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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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*.

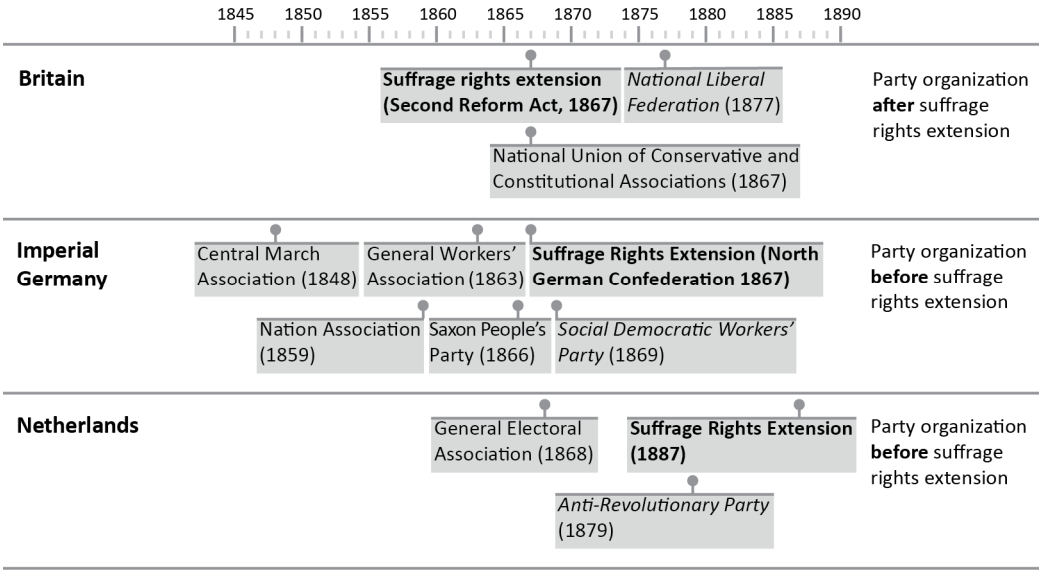
[118] Klaus Erich Pollmann, "Arbeiterwahlen im Norddeutschen Bund 1867-1870," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 15, no. 2 (January 1, 1989): 164–95.

[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.

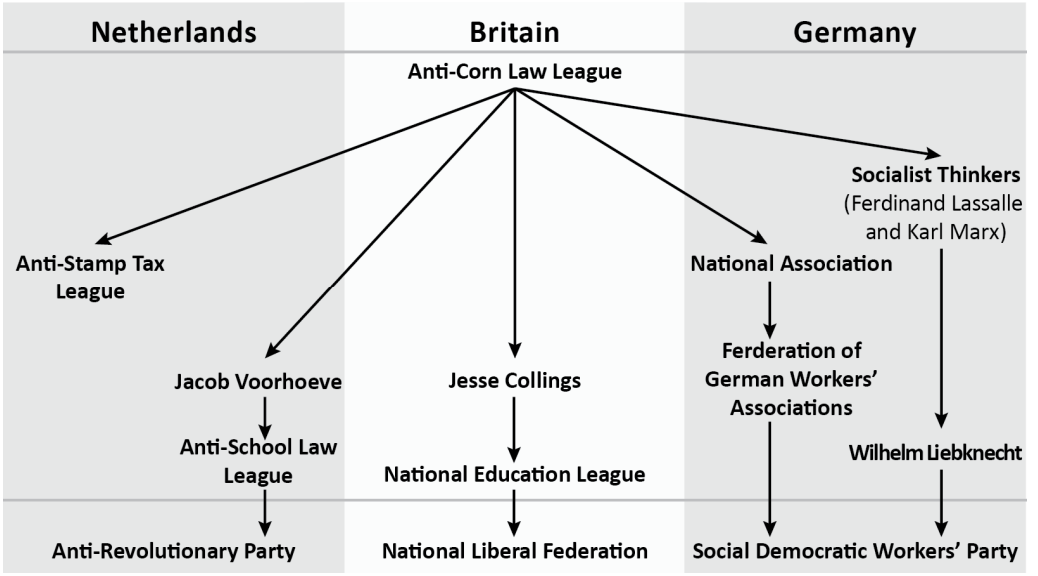
[155] "große englische Agitation gegen die Korngesetze" Ferdinand Lassalle, *Offenes Antwortschreiben an Das Zentral-Komitee Zur Berufung Eines Allgemeinen Deutschen Arbeiter-Kongresses in Leipzig* (Berlin: Buchhandlung Vorwärts, 1919), 58, http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb11126006_00001.html.

[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.