

Re-imagining Democracy in Central and Northern Europe

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Joanna opened by saying that we had funded the workshop out of part of her inheritance from her parents, Stella and Evan Innes and that we were calling it the **Stella and Evan Innes Memorial Conference**.

Mark set out a range of reasons why we might think of this as a region with a certain coherence:

- German culture zone – many educated people across the region could read German, and might have attended German universities (much less common in the Mediterranean countries we studied previously):
- layered polities, complicating the imposition of anyone's sovereign will – perhaps esp. true of German states, Austro-Hungary – but also Switzerland, Netherlands.
- complex systems of representation and participation across the whole of the region in the past as well as through our period of study
- many heavily rural states with, in the east, a continuing history of serfdom
- some places with their own traditions of democratic discourse – esp. Switzerland, but also Netherlands/Belgium, including during their lives as sister republics
- much of the region directly influenced by the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and the Vienna Settlement

A question to ponder was how far the region in taking on 'democracy' responded to events in France, allowing for different states bringing different histories to that response:

- Is this a story of the reception of French ideas? How and why did its reception vary across different polities and contexts?
- Was France a common reference point in thinking about democracy: both positively and negatively? What did they see democracy as entailing for French?

- Is this a zone whose use of democracy is best understood as reacting to/against France (1789, 1815, 1830, 1848 ?
- Insofar as they were responding to external models and events what other instances might be salient: USA, Cadiz, Greek Revolution? How much were discussions influenced by reference to other polities in the region
- What did people find usable – and why – both positively and negatively?

He was struck by how quickly people took to arms around 1848 in parts of the region, thus South German states, Hungary, Poland (Austrian and Prussian) And is there a common lexicon emerging? What are the key elements of that lexicon and is it local, regional, or international?

He urged participants to press the question as to what themes unite and what divide people's thinking about democracy in the region

Session 1: Republican self-government and federal traditions: Swiss and Netherlandish

Andreas Würgler & Irène Herrmann

Irène introduced the session by noting that Switzerland was seen as the cradle of democracy. Yet its relationship to democracy was not straightforward.

Together they presented an overview. Switzerland was marked by 4 features:

1. No kings – its history is one of democratic or aristocratic states/cantons. The names of 'republic' and 'democracy' already had some currency by the late sixteenth century. It was Napoleon's only republic, and the only 'pure' democracy in Europe. There were some real direct democracies in the Landsgemeinde cantons
2. There were strong urban-rural divisions: between cantons (with some rural cantons having no towns of any size) and within some cantons (where the urban population dominated the rural).
3. It developed a federal set of institutions over the period which shaped how political concepts were understood – with democracy being applied differently at different levels, and with movements back and forth at commune, canton and federal level. And with a strong emphasis at the Federal level on building and maintaining consensus so as to maintain their fragile unity, in the face of a history of confessional conflicts.
4. It was linguistically diverse – 1780-1870 Germans dominated in the Centre and the East. At the same time, in the eighteenth century France was a very important references point intellectually – in the nineteenth century about a

quarter of the population were French speaking. Italian was also in play. It was deeply embedded in the intellectual and political cultures of its neighbours. Discussions were inevitably shaped by translations.

Andreas said that as elsewhere, democracy was understood to have an ancient reference point, and was often negatively employed. It was also employed from the sixteenth century at a cantonal level, in descriptive taxonomies which ranged from democratic through aristo-democratic to aristocratic. Bodin and Simler recognised some cantons as democratic. They had general assemblies, which voted on laws, war and peace etc., elected all officials, and held them accountable. More than 80% of men were part of the electorate. Democracy was a term of identity in such cantons, but could also be used negatively in arguments. In the 1790s, some rural protest movements invoked democracy, mostly thinking of the *Landesgemeinde* form as a kind of utopia.

In 1789-1798 the old confederacy collapsed under the pressure of French invasion; the French sought to diminish cantonal supremacy and establish a Helvetic Republic unifying the cantons, introducing representation at the national level through which was expressed national sovereignty (1st two articles of the 1798 Constitution). The constitution also introduced indirect suffrage, treated representatives as having a free mandate rather than acting as delegates, and sought to extend equal citizenship in contrast to some of the exclusionary practices of aristocratic republics and urban dominance of their rural areas – but in practice just on the categories of citizenship in use before 1798. The communes had the competence to accept or not new citizens. They argued that pure democracy was not applicable to large states, that voters were often ignorant, and that permanent assemblies caused instability. The 1798 constitution professed to make the Helvetic Republic a centralized “representative democracy” – the wording was imported from French discourse (not constitution) by the Swiss sympathizer Peter Ochs.

There was push back against the French (“Why do you want to **democratize** us? Isn't our constitution already **democratic enough**? Isn't our people the only sovereign power that makes the laws and elects its authorities according to a **representative system** that could hardly be **more purely** conceived? These are truths that cannot be refuted.” (Canton of Appenzell and former subject territories). Use of the term ‘representative democracy’ was meant to make French innovations sound unnecessary, though in fact these were two quite different systems.

Newspapers did pick up the new terminology, but the introduction of censorship closed down public discussion.

Napoleon's Act of Mediation restored the old cantonal institutions (and thus federalism), although not without reservations: It is clear from the record of debate that this was

Napoleon's own choice: others such as Fouché did not agree, saying that they would be prey to pro Austrian elites. No property census was introduced, but the minimum age was raised. All men over 16 were made eligible for military service. Napoleon said that 'The constitutions of the small cantons are certainly not reasonable, but it is custom that has established them: when custom and reason are at odds, it is the former that prevails.' He also pointed out that the small democratic cantons are the USP distinguishing Switzerland and preventing it from being absorbed into other states.

The key periods in terms of the use of democracy in public discourse were c 1791-2, 1798-1803 and after 1814. In the press, the term was mainly used when talking about the Landsgemeinde cantons. Democracy was not a key term in debates about the shift from the old to the new confederation.

Irene said she would distinguish two periods. Up till 1848, when a representative democracy was established at national level, and after 1848, when elements of pure democracy were incorporated, and democracy was claimed as something national and Swiss.

After 1815, the term continued to be used of rural cantons. Linking it to the French was a way of discrediting it. Both conservative and liberal commentators saw pure democracy as an underdeveloped political form. The revolutions of the 1830s marked a conceptual turning point, when liberals became more positive and vocal about 'representative democracy' – though Freedom, Republic and Nation remained more common terms. Representative democracy was contrasted with what was now called not pure but absolute democracy, associating this form with tyranny. In the late 30s and 40s, the term began to be used of a social and political principle, associated with an aspiration for social justice. She said that she had been inspired by Béla to think that Cherbuliez [[Antoine-Elisée Cherbuliez - Wikipedia](#) author of *De la démocratie en Suisse* 1843] feared this shift, whereas Secrétan [[Charles Secrétan - Wikipedia](#)] was open to it.

The 1848 constitution instituted representative democracy at the national level. It gave political rights and affirmed Switzerland's republican character. Switzerland could at this time be described as a republic based on representative or democratic principles.

The following period saw the rise of a 'democratic movement' demanding reform, against a background of economic stress and social tension. Protest was often inspired by socialist ideas, and used the vocabulary of democracy. Defenders of the regime responded by incorporating some practices borrowed from direct democracy into the constitution: referendum and initiative. They didn't like to see the term democracy appropriated by an oppositional faction, and instead claimed it as the common heritage of all Swiss. It was said to follow that the Swiss must already have the moral qualities necessary to sustain this demanding form.

She said that they had decided that their account shouldn't proceed down to constitutional amendment in 1874, since that would introduce a teleology. Instead, they would conclude in 1872, when an attempt to change the constitution failed.

In conclusion she noted some methodological issues, including use of different languages, and of alternative terms.

Netherlands and Belgium.

Camille said her chapter would be intrinsically comparative. She found that when the two nations were compared, one or the other was often seen as more advanced. She would try to avoid that kind of formulation.

She was struck by the extent of 'bricolage' between political languages, including elements of republicanism, enlightenment rights, ideas of an ancient constitution, invocations of the US and France etc. She cited a case in which bakers defending their guild privileges cited both historic privilege and human rights. She suggested that practices may precede language: After 1815 people were reluctant to use the term democracy, but they continued to engage in many practices which we might associate with democracy – such as elections. Bricolage was especially apparent in revolutionary periods.

Both parts of the territory experienced radical change during the French revolutionary period, which saw the establishment of both Brabantine (1789-1790) and Batavian Republics (1795-1801). There is better/fuller historiography about political culture and practices for the North than for the South, where the field is dominated by social and religious historians. No serious attempt has been made to study the two together. She thought that similarities between the two are more interesting than the existing historiography suggests.

In the northern state, 'democracy' was a well established word in the 1790s. The 1780s Patriot Movement had as its express goal restoring republican forms. The word democracy was only rarely used in relation to their aspirations. Ideas and terms from English Commonwealthman traditions, the US and the French revolution, notably ideas about individual rights, came to be employed, but mixed up with their own old republican vocabulary.

The 1795 Batavian Republic acquired the region's first written constitution, where the state was said to be both democratic and republican. Those two terms were closely associated: the periodical *The Republican* didn't have a very different editorial line from the one called *The Democrat*. It was also described as embodying *Volksregering* by representation – not a phrase that was used later. There were debates about how 'united' it should be, but these didn't divide old republicans from people favouring representative government: positions on all these issues cross cut each other. There

was a very clear procedure laid down in the constitution for how it could be changed, which was part of a conception that it might be changed over time by decision of the people. The regime was revised under Napoleon in 1801 and then again in 1805; in 1805 there was an explicit rejection of the idea that representatives should be understood as delegates: they had a free mandate.

In the South the United Belgian States were re-conquered by the Austrians in 1790, but things could well have gone otherwise. This success was short-lived as the French moved into the territory in 1792-4. Major parties in the Brabantine Republic were the progressive Vonckists (so called by historians, not at the time, after their leader Jan van Vonck) as against the conservative Statist faction, who gained the ascendancy in the face of the problem of how to hold the whole together. Vonckists didn't talk about democracy. Their movement was a very broad church – concerned to reconcile a unitary state and considerable local autonomy, but operating with a patchwork of ideas, as they struggled to reconcile provincial autonomy with a central order. They favoured modernisation of the estates system. Some said the US was a better model than France. By and large they wanted to keep older structures but to infuse them with democratic sentiments. Vonck envisaged a society of orders but with general suffrage. This was at a time, 1790, when social orders had already been abolished in France.

In 1815 the two states were united in an Orange kingdom. This was an era of depoliticization, which had already set in under Napoleon. After the Restoration, democracy was negatively typed. But a layered vision of political citizenship endured, in both north and south: one could do politics at two levels. Depoliticisation at the state level didn't necessarily entail depoliticization in the localities. The abolition of guilds raised many urgent issues at the local level. People didn't use much high-flown vocabulary when debating local issues, but it is clear that the word democracy was one that people knew. It appeared in the press, that remained reasonably free and open to the outside world. The word appeared mainly in reference to France, in translations of French debates, where it figured as the name of the popular element in a mixed constitution. A distinct feature of the southern part of the kingdom was the presence of French Revolutionary veterans, who provided an entry point to Francophone debates and used a vocabulary inherited from the revolution. Among these refugees was the Babouvian Buonarotti, who lived in Brussels until 1829. Louis de Potter cooperated with him. One thing that didn't transfer well from France was secularism.

From the 1820s there was some divergence between the political cultures of north and south (something she had addressed in her presentation to the 1860s workshop). In the Netherlands, there was a stronger reaction against democracy. In 1831 the Belgian constitution was founded on the idea of popular sovereignty. It was very liberal but didn't talk about democracy; in debates around it the word was sometimes but rarely mentioned. The structure of Belgian politics gave more space to oppositional voices

[representatives were elected by voters, not as in the Netherlands by provincial assemblies]. From 1840, a radical movement developed whose members talked about democracy a lot, though it was more often used in the titles than the text of publications. Jakob Katz led what was called the 'meeting movement' (the English word meeting was used). They charged the regime with not having fulfilled the promise of the constitution. In the Netherlands, by contrast, the word democracy long remained taboo. There was a very small group of radicals, riven by internal quarrels, who had contact with Belgian radicals. Their writings show that the word survived tabooisation: it had not been forgotten, just wasn't used.

A question emerging from this is to what extent democracy retained meaning in contexts in which it was officially suppressed. Her conclusion from her sources was that the word wasn't forgotten: people knew it, understood it when they saw it. If they didn't use it that was because they didn't find it useful. In the context of a long tradition of bricolage in political discourse, people took up the words and discourses that they thought met the needs of the moment.

Discussion

Niels asked about whether there was a sense that popular government would be cheap. **Camille** said not. **Andreas** said that direct taxes had not been Swiss practice and were only introduced by the Helvetic Republic. One result is that central democratic institutions were seen as more expensive. **Irene** said that the nineteenth-century image of Switzerland was as pastoral and reasonable, not spending too much, and that was integral to their thinking about why the Swiss are free. **Joanna** said she was surprised that the question didn't arise in the Netherlands. In England there was certainly a tradition of thinking of popular government as cheap – as by Paine and his proposals in Rights of Man II and Agrarian Justice, but on down through the radical tradition into the later nineteenth century

She had further comments. It struck her that it might be interesting to know whether the term modern was taken up – either positively or negatively: was there a debate about the 'modern form of government.' Did people position their states as more or less 'modern' than others.

Also, referring to a map showing where periodical titles (listed in Worldcat) included words with democ*, which she had circulated contributors previously, she noted that striking there was that fact that, whereas in most places democ* occurred much more often in the 1840s than in the 1850s, in Switzerland there were a profusion of titles in the 1850s. This was presumably an effect of the democratic movement that Irene had talked about, but the fact that that made Switzerland look very unusual in that decade seemed worth noting.

Finally, she was interested in the shift that Irene had described from democracy being a partisan term in the 50s to becoming a shared one in the 60s. Something similar happened in the United States in the 1790s. Seth Cotlar in the first Re-imagining Democracy book traced the shift to a tactical move by a particular newspaper editor, whose usage others took up. Whether or not he was right to identify that mechanism, she thought that mechanisms bringing about such changes were worth trying to identify.

Irene said there was criticism of direct democracy in favour of modern democracy – and a sense that the good Swiss citizen is modern! It seemed not obvious and therefore all the more important to stress the modernity of some variants of democracy. But by the 1850s others were claiming the modern ground too. In Fribourg, supporters of the old oligarchic Catholic regime accused their new radical authorities (practitioners of a particularly authoritarian form of representative democracy) of being themselves unworthy of democracy.

Henk said in respect of ‘modern’, that it was common to see democracy as something from the past and the French Revolution as having finally established its irrelevance.

In relation to the Swiss and Dutch – both started with elements of democracy and the use of the term; both fell to the French; but the North became a monarchy, whereas Switzerland remained a republic – and there developed marked differences in their use of the language. He wondered whether the survival of federalism in the Swiss case made a difference. .

He also noted that Maarten Prak suggested that the onset of the nineteenth century didn’t mean an advance of democracy in practice in once self-governing towns – in many respects there was much less democracy around.

Theo said that he was interested in the idea that there were multiple languages and idioms in political debates and that they often weren’t very systematic: one might call this ‘strategic eclecticism’. Should we see this as good, intelligent?

Camille said to Henk that indeed lots of old practices and institutions were officially abolished – but people still had to organize things and therefore reverted to what they were used to; there is (as yet) little other than Carolien Boender’s research on that in the North. and nothing really in the South. It didn’t seem clear whether or how that affected how they thought about state politics. One can see in the case of the Vonckists that they wanted change in practices, but also that they were striving to find adequate languages to capture what they wanted to be different.

Session 2: Germany between the First and Second Reich

Hanseatic cities

Anne Heyer

She said that this would be more in the nature of a report on research than the statement of a vision. She had found more material on Bremen and Lubeck than on Hamburg. The most democratic thing she had found was Bremen's *Demokratische Verein* founded on 5 August 1848.

The three towns were economically successful on the basis of overseas trade. Populations were Hamburg 132, 007 – in 1811, Lubeck 24,143 in 1815 and Bremen 35, 806 in 1812. All were accorded autonomous city status after 1815. All historically and in this period styled themselves republics. Lubeck was the most aristocratic, in the sense of having the richest and most elite merchant class, but also the first to adopt a modern constitution. All had constitutions with a Senate and a *Burgerschaft*. All were said to have an aristocratic flavour.

Travel literature tells us something about how contemporaries regarded these cities. Heine reported of Hamburg that there was freedom everywhere – a free city, free state, freemen with a 'True republican community spirit.' .

Another perspective is provided by scholarly texts on constitutions. All their constitutions were reconfigured during the 1820s and 30s. One of the challenges in this regard was to think about what to do against the background of French remodelling.

A constitutional text by one-time mayor Bartles asked what a democratic constitution was, and said it was one in which citizens could take part in governing. He contrasted republics with monarchies, but the antithesis of democratic in this context was aristocratic. A history of Bremen written in 1848 said that in the past the germ of democracy existed only in small free communities, at a time when knightly aristocracy was more the order of the day.

She had looked at police files in the hope of finding more references to democracy at the grass roots, but although one can find 'democrats' in the name of files, there is little reference to the word within file contents. They did include a few profiles of people the police regarded as democrats. In that context, the self-styled *Demokratische Verein* in Bremen was unusual. It formed around the pastor Rudolf Dulon. The police suspected conspiratorial links to democrats elsewhere.

In terms of earlier uses, there was a *Freiheitsfest* in Hamburg. The earlier uses she has found were however basically taxonomic. The *Niedersächsischer Mercur* in 1792 distinguished between democrats and jacobins, seeing jacobins as more manipulative. She still needs to focus in one the period when the French took over, to see if new usages accompanied them, or whether on the contrary they discouraged use of the term, or gave it a bad name.

Prussia

Theo Jung said one of the challenges was that *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* had included lots of Prussian material, making it harder to find something new to say. One of its chief stories was about temporalisation: about its shift from being a taxonomic term to one which interpreted the movement of history. When the term was used in specific contexts, he suggested that in fact spatial difference was often more to the fore. He thought it worth thinking about the mental maps people constructed around the concept.

Space was particularly important in Prussian thinking about the concept for three reasons:

- first, because Prussia was seen as representing a mean between East and West. Perhaps politically as well as geographically.
- secondly, that placement could be seen as helping to make a case for carefully judged reform.
- thirdly, Prussia was itself a complex entity, exhibiting variation over space.

Talk about democracy following the French revolution was almost exclusively talk about France. The dominant discourses were anti democratic: France was taken to exemplify democracy's well known bad features.

A series of binaries were however constructed around French example: good/bad, true/false – implying that there could in principle be good and true democracies. In accordance with that, good democracy could be conceived as a spirit, of serving the people, that could be present even in a monarchy. Frederick the Great could be praised as a real democrat. This could be to conservative effect, implying reforms were unnecessary.

But Prussian reformists could try to put the idea of democracy to alternative uses. So Franz Schuselska argued in "The Prussian Constitutional Question and the Nordic Principle," (1845), that democracy as the natural element of the state could not and should not be repressed. He added that this was not "antimonarchical.":

"Where the democratic element develops freely and naturally, it naturally strives towards the unity of the life of the state, i.e., towards the monarchical form of the state."

The claim that democracy was compatible with monarchy opened up a space for reformist discourse.

Sometimes writers said that democracy suited some but not others, eg the French but not the Prussian or German spirit – playing off ideas about nations that had roots in a Roman/Germanic comparison (though that was far from a straightforward binary). But also worth noting is that this approach conceded that democracy might be good for some places. And possibly even in Prussia if circumstances changed.

This didn't just prefigure more modern notions of an east-west divide, because other contrast were in play, notably north/south. Democracy might be tied to climate, with mediterranean types being democratic because of the abundance of food; whereas Nordic climates were associated with being serious, peaceful and against disturbance. The Swedes were sometimes seen as representative of democracy and as an example for Prussia. Russia represented the opposite pole: it was sometimes classed as northern and sometimes as eastern.

Arndt cited Sweden as illustrating that democracy might be a matter of spirit and character.

1848 in the German Confederation

Mark Hewitson said that interest revolves around the attempt to create a German polity and what that might have involved, in the context of a train of unsettlement in Europe seen as stemming esp from the latest French revolution: once again, France was the epicentre, but was it or was it not an example to be followed? Jonathan Sperber suggests that France was seen to provide the archetype. When Fanny Lewald went to Paris in March 1848 she praised French resolve and depicted the Germans as scared and naïve.. There was discussion of the archetype – with some arguing that the Terror was justified although far from all. Carl Schurz, who was a student in France 1848 and ran a democratic newspaper, wrote with horror about the rivers of blood in France, and the very different conditions pertaining in Germany – not least the Biedermeier mentality of the (expanding) middle orders. So there was seen to be reason for Germany to follow a different course. Though for Marx and Engels, the problem was that Germany and even France were not revolutionary enough.

There was an emerging group of democrats before 1848, represented in the lower houses of various especially south western assemblies. Until the revolution, the line between liberals and democrats was very vaguely drawn, though it was clear that there was a wide spectrum of 'liberal' views. In the southwest, not only was there a strong French legacy, but also views were informed by close links with the Swiss. Among radical leaders from this region were Hecker and Struve in Baden, which was right alongside the French Swiss border. (the radical posture of Baden is indicated by the following events: 13-27 April 1848: the 'Heckerzug'. 21-25 Sept. 1848: the 'Struve-Putsch'; Bavarian Palatinate, 1 May-19 June: Prov. Govt.; 14 May–23 July 1849: the Provisional Government and Badenese Republic.)

At Heppenheim in 1847 moderate liberals had agreed a list of objectives, including a national Parliament, civil liberties, jury trials and democratic representation. The question was, could such a programme survive the transition to mass politics. Struve wasn't initially clearly out of line with that programme, articulating (in both 'Die Forderungen des Volkes in Baden' (12 September 1847) and in his motion to the

Frankfurt Vorparlament (31 March 1848)) what liberals could broadly agree with - combining German states to a wider German regime. German circumstances meant that the first task had to be to create a new polity: there was no existing state whose power could usefully be seized. Hecker told the Frankfurt Parliament that this was in some ways an advantage: since it hadn't been convened from above by any existing power, it couldn't be dissolved from above either. But how to give such a fragile construct a sense of direction? The task was made harder because the public sphere was fragmented, fragile and highly local.

Some liberals liked to characterise what they were doing as a revolution, but others avoided the term. Democracy was a less controversial concept. Fröbel said that democratic monarchy was not possible, but it's telling that he thought that a question worth addressing.

Talk of democracy was largely restricted to cities and towns, not the rural population. In Berlin there were 8 large democratic clubs by August 1848. When they set up a tent to allow delivery to large audiences there was a mood shift, though the tent only remained for a few months. See Boerner's account in P. A. Boerner, *Erinnerungen eines Revolutionärs. Skizzen aus dem Jahre 1848* (Leipzig, 1920). He describes talk about such issues as how to defend the revolution, abolition of the standing army and of privilege.

The Frankfurt Parliament provided a very different context – even Robert Blum barely referred to democracy or democrats there. He distinguished moderates and radicals, left and right. Silence about democracy may be explicable in terms of the limits of the local political sphere. Frankfurt deputies had to live and work together and had only loose contact with their home towns, so they were distanced from wider public opinion. Democrats remained a minority, holding not more than a third of seats. Frankfurt lacked the intense newspaper activity of other major towns. Freiheit and Einheit were the most sloganized terms. Volkssouveränität was an ambiguous term that could mean either national or popular sovereignty. Meetings were coloured by the search for compromise. The success of the democrats in Frankfurt in gaining agreement on universal suffrage was achieved in part by taking the electoral law out of the constitution.

Discussion

Michael Rowe noted that, esp before 1848, German liberals were critical of arbitrary rule whether of the 'Left' (Jacobin revolutionary) or 'Right' (last years of the Napoleonic Empire and Restoration Monarchy). Their preferred option was a constitution, as promised but never delivered by King Frederick William III of Prussia, including an all-Prussian elected assembly. Failing that, some consoled themselves with the Napoleonic legal legacy in the west of Germany. Specifically, they really liked the legal procedures (e.g., as contained in Code d'instruction criminelle), because (i) they were

regular and predictable and could be appealed by higher tribunals; (ii) they were public; (iii) and based on oral and not written testimony, and (iv) were decided upon by juries. (v) Also they made no distinctions on the basis of religion, social estate, or between town and country. Though, as Marx observed, they were heavily tilted towards property owners (jury selection), and were so obsessed with property crimes like wood theft that even the conservative Prussian authorities complained.

Theo said that indeed, the jury trials which continued to be held in Prussia's western provinces were envied and argued for elsewhere. In the 1820s and 30s they formed part of the discourse about Prussia being already democratic. They remained an issue in 1848.

Mark H agreed that reducing arbitrariness was seen as important throughout much of Germany, embodied to an extent in the development of civil, penal and administrative law (the Allgemeines Landrecht, plus later modifications, in the Prussian case). The Karlsbad decrees were in this context held to be the arbitrary intervention of an 'absolute' system rather than 'laws' in the full sense, of a kind worthy of a Rechtsstaat. Protections for the private sphere (civil and penal codes) were in sharp contrast to the lack of protection for individuals in the political or public sphere.

Niels thought that Mark had overstated the occurrence of democratic language in Germany in 1848-49.

Mark H said that it was true that there were more references to 'Volk', 'Volksverein', and 'Volkssouveränität' than to 'Demokratie', but allusions to 'democrats' and 'democracy' became increasingly common in 1848/49. Robert Blum's *Volksthümliches Handbuch der Staatswissenschaften und Politik* (1848) – 'Ein Staatslexicon für das Volk' – refers readers from 'Demokratie' to 'Volksherrschaft', but then refers in the article itself to 'democracy', despite it being a 'foreign' word, throughout.

Gabor had a comment that related to the coherence of the volume and possible cross-references. His views on Paulskirche and 1848 in Germany differ from Mark Hewitson's. He planned to write about Friedrich von Raumer, Karl Mittermaier, Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, Theodor Mommsen – all Paulskirche liberals. Hungarian politicians were in contact with them, discussing Germany's form of state and Hungary's relations to a possibly unified Germany. These moderate liberals also did political theory in retrospect in the 1850s – as he saw it, more important for the following decades than the narrative sources (mostly memoirs). His point was that the moderates are also important, not only the radicals.

Mark H explained how he had gone about things. He had looked at the speeches of the period – where democrats and liberals were trying to convince each other of the validity of their arguments about 'popular sovereignty' and the practicalities of a German polity. Then at newspapers and pamphlets. In the Frankfurt Parliament it is true that there was

little direct discussion of democracy – whereas in the political clubs of other towns it was often very different: there was more use of Demokratie and Volksherrschaft. In pamphlets and newspapers one sees much more use of Demokratie and Volk. Democrats were responding to liberals in this broad context.

Jim asked Anne if she could elaborate on the Bürger/Einwohner dynamic in Hanseatic cities. Did city histories (often very self-congratulatory) take note of the disenfranchised labouring classes and how did class tensions evolved over the nineteenth century? Were there political and socioeconomic flashpoints between city elites and the underclasses?

and to Theo and Mark: the word ‘republic’ had been in effect repressed since 1780, whereas democracy was perhaps seen as less threatening. However, there was still extensive censorship, which means that we might need to cast a wider net and include texts printed abroad and shipped in; also to think harder about how far liberals accepted this kind of repression, how far they thought it necessary, and whether they experienced it as a constraint.[Theo adds now that given censorship regimes, arguing that monarchy and democracy were compatible could be a way of opening up a space for reformist discourse).

Andreas: could you say more about the ‘weight’ of the Prussian sense that Prussia was in some sense democratic. How important was this perception?

Francois was keen to know if the post-Napoleonic exclusion of Jews from Lubeck was discussed.

Henk wanted to hear more about ideas of local ‘self-government’. What role did that concept play, and what was it used to talk about.

The session was running over, so the chair told the speakers they could choose one question each to answer.

Mark H said that he didn’t think that ‘democracy’ was the main question in Frankfurt. Discussion focused rather on what territories would be brought together in a German polity; who would decide; how would it work (it was generally accepted that monarchy would be an element) and what the constitution and federal arrangements would look like. They settled on an elected assembly, with a broad manhood suffrage and a direct, secret ballot, and with a government appointed by the monarch – these were the issues at the heart of most discussion and they remained contested in the debates about an absolute or suspensive veto for an hereditary monarch and about a Reich Electoral Law until the end of the Frankfurt Parliament in May 1849. At the time, liberals and democrats saw this compromise as combining ‘democracy’ (or ‘popular sovereignty’ via an elected assembly) and constitutional monarchy (in the form of a suspensive veto and a government nominated by the Prussian King as ‘Kaiser of the Germans’).

Anne H: responding to Jim, said that in 1848 some were pushing for radical reform and they tended to think that the status of Burgher should no longer be central. There was debate over how far citizenship and suffrage could be extended. Lubeck ended up with the most restricted franchise of the three.

Theo: In Prussia there were people who explicitly called for democracy, but they were often in exile and were influenced by exile debates. Those who remained in Prussia were often looking for a way to read Prussia as partly democratic, either to fend off calls for reform, and to make them sound less threatening. Something that some seized on in that context was the idea that its more meritocratic bureaucracy introduced a democratic element into Prussian governance.

Session 3: The limits of democratic citizenship: peasants and Jews

Niels Grüne said he would be focusing on Germany and Switzerland. In the chapter, Anne EN would also be contributing material on Denmark and Norway.

He identified three ways in which the French revolution affected rural society: through its ideology; through the model it supplied of how to challenge authority and thirdly by providing a military shield affording dissidents in the Rhineland some protection.

The authorities blamed French influence for rural unrest in the 1790s, and rural people did have access to news from France, and may have been prompted to act more vigorously by it. But their actions basically followed older models. In Saxony they invoked the king against oppressive lords. Even as they borrowed slogans from the French, like Bastille and liberty and equality.

German 'Jacobins' failed to mobilise the countryside. The Mainz republic (1792-3) is a case in point. Some pamphlets were produced for a rural population focusing on the nuisances of princely rule – tyranny and despotism as against liberty and equality. Christoph Friedrich Cotta's *Calendar for Craftsmen and Peasants* (1793) was expressly designed for a rural population – but there was no mention of democracy as such, although all being free and equal is the main message.

Things were different in Switzerland, but the mode there was republican and not, in the absence of monarchs, anti-monarchical.

After 1815, key grievances were feudal dues and services and tax burdens; there was concern to protect communal rights to manage communal resources. Popular government was portrayed as inexpensive; involving local autonomy, and dismantling of the feudal regime in favour of peasant producers. Karl Schapper in August 1848: "Let us speak to the peasants about material interests! Ideas are not attractive to someone who has no bread to eat or who is bent over by debt."

In the 1830s constitutions and municipal codes created a broad rural franchise, presenting liberals with a rural population to mobilise. At the Baden reform diet of 1831,

there were calls for freedom of the press, freedom from compulsory labour services and freedom from tithes. For an example of liberal outreach we might look at Karl Mathy's speech on the 25th anniversary of the Baden constitution in 1843; in which 'liberal' and 'progress' were key words.

This changed in 1848, when democratic clubs with a mass following spread in some rural areas esp. in the Rhineland, Palatinate and Rhine-Hessen, but most did not use that self-description; they were known as people's associations (*Volksverein*) and fatherland association (*Vaterlandsverein*), and Rustic Clubs (as in the case of the Silesian *Rustikalverein*). One of their objects was to organise petitioning. In Baden they petitioned for unicameral government: "a constituent single chamber elected by the people" (*constituierende einzelne Kammer, die vom Volke gewählt*). Generally in 1848-9 common expressions relating to the desired political order were: "rule of the people" (*Volksherrschaft*); "government of the people" (*Volksregierung*); "popular government" (*volkstümliche Regierung*). But the same trio of rural demands remained in place – self-government, lower tax, abolition of feudal elements

Rural people were drafted in to support the Hecker and Struve risings, but many tried to avoid involvement.

Jewish democracy

Francois said that he would be talking about how Jews in central and eastern Europe and how they dealt with legacies of the French revolution.

He identified five types of legacy:

1. One stemming from revolutionary emancipation and the establishment of Jewish equal citizenship (according to the formula of Clermont-Tonnerre, for the Jew as an individual, everything; for Jews as a nation, nothing). When Lubeck and Frankfurt removed Jewish rights in 1815 they triggered a reaction from eg Johan Jacoby, a prominent activist of the Vormärz, who in 1841 was imprisoned for four years in 1841 for his 'Four questions answered by an East Prussian': the questions dealt with things like censorship and representation. Heinrich Simon was another.

Also Ludwig Kalisch, a Pole who went to a German university, then became a newspaper editor and advocated for democratic reform [of Narhalla, the Mainz satirical newspaper, which was banned in 1844 – denounced by Kathinka Zitz]. He was sentenced to death in absentia [for his part in the Hecker and Struve risings] in 1851 and then went into exile in London and Paris. He was a very radical democrat with a very strong commitment to his Jewish heritage, also exhibiting the cosmopolitanism of which Jews were often accused.

2. Under Napoleon, Jewish individual and collective rights were recognised. In 1798, he even attempted to recruit Jews to the armed forces, saying that if they joined his campaign in Egypt they would be able to go on and retake Jerusalem.
3. He also established consistories (formal assemblies of Jewish communities) to give Jews a place within the state, parallel to provision for Protestants. (as for protestants. Austria would later establish consistory-type bodies; in Hungary there was a Jewish Congress in 1868-9.
4. The old idea of the Royal alliance, between kings and Jews, was remobilised. Napoleon had a largely good reputation among Jews in eastern Europe. Positive memories of the revolution were emphasised when Jews joined in celebrations of the 1848 February revolution in Moravia and Polish Prussia. Hirsch Fassel, rabbi in Prossnitz (Moravia) said that 'in a constitutional Austria one will stand for all and all for one, love of the fatherland and for its constitutional emperor will not be disregarded but will be as equal.'
5. The idea of Jews being included in a national project. In central and eastern Europe, Jews were so numerous that everyone wanted to get them on side. That was a stepping stone towards what would later be distinct Jewish political movements, as first in Hungary in the 1880s and 90s.

Adam said that he would be focussing mainly on Germany and on Jewish emancipation, later conceived as a central strand in modern democracy, but in its first phase conceived within older frameworks. From 1830, some cautious use of the term democracy can be found. Emancipation wasn't a slogan until the late 1820s, when the term was borrowed from the UK Catholic Emancipation movement – though the analogy between the positions of British and Irish Catholics and German Jews was not very strong. The restrictions on Jews mainly affected a few rich men. The usual notion on both sides was that the price of removing them would be some measures of self-reform.

Emancipatory decrees attracted attention beyond their real significance. That was partly because Christian messianic thought attached special significance to the position of Jews. Change in their status was therefore easily linked with other hopes or expectations of change.

The Kingdom of Westphalia granted legal equality to Jews in 1808. Westphalian Jews were invited to take part in Napoleon's assembly of Jews, the Sanhedrim. That institution could be linked to Moses' republic of the Hebrews, which had played a part in republican thought in northern Europe since the seventeenth century. The attraction to Napoleon was that it was another device for casting him in an almost priestly role. In contrast Jerome granted equality and imposed consistorial government – which were not especially

A few years later, Jerome introduced consistorial rule (another element of the Napoleonic model] into Westphalia. This was intended to weaken rabbinical authority while promoting moral uplift. The head of the Westphalian consistory, Israel Jacobson

[JACOBSON, ISRAEL - JewishEncyclopedia.com](#) was a major Jewish financier who arranged financing for both Jerome and the Duke of Brunswick. He admired Moses Mendelssohn and was keen on Jewish reform, conceived in terms of bringing Jews under the state. However, most Westphalian Jews did not like those reforms – which could be seen as continuing the tradition of a Jewish intercessor figure.

Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), was at the centre of many debates about Jewish emancipation. He at first tried to avoid taking positions on the proper position of Jews, but events forced his hand. Rabbis tended not to like Mendelssohn, disapproving both of his support for the translation of the Bible and of Joseph II's Toleration Edict. More conservative Jewish elements sought to exclude him by a rabbinical ban. At the same time, more radical elements, such as August Cranz (1737-1801) wanted him to go further and challenge the rabbinical ban and reform Judaism. Mendelssohn's assimilationist position faced hostile criticism from Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) whose work was marked by Judeophobia and who valued unity and sameness against what he saw as Jewish particularism. Fichte in turn was attacked by Sak Ascher (1767-1822) in *Germanomanie* (1815); he attacked both Francophobia and Judeophobia. His work outraged young nationalists and was burnt at the Wartburgfest (anniversary of Luther's theses) in 1817. Ascher defended Jewish rights on Kantian grounds, rather than in terms of democratic citizenship – but he faced nationalist students who turned Kantian language against Jews.

Beyond Germany too, campaigns for Jewish rights were not always aligned with other kinds of campaigns for rights. In 1810-14 there was a literary feud in Denmark, attacking both king and Jews as parasites – at the height of which, in March 1814 King Frederick VI granted Jews full civil liberty and equal standing to Christian subjects. This was directly after he was forced to cede Norway to Sweden – and, in contrast to Denmark, Norway completely banned Jews (and Jesuits) from entering its territory.

The generation who grew up in this Napoleonic/post Napoleonic period took more outspoken positions when they grew up. In 1830, many liberal Jews rushed to Paris. They included Ludwig Börne (1786-1837). Born in the Frankfurt ghetto, he converted to Protestantism in 1818, but rooted his radicalism in his Jewish identity. Börne criticised Riesser [RIESSER, GABRIEL - JewishEncyclopedia.com](#) for supporting Jewish rights in isolation, wanting Jews to be seen under a scheme of justice and equality (rather than asking for 'concessions') He attacked the Rothschilds (whom he knew from the Judengasse) for propping up morally bankrupt monarchies – and saw popular hatred against Jews as linked to their support for these old regimes. Börne does not say a lot about democracy (although the historiography does not often acknowledge that), and when he did, in passing and in the context of constitutional questions, which were not his main interest. He also used it as synonym for demotic, to denote the power of the masses, not any particular agenda. He became a devotee of Lamennais, whose work he translated into German, and increasingly universalistic and millenarian. In the 1830s, defending his turn to Christianity, he argued that only religious belief could bring true happiness and inspire a successful revolution, after which the Church would, in effect,

become democratic (though he doesn't use the word): 'there will be no more Pope, nor any parasitical bishops, nor standing armies of monks, ... the people themselves will elect their spiritual administrators, and the Church will be governed for and by the people.' The messianic political note was also struck by Heinrich Heine and Moses Hess.

There does not seem to be good grounds for thinking (as Abigail Green does) that there was a synergy between Jews and liberals in 1848.

Rather than following Green, he thought one should think, at least through to 1870, in terms of two tiers of political tension in continuing play. In philosophy, universalist vs particularist; in terms of general tone, messianic vs the pragmatism that tended to be favoured by community elites.

Discussion

Jim said that Borne talked to workers, which made Heine suspicious of him. Might not his practice help to qualify him as a democrat.

Michael noted in relation to the Sanhedrin of 1807 that Napoleon's offer was very two-edged: it gave them a role at the expense of determining what that role was. Francois and Adam broadly agreed. **Francois** said that the holding of the Sanhedrin was seen by Jews as a mark of great distinction to the community – and its members were accorded full state honours. **Adam** agreed that it was very good for those who were involved – just not so good for those who had a more particularist sense of Jewishness

Theo said that it would be good if Niels could say something about why peasants were often hostile to Jews. **Niels** noted that they often argued that Jews should be excluded from the division of once-communal rights.

Theo: Church reformers in Protestant and Catholic churches were very important in 48, He asked if there were Jewish equivalents of the Lichtfreunde and the German Catholics. **Francois** said the closest equivalent were Reform congregation. Jacobson was a founder of the Reform movement.

Jakub Benes wondered if the levee en masse had a democratic element: aiming at making people feel part of the nation. **Niels** said that there probably was something in that, though peasants didn't respond positively when Struve pressed them to support his breakaway republic. Prussian armed forces which were much more formidable.

Joanna said that people who called themselves democrats were sometimes in favour of conscription – for those kinds of reasons – participation and unity. **Francois** said that in Warsaw Jews joined various militias, and they were also prominent in Hungary – but the traditional position was that Jewish communities paid a tax to avoid military conscription. **Adam** said that none the less Ascher argued that Jews would be very good members of the army.

Joanna said she wanted to make an editorial point. In all these presentations, speakers found little mention of democracy. She said that wasn't inherently a problem: if it wasn't

there it shouldn't be smuggled in. The object was to understand how it was and wasn't used, and why. It's more a writing problem: how to present the relevance of material in which 'democracy' was rarely invoked. She said that she didn't think that democracy had the kind of currency it has in public discourse today in any place or time in our period. But that's not all bad news for us: this makes it easier to conduct broad surveys, and we think changes in its use, even if they're changes in the use of a second or third tier term, still shed interesting light on changes in political culture. In the case of Jews, one might say that they don't use the word because they don't think it will help them deal with the problems they were grappling with. Fine: exploring that potentially sharpens our ideas both about the nature of those problems and the remit of the word. In the case of peasants, it might seem that its absence reflects people not choosing to use this relatively high-register word in communicating with them. But then there's the complication that Danish peasants apparently did talk about it. So what will be needed in that chapter is a story that makes sense of why it was used in some contexts and not others.

Adam said that there was an element of religious messianism, linked symbolically with the Jews; Jews looked for other words to express these kinds of commitment. **Maurizio** said that, on the other hand, it is striking if they talk about Lamennais without talking about democracy!

Day 2

Session 4, Habsburg lands and Poland

Joanna summarised and commented on **Franz Fillafer's** remarks, pre-circulated the previous day, as follow:

She said that Franz was keen to approach the Habsburg empire not as a backward entity but as a particular kind of polity, and to focus on how people there used 'democracy' and cognate words to think about their problems.

In the French revolutionary period, Franz suggested that 'democracy' was used as much to continue battles over Joseph II's reforms as to talk about France - or the two were conflated. Joseph's reforms could be attacked as democratic; we might want to know what made them so. Perhaps because he imposed uniformity, stirred up peasants, and attacked the Church? Franz also planned to look at local Jacobins' plans to reorganise the realm, and what role they saw for the people. Also at how censorship affected political vocabularies. And finally at whether Leopold and Francis's policies affected nobles' tendency to present themselves as representatives of the people.

In relation to a second period, up to 1848, Franz proposed to look at how curiosity in the region about political experiments elsewhere related to self-imaginings about a primordial democratic past (obviously linking to Bela's 'history' themes). Also at how

ideas about democracy were shaped by ideas of community and the role of the people from the point of view of faith and religion. And at how local corporate traditions of representation shaped the constitutionalism of 1848.

In the third section, he proposed to look at 1848 as time of experimentation in imperial nation-building and citizenship, and at people's discovery that their various particularistic tendencies – on the basis of region, language, religion, or social group – were in tension with one another and couldn't all be given equal weight. There was a tendency for each self-defined group to see itself as modelling citizenship and others as the problem. He also has some material relevant to Mark Philp's interests in everyday life expressions of democratic identity. He doesn't spell this out, but I imagine this was a period when in Habsburg lands as elsewhere the word came to be used more widely in a constructive sense, so one question is what were these uses and was there anything locally particular about them? We might also wonder how wide a range of people - in both a political and a social sense - used these words and how that might have changed in the course of the revolution.

Finally he wanted to look at various government- and community-reconfiguring projects of 1850s and 60s with a fresh eye. It wasn't clear that he had as yet a clear sense of how democracy figured in political discourse at this time, though the Czech Tabor movement for one thing might warrant a look, and be suggestive as to the word's possible deployment by as well as about oppositional groups. Even if the term was less widely used than in 1840s, Joanna said that her guess was that it would have had some legitimacy at one margin of political discourse.

Franz proposed to offer a fresh account of the empire in its broader European context, though Joanna noted that, from the point of view of the book, as or more interesting was the question of how it compared with other states in the region, most of which tend to get treated as outliers in relation to continent's cutting edge modernisers. In that larger context, though, the question of how inhabitants of Habsburg lands did and didn't position themselves is also of interest:: did they worry about being 'backward' or argue that they were as 'modern' as anyone else?

Gabor said that two tendencies in talking about democracy run through the period (1830-1875) – among non-Magyar as well as Magyar nations. This was really a matter of a fault line within the liberal camp between Western oriented moderate liberals and nationalist, radical democrats. The first rejected democracy, understood in terms of widespread participation and political representation, even as they recognised a historical trend in the direction of democracy. They also tended to be against giving non-Magyar nations separate rights. By contrast radicals were open to democracy both in the sense of increasing popular participation in politics, and in terms of recognising

national claims. The second group nonetheless shared with the first an orientation towards individual rights: they didn't favour any version of democracy involving collective rights. The Austro-Hungarian constitutional compromise of 1867 partly restored Hungarian sovereignty – but rendered the radical independence-minded democrats conception obsolete and left the field to the moderate liberals.

Between 1790 and 1830 the Hungarian diet met only twice. To explore the impact of the French revolution, it's necessary to look elsewhere, to pamphlets, literary works and correspondence. There was a so-called Jacobin movement, but this was in fact oriented chiefly towards Girondin positions; its supporters strongly disapproved of Jacobin terror, and ultimately repudiated it.

As the July monarchy consolidated in France, it became possible to see the first revolution as a historical event: an important event, but not something that one needed to endorse in every particular, something that could be set alongside developments in other places

Leading figures on either side of the divide he was describing were Szechenyi and Eötvös on the one hand and Kossuth on the other. Kossuth thought that government should be both for and by the people; the others, that it should be for but not by them. He thought that the democratic position was probably more widely supported among the intelligentsia than published texts suggest, because such opinions could earn you enemies. Democratic curiosity and sympathy were hinted at in such genres as travel books. Tocqueville's account was read and influenced Mihaly Horvath, the bishop who became minister for education during the mid century revolution, and gave a positive account of Hungary's democratic prospects. Both Britain and America were discussed as self-governing communities with politically equal members and no privileges

The Hungarian constitution had two pillars: the county, where nobles governed and the national government. Kossuth focussed esp. on the first: the thought it could somehow be merged into some kind of modern representative system. He didn't plan to give non-Magyars any kind of collective rights. Eötvös by contrast was critical of noble liberty, which he saw as a deformation of popular sovereignty.

Around 1848, the word democracy became popular among radical democrats. From the writings of Zsigmond Kemény, we can see that ministers were worried about them. The manifesto of the Slovak nation, [Demands of the Slovak Nation - Wikipedia](#), authored by Daxner [Štefan Marko Daxner - Wikipedia](#) demanded universal suffrage, free mobility and the restitution of the property of the indigenous Slovaks, along with recognition of the rights of Galician Poles. Kossuth saw 1848 as a democratic beginning. He thought that Hungarian democrats needed support from elsewhere.

During the period of neo-absolutism (1849-1860) moderate liberals held up the English constitution as the model to be followed by the Hungarian political elite, They also

promoted Guizot- influenced policy identifying the importance of scholarship and the spread of education as precursors to wider democracy.

Between 1860-75, attempts to realise these radical theoretical constructs collapsed, as Magyar nationalism triumphed. We find non-Magyar nationalities using Herderian arguments. In this context, tensions between individual and collective notions of right were raised to a more theoretical level. The elite tended to think that if you implemented democracy properly you could make it difficult to make improper claims. Religious rights sometimes provided a basis for quasi-national rights, thus for Romanians and Serbs. Kossuth's proposals for some form of Danubian federation represented an attempt to see a way forwards.

Increasing acceptance of democracy as a force or principle in politics was reflected in Kalman Tisza's [Kálmán Tisza - Wikipedia](#) remark to the House of Representatives in 1861 that they must act according to the demands of democracy. The far left created democratic circles and the Slovaks national democratic associations. However, it became clear that the Hungarian radical democrats were not prepared to support the claims of other nationalities. The Slovak Daxner told those who had joined the new school's democratic associations not to believe the Hungarians.

Following the 1867 compromise, the 1869 elections strengthened the hand of the far left, and democracy returned as a subject of parliamentary debate. However, this prompted a reaction: the franchise was narrowed, and Slovak cultural associations and secondary schools were closed down.

Piotr said that he saw many parallels between what happened in Poland and other places. At the start of the period, democracy was a word of marginal importance, by the end, widespread, and in use even among conservatives. It was accepted that democracy might in future be the only possible basis for government. He would focus on what was more specific to Polish experience.

For most of the period, there was no Poland as such, the lands of the former kingdom having been divided between Russia, Prussia and Austria. He doesn't think there were notable differences between the ways in which democracy was understood and discussed in the different parts. A more important difference was between exile circles and the homeland, or exile circles and secret societies vs public discourse in the homeland. The word was also used in relation to ancient Slavic societies and their supposed institutions. Vernacular equivalent terms, such as *gminowładztwo*, were widely used – and in the later twentieth century the Solidarity movement tried to revive these to challenge the communist authorities' 'democracy'. The imagined alternative political structure was based primarily in the countryside: towns had inhabitants but it was to the countryside that one looked to construct citizens.

He planned to tell his story basically chronologically. Key influences on early use were Aristotle and Montesquieu. From them came the idea that democracy was best suited to and perhaps could only successfully be practised in small territories. The first occurrence he has found of the later much repeated phrase 'noble democracy' to describe Poland's old political culture is in 1789. It was used then to defend the *Liberum Veto* against proposed reforms; it was argued that if majorities could rule, then the state would turn into an aristocracy or an absolute monarchy. The critical response was that Poland was not a noble democracy, because the state oppressed peasants and townsfolk so didn't qualify as a democracy.

The French revolution had a major impact. Jozef Wybicki (author of the current Polish national anthem) visited France with others in 1795, but what he saw there made him lose the taste for democracy.

The word was not much used in the context of the November uprising 1830-1, though it can be found in the proceedings of the Sejm, serving as a category in a taxonomy of forms of government.

Its breakthrough into use as a political slogan came with the foundation of the Polish Democratic Society in March 1832, after the failure of the Uprising. Members of this group wanted to distinguish themselves from what they saw as the failure of the old noble elite. In their small manifesto, 1832, they made the case for international fraternity in support of the Polish cause. Four years later, their large manifesto -- much more detailed but less cosmopolitan -- collected several hundred signatures. It shows how the thought of the Polish Democratic Society was developing in exile. It distinguished democracy from anarchy and terror. They created a conspiratorial network, which was then blamed for stirring up peasant unrest. There were young democrats who put democracy at the centre of a utopian vision; these included fans of Lamennais. They might wear peasant clothes and go out among the peasants. They preached universal justice which they associated with the teachings of Jesus.

There now developed a tradition of historical reflection, promoted esp by the influential historian Lelewel, who used it in his works. In this tradition, democracy was seen as the initial Polish condition, before rule was usurped by nobles.

The springtime of nations began in 1846 in Poland with the rising in Krakow and then the peasant uprisings against Polish noble landlords and their ideas in Galicia. Democratic conspirators hoped but failed to attract the peasantry at this juncture. These failures precipitated a structural crisis in the Polish Democratic Society, which moved from Paris to London, losing its archive along the way, so that we can't learn much about the detail of its internal discussions at this time.

After the widespread failure of 1848 revolutions, former democrats reflected on what had gone wrong. Some said democracy wasn't needed given already strong bonds of sympathy between lord and peasant.

In the early 1860s the Polish Democratic Society finally dissolved after a period of inaction. Ironically, at the same time the word gained new currency. From serving as an adjective to qualify various nouns – democratic X – it became itself more frequently the subject of adjectives. In the context of developing Austrian restructuring, a National Democratic Society was founded in Lviv 1868-71 (subject of a study by Zbigniew Fras). They tried but failed to radicalise the Galician Diet (both conservative landowners and Ukrainian peasants opposed them). Generally however conservatives now saw a point in trying to coopt 'democracy' to their own cause. The argument shifted towards the question What kind of democracy should we have? Diverging views on this laid the ground for later factions.

Discussion

Adam thought that in both Hungary and Poland there was a tradition of the aristocracy identifying themselves with the nation, and wondered how that idea fared in these changing times. **Gabor** asked him to clarify whether he was thinking about the high aristocracy or the much larger nobility, or both. **Adam** said, both, either. **Piotr** said that aristocracy wasn't just a social group, but a counter concept, against which democrats defined themselves: Lelewel criticised the magnate oligarchy, and the Polish Democratic Society defined itself against Czartoryski's Hotel Lambert. **Mark** asked if all Polish Democratic Society members were nobles in the broader sense. **Piotr** said most but not all: the Jew Jan Cynski was not a noble; they also had a peasant member Jan Nepomucen Janowski https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Nepomucen_Janowski : he was one of the most engaged. **Gabor** thought it important also to acknowledge that the public sphere in Hungary was very restricted. Only the nobility could in practice reach it to express their views. He also noted that there was a religious divide. The aristocracy tended to be Catholic and European in orientation; the nobility were more likely to be Protestant, and oriented to safeguarding their liberties.

Questions were taken in twos.

Anne Heyer said she didn't see people linking democracy with violence in her sources. She wondered why the Terror loomed quite so large.

Francois wondered if Polish Democratic Society efforts took different forms or had a different impact in different regions, and whether there were any Jews involved other than Jan Cynski.

Gabor thought that in Hungary worries about violence shaded into a larger concern with democratic manners. Kossuth was seen as challenging many historic taboos, eg by speaking so publicly when he was just a poor noble.

Piotr said that the Polish Democratic Society did see violence as a possible means to an end: if all else failed to bring about change, violence was seen as a legitimate last resort. In that context. Consequently, conspirators were seen as terrorists. It was argued that one should reject the terroristic form of democracy and look for alternatives.

In relation to the geography of conspiracy, he said that it focussed first on the free city of Krakow (later taken over by Austria), then on Greater (Prussian) Poland, where there were reading groups in which people read Polish Democratic Society tracts. Congress Poland was the most repressive of the three. Much effort went into finding ways of operating under repression, eg by using invisible ink. **Joanna** asked how changes played out in the context of other political changes in the 1860s, eg in Galicia Austrian revival of crownland diets created a new context. **Piotr** said not in terms of how people talked about democracy. In Congress Poland it was notable that the national government which came to power in the 1863 uprising avoided using the word. In the press, it occurred mainly in references to international developments. There was perhaps a more ironic tone about the failings of democracy elsewhere in the Russian press; in greater Poland, the tone was more neutral.

Jakub noted that Kossuth had a Slovak background, and thought he represented an interesting example of someone who self-identified with what he saw as the enlightened nation, the only ones who could do democracy properly. **Gabor** agreed. He thought Kossuth overcompensated. Eötvös was in a sense another assimilated figure: his native tongue was German. **Piotr** added that the civilising challenge was seen to apply also to peasants in Polish lands, who were seen as not truly Poles, and having to be helped to become so.

Mark Hewitson asked whether 'citizen' was an important concept and whether it had Irish civic as well as nationalist references. **Piotr** said it was associated with privilege. Democrats saw themselves as trying to extend privilege.

Session 5 Nordic countries

Anne Englest Norgaard said that since she had talked at several previous workshops, it was a stretch to think what new she might have to say. She would focus on the earlier part of the period, which might make a change. She would be one of three authors of a Nordic chapter. They planned to make it chronological: they would compare Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland across several periods.

She would initially focus on Copenhagen, which in the eighteenth century largely constituted the public sphere, though later that expanded. The word was initially largely an academic concept. Its use exploded only in the 1840s.

Early uses can be found in things like law textbooks, eg one by Schlegel, professor of law at the University of Copenhagen, who taught the generation who devised the Norwegian constitution. He was inspired by Kant. His book on natural law written in 1798 cited Montesquieu, Rousseau and Kant. He had a fair bit to say about democracy, saying that it was the original form of government, and then employing it as an element in a taxonomy, in classical fashion. He distinguished pure and elective forms, observing that the latter verged on being a form of aristocracy, as in the case of the French republic. He said that democracy entailed constant movement and tended to produce demagogues.

As the French revolution developed, the term did appear in more general conversations, mainly to negative effect. It was for example used in relation to peasant unrest. Land reformers were called democrats. No one at this time called themselves a democrat, though opportunities existed to read quite radical writings: thus, there were translations of Paine and of Robespierre. For a relatively radical voice within Denmark one has to turn to the geographer Malte Brun, who was especially influenced by Rousseau. In 1790, Brun published a satirical aristocrats' catechism. He was prosecuted for this. But even he didn't call himself a democrat. From 1795 censorship was tightened and during the next few decades there was relatively little public debate.

In 1814, Norway – bidding for independence from Denmark, which had been defeated alongside Napoleon, but eventually ending up under the wing of Sweden, which had been cannier about taking sides. But democracy was not mentioned there. Later, Felsen used the word in writing about the constitution, in the context of defining the system. The word in this context remained an academic word. In the 1830s, a work on Norwegian constitutional law called Norway a 'democratic monarchy'.

This period saw the beginnings of peasant politics in both Norway and Denmark, which shaped how people thought about democracy in the 1840s. Tocqueville was translated into both languages in the 1840s. Interestingly, the work had a different reception in each. In Norway, his work was read as illustrating the dangers of democracy. In the elections of 1843, the farmer faction won the majority of seats, which worried the intellectual middle classes. There had been no significant Norwegian nobility in the recent past, and by this time it had been formally abolished. In Denmark the educated middle classes had no independent access to the administration. They saw the more powerful Danish aristocracy as outdated and thought they would suffer defeat.

Around this time, one begins to find some more radical interpretations. Radical newspapers appeared in Copenhagen, some advocating universal suffrage. This is the

first point at which democracy was first taken to imply a view on suffrage. It was also now linked to social programmes.

In 1848, both use and meanings proliferated. There were two weeks of demonstrations; the King abolished absolutism and accepted a new liberal ministry (and war with Germany broke out). A constitutional assembly was called which met between 1848 and 9. Both sides used democracy in slogans: urban radicals and the rising peasant farmer party, but also liberals and conservatives. However, liberals and conservatives failed to capture the word for their interpretations; it remained a word of the left, and indeed became a party name for the peasant farmer group. Its various meanings included: a constitutional regime; an element in a mixed constitution; the lower classes; the entire people; particular political groups; the zeitgeist, and large structural changes in history and society. It covered similar ground in Norwegian usage, where it was especially associated with a workers' movement, which however disappeared in the face of repression in 1857,

French influence and example was obviously a key interpretation throughout. Opponents of democracy sought to taint it by association with France, by linking it esp with the Terror and subsequently the tumultuous 'June days' of 1848. Its proponents were inclined to play down its French associations and emphasise local meanings.

Jani said that he would try to do two things: to present his preliminary findings on Finland, and to identify themes that he thought might be helpful in terms of finding ways to integrate different parts of the Nordic chapter.

He said that that the French revolution had a significant effect, especially in shaping how Alexander I was framed in Finnish political discourse, The Napoleonic Wars were crucial, In effect, they resulted in the fracturing of Sweden into two states, one under Swedish, one under Russian rule. In conceptualising itself as forming anything like a state – a kind of state within a Russian empire – Finns drew on Swedish traditions, but their position under the Russians meant that they couldn't push these to the fore.

There was no Finnish academic literature, so insofar as there was printed public discourse, it's to be found in newspapers, and tied to specific events. In the early part of the period, insofar as democracy was associated with revolution, it was a negative term, though one can also find it being used in relation to Athenian democracy. The effect of the Decembrists, and model of repression presented by the German Confederation's Carlsbad decrees, was to institute a period of strict censorship.

In the 1830s, things thawed a bit. Newspapers expanded as a medium. The Russian-Swedish alliance came to an end [as Swedes started to worry about Nicholas I's ambitions, and shifted towards a posture of neutrality]. Swedes and Finns in Sweden

more often articulated criticisms of Russia. The terms liberalism, socialism and democracy were more often used. In this context democracy was more often associated with the future, though uses could still be negative.

In the 1850s, stricter censorship returned. It was completely impossible to write about politics in the Finnish language, but there was a little more latitude in terms of what could be said in Swedish. The effect was that Swedish and Finnish discourse were out of sync.

In the 1860s, there was more liberalisation. This was the decade in which the Swedish reform diet met, and there was a resynchronisation. Generally historical actors saw Finland as lagging. Even conservatives, who opposed democracy, came at this time to think of it as probably the key to the future. The term broke through into use in the Finnish language in the 1870s. From that decade, a politically engaged person would have to keep track of texts in both languages. Russia responded to the spread of politicisation by trying to cultivate the Fennomans (the Finnish nationalist movement), so as to distance them from Swedish influence.

He displayed a graph showing the appearance of forms of the word in Finnish (ie largely Swedish language) newspapers. This showed that usage grew a bit in the 1820s and 30s, but more in the 1840s, peaking in 1848. This had much to do with reporting on events elsewhere, but there was also a more gradual rise in the prominence of the term and the range of applications found for it.

His finding so far has been that democracy and related words appear in six contexts.

- In relation to foreign news, esp in relation to the US and Switzerland (eg mention of the democratic party in Bern). In such cases, the word is not usually given any specific value.
- As a label for people or a term of self identification. In Finland it came to be used in that way only in the 1870s. There was however fiction in which people self-identified as democrats: he has found 5 or 6 examples of fictional characters self-identifying as democrats. He thinks that the point was to provide a basis for modelling ways of dealing with such people
- It was often applied to the past, esp to Athenians. The periodical *Mehilainen* (the Bee – a pioneering Finnish-language periodical) in 1837 carried 100 pages on ancient Greece, strikingly, when most of its content was educational content geared to the perceived needs of peasants in the form of eg poems and agricultural advice. Athenian democracy stands out as a very untypical choice of subject. In that context it coined a Finnish word for democracy, Kananvalta (valta=power. He hadn't seen so early a use of this word until he discovered this article.

- In the 1850s, it was presented as an ideology, alongside liberalism and socialism, also newly conceived as idioms. One also begins to find it qualifying other term: thus democratic conservatism (a rare instance of positive use). The word democratism is not common but was occasionally found. Ism words often appeared in headlines.
- Following on from the distinction between ancient and modern democracy: democracy was finally understood as offering a path to the future.
- One also finds meta reflections of the rise of the term. Niels has already cited Rotteck doing this in his Staatslexicon.

In terms of characterising patterns, there's a question of how much is 'much'. In other work, he's shown that when historical actors talk about a word being on everyone's lips, that usually correlates with patterns we find in word-searching. Historical actors are generally fairly good observers of trends.

Discussion

Andreas noted that there were no hits in Jani's graph before 1800, and asked if the word was really never used before then. **Jani** said the data pre 1800 wasn't comparable (because of the structure of library holdings), so he hadn't included it.

Andreas also wanted to know if the phrase representative democracy could be found. **Jani** said what he found was the phrase pure democracy. He thought that when not said to be pure, democracy was representative by implication.

Anne Heyer said that she also had found the word in fiction. She thought it was used to create scenarios of opposition. She wondered if he found democracy always contrasted with something else, and also how democrats were described. **Michael Rowe** asked how the terms jacobin/ical were used. **Anne EN** said she had found those terms, but hadn't compared them with democrat, which might be interesting to do. She said she too had found fictive democrats. In relation to accounts of ancient democracy in a popular periodical, she said that Denmark had mandatory public schools from 1812, known as Folk High Schools from their founder, Grundtvig [N. F. S. Grundtvig - Wikipedia](#). People would learn about ancient democracy in such schools. **Mark** asked if Jacobin was a term that you used of yourself or others. **Anne** thought of others. **Jani** said in relation to education, that both Norway and Finland were doing basic state building. Education was crucial to their existence.

Questions were taken in pairs.

Simon Dixon said that from the 1880s there were files in the Russian governor's collection on the press. He said that foreign news was common, mainly related to Germany. He wondered to what extent choice of news reflected a political intention, or was it just filler?

Henk asked Anne why and how did the term democracy break through in the 1840s. And to Jani, in relation to fiction, he hadn't seen instances of people saying I am a democrat. And in relation to one passage he had quoted, he thought he could echoes of Guizot's widely circulated *Democracy in France*. **Jani** said he would see if he could trace it in Guizot.

Jani said he wasn't sure whether to use fiction in his discussion. **Jim Brophy** asked if he was talking about fiction serialised in newspapers. If so, he thought he should include it. To **Simon**, Jani said that there was a thesis based on those governors' files. **Simon** said indeed, they would be publishing an article by the author in the *Slavonic Journal*.

Jani said in relation to whether foreign news reflected political intent, he thought it varied. It was interesting that in one journal which produced two issues, in Swedish and Russian, the news was different: in the Russian version, there was little on Norway or Poland and the political colouring was different.

Anne EN on why the word came into much more use in 1848: the context of revolutions brought it to the fore. She thought that the fact that 1848 was an important moment in Denmark helped to give the word lasting currency in a Danish context. She noted that for Norway, where 1814 was the key political moment, the context was very different, and this helped to solidify a different political vocabulary.

Adam asked whether Norway was to Denmark as Finland to Sweden, before they went on different political journeys in the nineteenth century: when Norway got much of what it wanted, and Finns had to accept that it would be hard to change things much. **Anne** agreed. **Jani** didn't entirely agree. He thought that Finland had quite a lot to gain from union with Russia. There were articles at the time that made this point. At the start, Alexander could be seen as a constitutional Tsar. It was the Decembrist revolt that changed things.

Section 6: Intellectual perspectives

Charlotte Johann on individualism, socialism and corporatism. She said that her basic premise was that liberal conceptions of democracy were not hegemonic at this time. There was plurality of conceptions in the nineteenth century, and one can see tensions between them. The ideas she was exploring didn't perfectly map on to liberalism, socialism or corporatism, nor did corporatism neatly map on to conservatism. She noted that the word individualism was mainly used negatively.

There was no consensus as to how democracy might be embodied in institutions, or at what scale. Did it pertain to nation states, or was its natural level more communal? What kind of social order does democracy produce – what would its social consequences be. These questions were all open.

An effect of the French Revolution was that democracy came to be associated with representation. Constant contrasted the sovereign ancient individual with the modern individual who was sovereign only in his private life. The protection of individual liberties and rights was taken to be the principle of representative government and the foundation of constitutions. A shift to favour individualism was sometimes associated with democracy – in critical terms: democracy was understood to dissolve social bonds. Both Metternich and Hegel said things to that effect. In Germany during the wars against Napoleon there was some concern about how to balance the needs of the individual with the need to unite for the common good. Hegel offered an alternative model to Constant: he argued against constructing elections around individual voters; he thought it better that voters should be organised in corporate bodies. He worried about the impact of modern democratic institutional arrangements on how people would experience society.

A social turn informed perspectives on 1848. Lorenz von Stein reported that in France, the age of purely political movements was over; now the social movement dominated the scene. He said that the next revolution could only be a social one.

After 1848, the sense that there was a tension between the social and the communal became ever more entrenched and codified on both left and right. Attempts to establish a historical genealogy for the distinction culminated in the work of Tönnies, who wrote his most influential book in 1886. He saw history as having involved a shift from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*. Once there had been local communalism; by contrast, modern society was based in states. He didn't invent the dichotomy, which was also common to other socialists: she quoted something that Lassalle wrote to Marx, about the development of the bourgeoisie involving a movement from raw individualism to real, advanced individualism. This provided the intellectual context for fascination with ancient village communities: the Mark, the mir etc. Tönnies and Lassalle also drew on a specific legal tradition, the 'historical school', which had fostered interest in the history of the Mark. Gierke said that the French revolution had brought about the triumph of the state and individualism in Germany. He thought that one could and should reclaim *Genossenschaft*.

Her chapter would be looking at a critique of one specifically modern version of democracy – which became not so much an exercise in discrediting it as an attempt to re-imagine it.

Discussion

Bela said that it was a huge topic. He wasn't sure how democracy fitted in. He thought that perhaps it was seen as destroying older forms of organisation. Some socialists welcomed it as a tool, but didn't see it as the end game. He saw Tönnies not as a socialist but as a social democrat. He wondered if modernised forms of corporation

were seen as having a role to play. **Charlotte** Tönnies said he was just telling an empirical story, not advocating anything: the object was to help people understand modern conditions, because we couldn't go back. Gierke and his followers by contrast thought some things could be recovered: we can make modern society better. **Bela** suggested that it was important that Gierke produced an edition of Hobbes. He saw Hobbes as a prophet of individualism.

Michael said that Napoleonic officials also talked about the corrosive effects of democracy, and how about how to reconstruct the social system. He wondered what the implications were for how people understood political parties. Were they more accepted from the 1860s? **Charlotte** said that she was still trying to think about how social democracy was fitted into this story.

Joanna wondered how 'associations' fit in. Her impression was that in the early nineteenth century associations were presented in Europe as something new, with a longer history in England. Conservatives were wary, preferred organic forms, thought they were just as good or better than associations, Whereas in the second part of the century the association came to be generally accepted as a form that both sides could work with **Charlotte** broadly agreed.

Mark Philp said that in one vision democracy transformed life, provided a context for the construction of utopian forms of community. Though those attracted by such ideas weren't always very articulate about them. He wondered if intellectuals conceptualised this kind of move. **Charlotte** said that she thought there was a form of utopianism which focussed on what might be achieved by transforming civil society, and perhaps removed the state from the equation.

Henk thought that the association between democracy and individualism came especially from the French abolition of corporations. He wondered how self-government fit into the story? Did it represent an attempt to reimagine community? **Niels** remarked that in south Germany there continued to be a strong emphasis on community life as a basis for political participation. **Charlotte** agreed that liberals were also looking for ways out of the perceived reduction of human experience to an opposition between individual and state.

Bela said that he was thinking of organising his chapter – on the ways people at this developed of positioning democracy in history - around categories developed in some articles in the *Staatslexicon*, two under Rotteck's editorship and one by Bluntschli. These were 'democracy', 'the democratic element' and 'the democratic principle'. These three terms meant something different, but all offered a way into the topic.

Democracy. In this approach, democracy was conceived of as a possible way of organising government. What was at issue was the history of *Staatsrecht*. Observations by Guizot and Tocqueville could be incorporated into this kind of story. These histories were built around alternative genealogies. Some went back to the ancient world; the work of the historian Wilfried Nippel is a helpful guide to such accounts. Others traced the roots of democracy in German liberty: in early societies as described by Tacitus, succeeded by the rise of feudalism, with free cities providing bastions of liberty within this environment. Though the rise of oligarchy within cities, and their assertion of lordship over surrounding rural communities. In this vein we find Bluntschli's writing on Zurich 1838, and work by Savigny and Eichhorn [Karl Friedrich Eichhorn - Wikipedia](#), who tried to find new ways of connecting philosophy and history. There were also books on the history of other German cities, such as one on Bremen that Anne Heyer had mentioned. Another story put Norse liberty at the start of the story – the Danish historian Rudolf Kaiser built histories written for migrants to the US around this theme. Then there were stories about Slav liberty told by Herder and Lelewel. It seemed there wasn't a story about Hungary's democratic origins: Gabor said Hungarians were represented as monarchical from the start. In some versions of this story, the Protestant Reformation provided an important break point: in different accounts, the Reformation was both negatively and positively portrayed: thus the account of the Protestant Gervinus can be contrasted with that of the Catholic jurist Zipfel, or the Swiss von Haller, who saw it as having brought atomisation. The historian Hottinger [Johann Jakob Hottinger \(historian\) - Wikipedia](#) in 1843 expressed a Swiss Protestant viewpoint.

Democratic element. This approach basically still took off from *Staatsrecht*. The emphasis was on the need to harmonise democracy and monarchy – which was seen to be achievable, whereas by this point the tension between aristocracy and democracy was seen as essentially irresolvable). Here the focus was on how to construct modern states out of different elements, and on the merits of estates vs popular representation. Key to writing about the history of this challenge were histories of cities, on which there was a rich Germanic literature, including by Hegel's son Karl von Hegel, known in his day as Städte-Hegel. The focus was on how government developed between Roman times and the middle ages, and on mediations between monarchy and people. Hanseatic and Swiss cities were objects of special attention. Bluntschli, who was interested in Genossenschaften (cooperative forms) thought that modern states must be federal, and in this way provide space for democratic life. Also in this tradition we might place literature about the Mark and the mir, and about Swiss collective farming traditions.

Democratic principle. This approach was not set in the framework of *Staatsrecht*. The central issue was more about the history of society and the form future societies might take. Charbouiller 1843 said that individuals were like grains of salt. It wasn't easy to see how a larger whole might be constructed out of them. Eötvös wrote interestingly on this theme. The article on the topic by Bluntschli went through a range of topics, including

social inequality; industrialisation; individualism; the Roman law of succession; bourgeois status; novel and pantheism. His question was how one could stop democratic principles from turning into radicalism, socialism or communism. Social democrats tried to think about how to accommodate democratic principles in a form of state, what they called a Volksstadt or Freistadt. At issue here was essentially a history of consciousness.

Discussion

Joanna asked if France was part of the story, would it be the same or different? **Bela** said that the categories had French equivalents, though the spectre of the Holy Roman Empire hung over the German story in a distinctive way. Nonetheless that was itself framed within a larger European narrative. **Joanna** asked about how Lorenz von Stein might fit into his story. **Bela** said clearly he was especially interested in the Franco-German relationship.

Andreas wanted to know if there were others who discussed the democratic principle. **Bela** said it was of the nature of lexicons that they tried to organise existing thought, more than to strike out on a new path. The word 'civilisation' was also used in this connection. **Iain** thought that there was a danger of losing sight of the specifically historical thread. He noted that Bluntschli was a critic of the historisches Recht. **Bela** said yes, he thought it was too aristocratic.

Francois wondered if there were Polish historians other than Lelewel to integrate into the story. **Bela** said he would be very happy to receive suggestions about who else he should be thinking about. Ditto in the case of Nordic historians.

Mark Hewitson wondered how Bluntschli thought that the government should deal with industrial cities. **Bela** said he always had the social question in mind. He thought Kant was not enough. A new style monarchy should be fully civilised.

FINAL DISCUSSION

Joanna launched discussion with some general remarks, harking back to themes which Mark had suggested at the start might create links within the region.

She said that she thought the idea that the complex polities of the region posed special challenges when it came to developing local variants of modern democracy had held up fairly well. By contrast, there had been little even indirect engagement with the German-culture theme, though a few German authors who were widely influential within the region had been mentioned, thus Kant, Herder and Hegel. No one had said anything much about the particular challenges or opportunities presented by the late survival of serfdom in the east of the region. Insofar as people wanted to engage with that theme now, she thought it might be broadened, so as to focus on the people as a key element in the democratic equation. Several people had asked her recently whether changing

ideas about democracy reflected changing ideas about the people. Her view for now was that the people were increasingly perceived as being capable of self-organising, in the relatively unstructured environment of the modern city, but also in the countryside.

Iain remarked that the role of communities, including national communities, was of course a big theme in modern day democratic politics.

Adam suggested pausing on the time frame. In general it seemed that there was not much talk about democracy before 1848, but much more after. **Joanna** said that she thought that was above all a German story. [Works for Denmark too, but cf the Netherlands, Switzerland and Poland. And indeed also Sweden about which we didn't hear].

Francois wondered who the competitors with democracy were. Perhaps above all purveyors of patriotic or nationalist doctrines.

Piotr said that he thought monarchy and democracy weren't necessarily seen as opposed. Esp in Poland, reflection on developments in 1795, with the final partition, were associated with thinking about how power could be reimagined: whether the executive should be strengthened, or power should be decentralised. In relation to serfdom, he wanted to emphasise just how diverse peasants, and serfdoms were. In the Duchy of Warsaw, restrictions on movement were abolished, making a big difference. Democrats didn't always clearly distinguish between the position of peasants in Russian and Prussian Poland.

Mark Philp suggested that people thought in different ways about their peasantries and about how they were to be described.

Mark Hewitson thought that scale mattered, even if it wasn't a central concern everywhere. There was a sense that the rise of mass society, and associated anonymity were threats. At the same time there was a sense that states were vulnerable to external interventions, as Napoleon had demonstrated that they potentially were.

Joanna added that the removal of restrictions on movement or settlement were seen as destructive of old forms of community.

Henk said that he thought the language chapters needed to address common themes, or they would be too disparate. **Joanna** didn't think so: the point of the language chapters was to explain what problems people in a particular place used democracy to think about. To determine in advance that the themes across these chapters didn't fit with the desire to explore particularity – or with the methodology of the volume, in which shifts in understandings of democracy were imagined to arise from particular settings, not just through some change in Zeitgeist.

Camille said in relation to the question of scale that people could engage at different levels.

Jim wondered why the volume extended to 1870. **Joanna** said when she and Mark chose the date they saw it as a punctuation point in the history of the region, but had not clear sense in advance what the effect of ending at that point would be. That had only emerged in the course of discussion. **Jim** thought that the end of the period was overshadowed by the rise of new forms of authoritarianism.

Mark Hewitson suggested that monarchical constitutionalism and the nation represented ways of re-imagining the people in a democratic context. He mentioned Durkheim and his ideas of organic vs mechanical solidarity.

Mark Philp questioned the accounts various people had given of novels of the time containing characters who said 'I am a democrat'. He thought such statements tended to come in the form 'he is a democrat'. [He said in his observation people represented as democrats were open to talking to all kinds of people

Anne Heyer said that she remained interested in understanding better the mechanics of the emergence of the term in 1848. **Joanna** said she thought that was a good question, well worth trying to pin down more. Her impression – but this was very impressionistic – was that when everything started opening up originally the term mainly said something about the moment: democracy was going on all around. Only later did it settle down into a more partisan position. **Jim Brophy** said that he agreed on the 'democratic moment'.

Andreas wondered with regard to Prussia when exactly was the point when some Prussian thinkers wanted to link Prussia positively with democracy or D-term thus D-washing a monarchy? This would be the moment when democracy becomes an *à la mode* concept (in Prussia). He asked also how far we can detect some similarities of this volumes' geographical area (the "left-over zone" of layered polities with more or less links to German culture) in dealing with democracy.