights is seen as the foremost explanatory factor for party emergence. Closer scrutiny, however, reveals that elections were more means than an end. In the context of the 1860s and 1870s, electoral campaign was not necessarily attractive for party founders because of possible political influence. In Britain and the Netherlands, suffrage rights were limited. In addition, a comparison of the political histories of the two countries shows that the direct link to electoral reform did not always exist. Although the British NLF benefited from the discussions around the Second Reform Act, there was no electoral reform in the Netherlands that could explain the rise of the ARP. In Germany, where suffrage rights had been granted to the entire male population, the SDAP could not hope to influence politics. The German *Reichstag* was powerless in the face of an authoritarian political executive appointed by the Emperor.

Against the background of these different conditions, the dissertation suggests a more nuanced analysis of the influence of elections on the emergence of early party organizations. Party founders' commitment to establishing a new system of mass participation within their

[857] See Saward for a more theoretical discussion of representation Saward, *The Representative Claim*.

organization was sincere, at least to a certain extent. In this sense, elections were important because they contributed to the consolidation of organizational structures in multiple ways. The British party leader Chamberlain presented the NLF as the powerful electoral machine. He actively contributed to the public fear that he could command, possibly manipulate, ordinary voters to the advantage of the parliamentary Liberal Party. This impression was further strengthened by his frequent references to the untamed side of popular politics that, ironically, helped Chamberlain to gain an even more prominent position in established British politics. This belief in electoral power provided the NLF with actual political influence, but it also forced him out of the organization, once his cabinet duties became too demanding.

Political office was less attractive to the Dutch party founder Abraham Kuyper. After an early and disappointing experience with parliament, he focused on consolidating the power balance in the ARP. For this purpose, Kuyper downplayed the electoral success of his party and argued that the organization's electoral performance was insufficient. In his newspaper *De Standaard*, he promoted the idea that in order to reach its true potential, ARP needed to unify its two sides: the party in the country needed to be consolidated with the party in parliament. In practice, this interpretation meant that Kuyper claimed complete hegemony over the party's political course, including its parliamentary activities. In other words, elections provided an argument to consolidate the ARP's internal balance of power.

A more extreme version of a careful electoral strategy was developed by early German Social Democrats. The activists around Bebel saw parliamentary participation as a compromise with the authoritarian Imperial State and a fundamental betrayal of their ideological principles. Yet, in less than a decade, these initial concerns were abandoned and the SDAP became an eager participant in the electoral system. As the examples of the electoral campaign of Wilhelm Bracke and Johann Jacoby show, elections allowed the party leadership to intervene in local matters according to its own discretion. The most prominent argument was that the *Reichstag* enabled German Social Democrats to reach a larger audience. In this sense, cooperation with the despised authorities became an acceptable course of action in the light of broadening the support for the future Socialist People's State.

6. The Crisis of the Democratic Party?

In the historical circumstances of the ninteeth century, the idea of the mass party organization could be adjusted to different political circumstances. Depending on what suited their political agenda, party founders referred to democratic ideals to justify their course of action. Yet, party founders could not ignore the narrative of the democratic party, even if they implemented it only to a certain extent. In other words, the myth of a better form of popular politics could become so powerful because it corresponded with real-life experiences. This also explains how in this period quantity could become a legitimizing argument for party foundation. Not only was the mass organization of the party a goal that could be achieved in the long-term future. Early party members also saw themselves as participants in a broad community of national scale.

Reading their newspapers as well as joining in local and national meetings, they experienced the scope of their movement. These early cases remind us that the exact size of party organization might be less important than the current discussion on membership decline suggests. Maybe the current situation should be studied as a crisis of ideas rather than as a crisis of functions. The myth of the party has lost most of its mobilizing effect. At the beginning, it was the dream of creating a tool for a better world that convinced ordinary members. With their innovative methods and broad political agenda, early party organizations established a monopoly over political participation and representation of the masses. In the difficult circumstances of the nineteenth-century, where democracy was a distant utopia with little perspective of realization, they made an attractive and sincere offer to many activists. While political influence in national organizations was restricted, they could become participants in a more representative political system within the early party organizations.

Today, this powerful appeal seems to have vanished. Not necessarily because party organizations have lost a share of their still comparatively extensive membership. From a nineteenth-century perspective, the more problematic aspect is that the promise of a better future has lost its basis in the rigid structure of today's parties. Instead of functioning as inclusionary organizations that empower the formerly unprivileged, parties today are increasingly seen as an instrument of the elite or the state.[858] In contrast, for nineteenth-century activists, membership in a political organization was already a powerful political experience. The actual influence of a single member was less important than the prospect of a more representative political system. Because most citizens today have voting rights and are eligible for political offices, party membership might be less attractive in terms of political participation.

This is not only a negative development, but also indicates that party organizations have achieved to a large extent what their early founders had promised. Despite all the limitations in their implementation of their democratic ideals, men like Bebel, Kuyper and Chamberlain believed that ordinary people could participate in politics. The nineteenth-century discussion about what this promise meant in practice was perceived by many contemporaries as a sign of crisis. But this study has shown that the discussion about crisis was an essential catalyst of the democratization in Western Europe. In other words, the myth of the democratic mass party became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Today's concerns about decreasing membership numbers are also an indication of the strength of our commitment to democratic ideas and practices. If we were to follow the very first party founders, one could think about the current discussions about the democratic nature of parties not only in terms of preservation, but also as an opportunity for innovation. For these founding fathers of the membership party, their

[858] Katz and Mair's cartel-party thesis provided the theoretical account of this perspective. "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy." See also Biezen, "Political Parties as Public Utilities."

contemporary perception of crisis provided the necessary incentive to push the boundaries of politics in the direction of the development of democratic ideas and practices.

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Appendix

List of Organizations

Amsterdam Committee for Transvaal (Amsterdamsch Comité voor Transvaal)

Anti-Corn Law League

Anti-School Law League (Anti-Schoolwet Verbond)

Anti-Stamp Tax League (Anti-Dagbladzegel Verbond)

Association for Christian-National School Education (Vereniging voor Christelijk-Nationaal Schoolonderwijs)

Birmingham Education Association

Birmingham Liberal Association

Brotherhood of Workers (Arbeiterverbrüderung)

Central March Association (Centralmärzverein)

Christian-Historical Debating Club in Utrecht

Commercial Educational Workers' Association Leipzig (Gewerbliche Bildungsverein in Leipzig)

Debating Society in Birmingham

Democratic Electoral Association Braunschweig (Demokratische Wahlverein)

Federation of German Workers' Associations (Vereinstag Deutscher Arbeitervereine)

General Electoral Association (De Algemeene Kiesvereeniging)

General German Workers' Association (Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein)

International Workers' Association (Internationale Arbeiterassoziation)

League of Communists (Bund der Kommunisten)

League of the Just (Bund der Gerechten)

London and Counties Liberal Union

National Association (Nationalverein)

National Education League

National Reform Union

Patrimonium (the Dutch Union of Christian workers)

People's Party (Volkspartei)

Progress Party (Forschrittspartei)

Saxon People's Party (Sächsische Volkspartei)

Schleswig Holsteinian Electoral Association (Schleswig Holsteinische Wahlverein)

School with the Bible (Een School met den Bijbel)

Socialist Workers' Party (Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei)

Nederlandse Samenvatting

Het Maken van de Democratische Partij

Deze dissertatie begon met het actuele vraagstuk of we het eind van de democratische ledenpartij hebben bereikt. Vooral het dalende aantal mensen die lid willen worden van een politieke partij heeft tot bezorgdheid geleid over de houdbaarheid van het organisatiemodel. De empirische geldigheid van lidmaatschapsdaling is gedeeltelijk in twijfel getrokken door kwantitatieve studies, vooral vanuit een historisch perspectief op de lange termijn. De algemene consensus in de partijliteratuur is echter dat de crisis van de partij begrepen kan worden als een crisis van de democratie. Dit proefschrift draagt bij aan het debat door de historische oorsprong van de nauwe relatie tussen partijorganisaties en democratie te bestuderen. In de negentiende eeuw legitimeerden de oprichters van de eerste partijen hun nieuwe politieke organisatiemodel met het vermogen daarvan tot massale volksvertegenwoordiging ("popular representation"). Dit verhaal was zo aansprekend, dat het de latere academische literatuur vormde. De opkomst van de partijorganisatie is beschreven als een logisch en misschien zelfs onvermijdelijk gevolg van de zich veranderende sociaaleconomische structuren en verbreding van de politieke instellingen in de negentiende eeuw.

De aanpak van dit onderzoek is om verder te kijken dan het algemene verandermodel op het macroniveau van de natiestaat. Daarom richt ik me op een analyse van de partijoprichters als actoren van de opkomst van de organisatie. De analyse van partijoprichters is geïnspireerd door nieuwe theorieën over sociale bewegingen en politieke geschiedenis. Hierdoor bieden hun ideeën een beter onderzoeksonderwerp om precies te begrijpen wat er in "het veld" gebeurde. De hoofdvraag van dit onderzoek is: waarom en hoe kwamen de eerste partijorganisaties tot stand? Om deze vraag te beantwoorden vergelijk ik drie vroege partijorganisaties: de Duitse Sociaal Democratische Arbeiderspartij (Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei: SDAP), de Britse Nationale Liberale Federatie (National Liberal Federation: NLF) en de Nederlandse Anti-Revolutionaire Partij (ARP). Deze drie partijen zijn geselecteerd omdat ze in de geschiedschrijving worden beschreven als de eerste "moderne" partijorganisaties in hun respectievelijke nationale geschiedenissen. Zij waren de eersten die het nationale partijlidmaatschap succesvol combineerden met parlementaire vertegenwoordiging. Daarom beschouwden tijdgenoten deze partijorganisaties als een nieuw fenomeen dat duidelijk gescheiden moest worden van eerdere vormen van politieke organisatie. De oorsprong van deze drie partijen wordt in dit onderzoek bestudeerd aan de hand van een groot aantal gepubliceerde en niet-gepubliceerde bronnen: brieven, autobiografieën, politieke brochures en andere publicaties die waren samengesteld door partijleiders, hun leden en critici. Daarnaast geven verslagen van partijcongressen en krantenartikelen inzicht in hoe partijleden en critici

betekenis gaven aan hun beslissing om een nieuwe vorm van politieke organisatie te ontwikkelen.

Transnationale dimensies van partijvorming

Het eerste hoofdstuk gaat in op de transnationale redenen voor het ontstaan van partijorganisatie door theoretische benaderingen te combineren met de nationale politieke geschiedschrijving. De opkomst van partijorganisaties onder verschillende omstandigheden was onderdeel van een integraal Europees fenomeen, dat zijn wortels had in het enthousiasme voor organiseren in het negentiende-eeuwse Europa. Een voorbeeld hiervan is de Britse Anti-Graanwet Verbond. Deze werd bewonderd door de oprichters van de Duitse SDAP, het Britse NLF en de Nederlandse ARP. Europese tijdgenoten waren erg onder de indruk van het Britse Anti-Graanwet Verbond. Ze waren vooral onder de indruk van haar succesvolle campagne tegen de invoerbeperking voor graan. Dit gaf partijoprichters een specifiek voorbeeld van de kracht van het fenomeen organisatie. Het geloof in de kracht van de organisatie had ook een directe impact op het persoonlijke leven van de oprichters van de vroege partijen. August Bebel, Joseph Chamberlain en Abraham Kuyper waren al jong lid geworden van plaatselijke verenigingen. Deze verenigingen hadden een socialiserende functie en zorgden voor een omgeving waar gemotiveerde en gedisciplineerde jonge mannen essentiële leiderschapsvaardigheden konden verwerven voor toekomstige politieke functies. Bovendien boden lokale verenigingen de gelegenheid om het respect van gelijkgestemden te winnen.

Onderwijs als de “missing link”

De eerste organisatorische ervaringen van de partijoprichters waren niet noodzakelijk politiek gekleurd. In het tweede hoofdstuk komt aan bod dat, zelfs wanneer de partijoprichters lid werden van nationale organisaties, die als doel hadden om lokale associaties te verenigen, ze hun organisatorische ervaring niet gemakkelijk konden aanwenden om deze verenigen te transformeren in politieke partijen. Niet alle organisaties hadden een politieke agenda. De Duitse Federatie van Duitse Werknemersverenigingen (Vereinstag Deutscher Arbeitervereine) was een niet-politieke organisatie die tot doel had verdere radicalisering van werknemers te voorkomen. Het Britse Nationale Onderwijs Verbond (National Education League) was zeer expliciet over zijn politieke missie om de belangen van de non-conformisten (een religieuze minderheid) te vertegenwoordigen. Het bestaansrecht van de Nederlandse Anti-Schoolwet Verbond werd betwist onder Nederlandse orthodoxe protestanten die sceptisch waren over de “verenigingsmanie” van hun tijd. Een tweede onderscheidend kenmerk van partijen ten opzichte van vroege nationale organisaties was hun brede politieke agenda. Dit was een belangrijke verandering ten opzichte van de single-issue organisaties, zoals de Nederlandse Anti-Schoolwet Verbonden het Britse Nationaal Onderwijs Verbond.

Hoe kunnen we de overgang verklaren van vroege nationale organisaties naar de eerste partijorganisaties? Een vergelijking van de drie organisaties suggereert dat onderwijs een belangrijke, maar weinig bestudeerde link is tussen eerdere verenigingen en de eerste partijorganisaties. Naast organisatie, maakten de ideeën en praktijken rondom het onderwijs, partijorganisaties tot een praktijk die nu denkbaar was. De drie landen deelden een sterk negentiende-eeuws geloof in de kracht van het onderwijs om de samenleving te verbeteren. Onderwijs was er niet alleen om arbeiders op te leiden, maar werd ook gezien als een vereiste voor bredere politieke deelname. De discussie in de negentiende eeuw over het kiesrecht richtte zich op de vraag of nieuwe kiezers voldoende waren opgeleid om een verantwoorde beslissing te kunnen nemen. Deze en andere discussies lieten zien dat het thema sociale mobiliteit een belangrijk onderdeel was van de discussie over onderwijs. De interesse in het onderwijs inspireerde nationale organisatorische activiteiten in de drie landen. Vanuit hun prominente posities in organisaties voor de bevordering van het onderwijs, betoogden de partijoprichters dat de organisaties van hun nationale gemeenschappen een stap in de goede richting waren, maar hun doel nog niet hadden bereikt. Als het onderwijs en de levensstandaard van de bevolking steeds meer werden bepaald door de overheid, dan was het logisch dat gewone mensen het politieke besluitvormingsproces rechtstreeks gingen beïnvloeden. Op dat moment werd de oprichting van vroege partijorganisaties een mogelijkheid, die al snel noodzakelijk zou lijken.

De oprichting van vroege partijorganisaties

Voor vroege partijoprichters was de sociale achtergrond van hun achterban minder belangrijk dan hun aantallen. Dit egalitaire begrip onderscheidde de drie partijorganisaties, de Duitse SDAP, het Britse NLF en de Nederlandse ARP, van traditionele opvattingen over representatie en dit mobiliseerde hun achterban. Het derde hoofdstuk geeft een analyse hoe deze representatieve claim werd gebruikt in de nieuwe partijorganisaties. De oprichtingsvergaderingen van de drie partijorganisaties laten zien dat de emancipatorische boodschap van onderwijs werd vertaald in een bredere kritiek op bestaande sociale en politieke structuren. Gewone mannen konden niet alleen boven hun sociale status uitstijgen in scholen en verenigingen, maar ook de controle over politieke instellingen verwerven. De afgevaardigden in de oprichtingsvergaderingen waren erg enthousiast over het idee dat de bevolking meer invloed zou krijgen op het politieke proces. In plaats van zich uitsluitend te richten op de rol van de vertegenwoordiger, dachten ze ook na over de rol van de vertegenwoordigde. Toen het er op aankwam om deze fiere verplichting uit te voeren, richtten de partijoprichters zich op de organisatorische tradities van hun politieke ideologieën. In de drie oprichtingsvergaderingen was men het erover eens was dat het nieuwe systeem van vertegenwoordiging alleen goed zou werken als de leden werden beschermd tegen de manipulatie van machtige leiders. De Duitse sociaaldemocraten kozen voor een politiek programma dat de leiders van het bestuur verbond aan de beslissingen die werden gemaakt op

het jaarlijkse congres. In Birmingham in 1877 ontwikkelden de afgevaardigden van het NLF een andere procedure om hun representatieve idealen te realiseren. Ze zagen zichzelf als de avant-garde van de democratische vernieuwing, toen ze het karakter van de volksvertegenwoordiging in hun organisatie verwelkomden. Lokale autonomie was ook een belangrijk onderwerp. Op het partijcongres van de ARP in Utrecht in 1879 kondigde Abraham Kuyper aan dat lokale verenigingen onafhankelijk zouden blijven van de centrale commissie van de partij. Echter, de ARP-leider gaf het politieke programma van zijn partij een gezaghebbende status, die gecentraliseerde controle over de partij mogelijk maakte.

Drie modellen van vertegenwoordig

Na de oprichtingsvergaderingen werden deze verschillende representatieve principes voortgezet in de organisaties van de drie partijen. Het vierde hoofdstuk gaat in op hoe het idee van vertegenwoordiging werd doorgevoerd in de organisatorische routine. In het organisatiemodel van de democratische partij waren er verschillende manieren om vertegenwoordiging in te voeren. Voor de vroege partijoprichters was het nakomen van hun democratische belofte in de organisatiestructuur van nieuwe partijen een moeilijke taak. De belangen van de Duitse sociaal-democraten, Britse radicale liberalen en Nederlandse anti-revolutionairen waren verdeeld. In deze onmogelijke situatie ontwikkelden partijoprichters verschillende strategieën om hun kiezers te bereiken. Deze waren ofwel gericht op procedures (Duitse SDAP), charisma (Nederlandse ARP) of een combinatie van de twee (Britse NLF). Op deze manier zou één organisatie die deze verschillende belangen vertegenwoordigde de mythe van massale deelname kunnen uitvoeren. Ondanks alle beperkingen hebben de partijoprichters democratie in gang gezet, in een tijd waarin er geen ervaring was met het betrekken van gewone mensen bij nationale politieke instellingen.

De rol van verkiezingen

In de traditionele literatuur wordt de uitbreiding van het kiesrecht als de belangrijkste verklaring beschouwd voor het ontstaan van partijen. Bij nadere beschouwing blijkt echter dat verkiezingen meer een middel dan een doel waren. In de jaren 1860 en 1870 waren verkiezingscampagnes niet per se aantrekkelijk voor partijoprichters, vanwege mogelijke politieke invloed. Gezien de verschillende nationale geschiedenissen van democratisering, suggereert het proefschrift een meer genuanceerde invloed van verkiezingen op de opkomst van vroege partijorganisaties. Het is belangrijk om op te merken dat partijoprichters oprecht waren in hun streven om een nieuw systeem van massale participatie in hun organisatie te vestigen. Op deze manier waren verkiezingen belangrijk omdat ze op verschillende manieren bijdroegen aan de consolidatie van organisatiestructuren. De Britse partijleider Chamberlain presenteerde het NLF als een krachtige verkiezingsmachine. Hij maakte een actieve bijdrage

aan de angst dat hij gewone kiezers kon bevelen, of manipuleren, in het voordeel van de parlementaire Liberale Partij. Een parlementaire post was minder aantrekkelijk voor de Nederlandse partijoprichter Abraham Kuyper. Hij bagatelliseerde het verkiezingssucces van zijn partij en hij zei dat de verkiezingsprestaties van de organisatie onvoldoende waren. In de praktijk betekende deze interpretatie dat Kuyper de volledige hegemonie claimde over de politieke koers van de partij, inclusief haar parlementaire activiteiten. Een meer extreme versie van een zorgvuldige verkiezingsstrategie werd ontwikkeld door de vroege Duitse sociaal-democraten. De activisten rondom Bebel zagen parlementaire deelname als een compromis met de autoritaire keizerlijke staat en een fundamenteel verraad aan hun ideologische principes. Maar in minder dan tien jaar werden deze eerste zorgen aan de kant geschoven, en werd de SDAP een enthousiaste deelnemer aan de verkiezingen. Omdat de Reichstag de Duitse sociaal-democraten in staat stelde een groter publiek te bereiken, werd samenwerking met de "verachte" autoriteiten een acceptabele manier van handelen. Dit had als doel om de steun te vergroten voor de toekomstige socialistische volksstaat.

De crisis van de Democratische Partij?

In de negentiende eeuw, kon het idee van een massapartij worden aangepast aan verschillende politieke omstandigheden. Afhankelijk van de politieke agenda, verwezen partijoprichters naar specifieke democratische idealen, om zo hun handelswijze te verantwoorden. Toch konden partijoprichters het narratief van de democratische partij niet negeren, ook als zij ervoor kozen dit slechts tot op zekere hoogte toe te passen. Met andere woorden, de mythe van een betere vorm van populaire politiek kon zo groot en invloedrijk worden, omdat het correspondeerde met ervaringen uit het echte leven. Dit verklaart ook waarom kwantiteit een geloofwaardige legitimering werd voor de vroege partijoprichters. Massa-organisatie van de partij was niet alleen een doel dat kon worden behaald op de lange termijn; vroege partijleden zagen zichzelf ook als deelnemers in een organisatie met een brede gemeenschap op nationaal niveau. Partijleden ondervonden zelf het bereik en de omvang van hun politieke partij, door het lezen van hun kranten en door het deelnemen aan lokale en nationale bijeenkomsten. Deze vroege gevallen maken ons duidelijk, dat de grootte van een partij wellicht minder belangrijk is dan de huidige discussie over het teruglopende aantal leden van een politieke partij misschien doet vermoeden. De huidige situatie kan wellicht beter worden bestudeerd als een crisis van opvattingen in plaats van een crisis van functie. De mythe van de partij is het mobiliserende effect bijna volledig kwijtgeraakt. Aanvankelijk was het de droom om een instrument voor een betere wereld te creëren, om zo de gewone mens (de massa) te overtuigen. Vroege partijorganisaties brachten een monopolie op politieke participatie en representatie van de massa tot stand, door middel van hun innovatieve methoden en brede politieke agenda. Zij zorgden voor een aantrekkelijk en oprecht aanbod voor veel activisten, tijdens de moeilijke omstandigheden van de negentiende eeuw, toen democratie nog een verre utopie was met weinig perspectief op een kans van slagen. Deze activisten konden binnen de vroege

partijorganisaties deelnemen aan een representatiever politiek systeem, in een tijd waarin politieke invloed en de toegang tot nationale organisaties beperkt was.

Tegenwoordig lijkt deze aantrekkingskracht volledig te zijn verdwenen. Echter, niet noodzakelijkerwijs omdat politieke partijen een deel van hun nog steeds zeer omvangrijke ledenaantal zijn kwijtgeraakt. Vanuit een negentiende-eeuws perspectief bekeken, is het problematische aspect juist dat het uitgangspunt van de belofte van een betere toekomst, verloren is gegaan in de strikte structuur van de huidige partijen. In plaats van te functioneren als inclusieve organisatie die de minderbedeelden uit de samenleving steunt en een stem geeft, wordt de politieke partij tegenwoordig steeds meer beschouwd als een middel voor de elite of de staat. Dit staat in contrast met de opvatting van negentiende-eeuwse activist, voor wie het lidmaatschap van een politieke partij juist een emanciperende politieke ervaring was. De daadwerkelijke invloed van het individuele lid was minder belangrijk dan het vooruitzicht op een representatiever politiek systeem. Tegenwoordig heeft het overgrote deel van de bevolking stemrecht en hebben de meeste burgers toegang tot het vervullen van politieke functies. Het lidmaatschap van een politieke partij is daarmee wellicht niet meer zo urgent als het gaat om politieke participatie.

Deze ontwikkeling hoeft niet per se beschouwd te worden als negatieve; het geeft namelijk aan dat partijorganisaties voor een groot deel juist hebben bereikt wat de vroege partijoprichters voor ogen hadden en beloofden. Ondanks alle beperkingen bij het toepassen van hun politieke idealen, geloofden partijoprichters dat de gewone mens wel degelijk kon bijdragen en deelnemen aan de politiek. De negentiende-eeuwse discussie over wat deze belofte zou betekenen voor de praktijk, werd door veel tijdgenoten gezien als een teken van crisis. Echter, dit onderzoek laat zien dat dit debat een essentiële katalysator was voor de democratisering van West-Europa. De mythe van de democratische massapartij werd een selffulfilling prophecy. De hedendaagse bezorgdheid over het dalende ledental van politieke partijen is tevens een indicatie van de hoge mate van toewijding aan democratische ideeën en toepassingen. Als we zouden volgen in de voetsporen van de allereerste partijoprichters, zouden we de huidige politieke discussie over de democratische aard van de politieke partij kunnen beschouwen als een poging tot het behouden van die democratische aard, evenals een kans voor vernieuwing. Het idee van een crisis zorgde voor de negentiende-eeuwse partijoprichters van de politieke lidmaatschapspartij, juist voor de noodzakelijke stimulans om de politieke grenzen te verleggen in de richting van de ontwikkeling van democratische ideeën en toepassingen.

Curriculum vitae

Anne Heyer was born on 16 August 1986 in Magdeburg, Germany. She obtained her BA degree in International Politics and History at Jacobs University Bremen in Germany and Tartu University in Estonia (2006-2009). In 2010 she finished her master degree MSc by Research in Politics at the University of Edinburgh with distinction. During her studies she was a scholarship-holder of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Anne has worked on her PhD thesis about the emergence of early political parties in Germany, Britain and the Netherlands as part of the NWO-funded research project Promise of Organization at the Institute for History, Leiden University (2010 – 2017). As a PhD candidate she was a founding member of the international Political History PhD Network, a board member of Leiden University´s PhD LEO organization and was affiliated with the Political Legitimacy Profile Area. She has taught classes about Modern and European History, Party History and Political Participation. Since 2012 Anne has been a research fellow at d|part, Think Tank for political participation, for which she, among other things, successfully applied for a grant for research-led teaching of the LehreN Initiative (6,000 EUR) and acted as editor of a blog series on "New Populist Parties in Europe?". Anne has published on early political parties and the history of democracy in German and English. Currently, Anne is working as a researcher on early nineteenth-century forms of political participation in the European Union´s Horizon 2020 funded research project TRANSPOP at Juan March Institute at University Carlos III in Madrid.