

Lorenz Stein and German Socialism 1835-1872

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To Elena and Cristi Siclovan

Lorenz Stein and German Socialism 1835-1872

Diana Siclovan

This thesis traces the intellectual trajectory of Lorenz Stein (1815-1890), a German legal scholar and political thinker who, despite being a significant theorist during his lifetime, is an obscure figure today, especially in Anglophone scholarship. It focuses on Stein's writings on socialism and argues that they provide crucial insights into the changing nature of socialist thought in the mid-nineteenth century. It contributes to the project of departing from a Marxist interpretation of the history of socialism that has long been predominant, and uses Stein's intellectual biography to illustrate how contingent political, cultural and personal factors have shaped both the creation and reception of socialist ideas.

The introduction contains a historiographical survey that examines the motivations of those who have endorsed or dismissed Stein since the end of the nineteenth century, and makes a case for his re-appraisal in light of recent historiographical trends, notably the improved understanding of the relationship between economics and politics in modern political thought. Chapter 1 traces Stein's early intellectual influences and reconstructs how he in 1842 came to write his first book, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*. Chapter 2 examines the reception of this work and shows how it inspired a tradition of radical socialism in Germany in the 1840s, a development that forced Stein to also elaborate his social theory. Chapter 3 discusses Stein's experience of the revolution of 1848 and his interpretation of its impact on socialist thought which he presented in his second major work, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich* (1850). Chapter 4 shows how Stein continued his project of a 'science of society' in the transformed political environment of the 1850s. The fifth and final chapter explores why Stein was increasingly sidelined in the 1860s, the decade that saw the emergence of a political workers' movement in Germany.

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List of abbreviations

ADB	<i>Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie</i> (56 vols, Leipzig, 1875-1912; repr. Berlin, 1967-71)
MECW	Marx and Frederick Engels, <i>Collected Works</i> (50 vols, London, 1975-2004)
NDB	<i>Neue Deutsche Biographie</i> (25 vols, Berlin, 1853-)

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INTRODUCTION

Between 1917 and 1989, the Soviet Union served as the world's preeminent model of a socialist state. However, throughout this period, the history of alternate or pre-Soviet ideas about state socialism was known only incompletely on both sides of the Iron Curtain. In both scholarship and wider political discourse, the history of socialism was commonly told as the story of the rise of Karl Marx's ideas. Marx's nineteenth-century interlocutors, who had articulated elaborate alternative visions of socialist or communist society, were either discussed as mere 'forerunners' or dismissed as his opponents. Their work was never used to challenge the teleological narrative of the ascent of Marx's communism.¹ The result was a skewed history that obscured the complexity and diversity of socialist ideas as they had existed in their nineteenth-century origins, and an increasingly narrow definition of socialism. Throughout the twentieth century, it became difficult to imagine a socialist state in a shape other than that of the totalitarian dictatorship embodied by the USSR.

With the demise of most socialist states in the early 1990s, alternative visions of socialism became a viable topic of scholarship for the first time since the early twentieth century. Historians are now uncovering socialist thought in its original variety.² This thesis is a contribution to this project of revision. It examines a figure that had a profound impact on the debate about the relationship between socialism and the state in nineteenth-century Germany: Lorenz Stein.³ Stein was a celebrated

¹ For examples of such traditional histories see G. D.H. Cole, *A history of socialist thought* (5 vols, London, 1953-60), I (1853): *The forerunners 1789-1850*; George Lichtheim, *The origins of socialism* (London, 1969); Leszek Kolakowski, *Main currents of Marxism: Its origins, growth and dissolution*, trans. by P. S. Falla (3 vols, Oxford, 1978).

² I particularly have in mind the work of Gareth Stedman Jones who sketches an alternative history of modern socialist ideas, exemplified by the genealogy of its iconic document, the *Communist Manifesto*, in Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Introduction', in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (London, 2002), pp. 3-187.

³ He is also commonly known as Lorenz von Stein. Since he did not receive his noble title until 1867 and my dissertation focuses predominantly on his life before that, I refer to him by his original name throughout.

law professor and a uniquely perceptive commentator on the development of socialist ideas in his time. Despite his importance during his lifetime, he fell into obscurity after his death. Although he published dozens of books, contributed to major political debates with his journalistic writings, and towards the end of his life served as an advisor to the Japanese Meiji government who modelled their constitution on his political thought, Stein was by the early twentieth century little more than a footnote, remembered mostly for his first book, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* (1842). This thesis argues that Stein's contribution to socialist thought went far beyond that. The question of how a more harmonious society could be achieved was the concern of Stein's work throughout his life.

The reasons why Lorenz Stein's political thought has long been unrecognized as a contribution to socialist theory has in large measure to do with the narrow definition of socialism that emerged in the late nineteenth century. Stein's ideas were phrased in the academic language of *Staatswissenschaft* (sciences of the state). This was an outgrowth of the eighteenth-century German Cameralist tradition that saw citizens' welfare as integral to good kingly rule.⁴ In Stein's vision, only a well designed state administration that regulated all facets of public life – yet respected the right to private property – could bring about a more socially harmonious society. Stein's outdated academic language is certainly not associated with socialist thought today. Yet if examined closely and unpacked from jargon, his vision of state socialism resonates strongly with contemporary ideas about welfare politics and social democracy.

In the late nineteenth century, the connections between the Cameralist tradition and modern state-led measures for social equality were still apparent to many of Stein's contemporaries. Shortly after Otto von Bismarck's social reforms in the 1880s, one commentator pointed out that not only were such measures in line

⁴ Cameralism was a German economic and political doctrine that flourished especially in the eighteenth century. Derived from the German word *Kammer*, the princely chamber, its main conviction was the need for high state revenue which should be used for the benefit of the people, essentially an early vision of a 'welfare state'. For more details see chapter 1 below.

with Prussian tradition, but that socialism in a broader sense was also not a novel phenomenon:

On the contrary it is nothing other than embodiment of the old Prussian idea of the state which, mindful of its powerful stance in all things economic and its adaptation to the changed requirements of the present, pursues its victorious unfolding and conferment onto the young German Empire with as much luck as vigour. Therefore [it is] no impractical dreamy German philosophy, no phenomenon sprung up from the most recent present that can thus be pushed aside, but a traditional and active political principle, equally proven and consistent in its roots, and variable and flexible in the forms of its appearance.⁵

As this author implied, state socialism had been a part of Prussian politics for centuries. Instead of dismissing it as utopian nonsense, as many contemporaries did, he acknowledged socialism as a serious phenomenon. Another German commentator from this period, who also emphasized the long pre-history of Bismarck's social legislation, claimed: 'Our stately existence in its entirety rests on the idea of socialism.'⁶

This 'continuity character in state-led socialization' across the nineteenth century was the major theme of Lorenz Stein's writing.⁷ The principal goal of his academic work was to adjust the Cameralist legacy to the changed social and political conditions of the nineteenth century. In so doing, he highlighted the wider relevance of the Aristotelian tradition in political thought to modern politics. In

⁵ Moritz Stroell, *Die staatssozialistische Bewegung in Deutschland: Eine historisch-kritische Darstellung* (Leipzig, 1885), p. 1: 'Es ist im Gegentheil nichts anderes als die Verkörperung des alten preußischen Staatsgedankens, welcher eingedenk seiner kraftvollen Haltung in allen wirthschaftlichen Dingen und in Anpassung an die veränderten Erfordernisse der Gegenwart seine sieghafte Entfaltung und Übertragung auf das junge deutsche Reich mit ebenso viel Glück als Nachdruck anstrebt. Also keine unpraktische träumerische deutsche Philosophie, keine dem augenblicklichen Drang der neuesten Gegenwart entsprungene und verdrängliche Tagesgeburt, sondern ein altüberkommenes thatkräftiges Staatsprinzip, ebenso wetterfest und stetig in seinen Wurzeln, als wechselnd und vielgestaltig in den Formen seiner Erscheinung.' All translations of German texts are, unless otherwise stated, my own.

⁶ S. Emele, *Der Sozialismus, Rodbertus-Jagetzow, das Manchestertum und der Staatssozialismus* (Sigmaringen, 1885), p. vii: 'Unsere ganze Staatliche Existenz beruht auf der Idee des Sozialismus.'

⁷ Stroell, *Staatssozialistische Bewegung*, p. 7: 'Kontinuitätscharakter der staatlichen Vergesellschaftung'.

contrast to contractual theories of the state, this tradition regarded rulership as an office, and saw the promotion of a virtuous life and social welfare as the main goals of politics. Such a notion of ‘practical politics’ had flourished across Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but was especially prevalent in Germany where it had been theorized by the philosopher Christian Wolff and famously embodied by the ‘enlightened’ Prussian king Frederick II.⁸ Challenged by Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes and ultimately Immanuel Kant, who sought to put politics on a more rational and moral basis, this older tradition of a ‘welfare state’ remained an important contender to the republican and liberal traditions that came to be associated with modern politics. Michel Foucault would in the twentieth century point to the legacy of the neo-Aristotelian tradition and its relevance to modern politics and the rise of the welfare state.⁹ More broadly, this perspective also informed the political visions of Max Weber and Carl Schmitt in the early twentieth century.¹⁰

Stein, with his scepticism regarding popular sovereignty and representative democracy, was one of the nineteenth century’s most striking representatives of this tradition. In the early 1840s, he argued that Germany’s contribution to the budding socialist movement should be a ‘science of society’, an enlargement and extension of its ‘sciences of the state’. Like many of his contemporaries on the left, Stein was sceptical of the ‘bourgeois’ state’s ability to address modern social problems. Yet, Stein saw a solution not in a radically new kind of politics, but in a return – in a transformed and updated manner – to what he considered the distinctly German values of the neo-Aristotelian welfare state. Highlighting the ancient roots of his

⁸ For a useful introduction to this topic see Wilhelm Hennis, ‘The problem of the German conception of the state’, in Wilhelm Hennis, *Politics as a practical science*, trans. by Keith Tribe (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 1-26 (especially p. 5).

⁹ See Michel Foucault, *Security, territory, population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-1978*, trans. by Graham Burchell, ed. by Michel Senellart (New York, 2007), especially pp. 15, 68, 101-03.

¹⁰ See for example R. Slagstad, ‘Liberal Constitutionalism and its Critics: Carl Schmitt and Max Weber’, in J. Elster and R. Slagstad (eds), *Constitutionalism and democracy* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 103-30.

ideas, he wrote in the 1840s: ‘It is [...] clear that [...] Aristotle’s *Politeia* contains the perhaps most accomplished science of society that has ever been written.’¹¹ Following the experience of 1848, which for many contemporary observers demonstrated the limited value of republican and democratic ideas as they failed to bring about lasting change, Stein suggested that it was instead the administrative sphere of the state through which socialist goals should be implemented. By the 1860s, he translated these insights into his theory of the ‘administrative science’, a vision of social and political organisation in which the entirety of the state’s institutions were imbued with a ‘social spirit’. By drawing on Aristotelian ideas, Stein laid the structures for an enduring version of welfarism that arguably rivalled the socialist and communist vision that arose out of the republican tradition.

It is not the intention of this work, however, to argue that Stein had a ‘better’ vision of socialism than that which rose to prominence in the twentieth century. In many ways, Stein’s project was a failure. Already his contemporaries claimed that his work was outdated, confused and often unintelligible. Other intellectual trends rivalled Stein’s vision of an administrative welfare state. Additionally, facets of his style and personality alienated his contemporaries. Yet, these instances of rejection are an equally important theme of my work. If the goal is to arrive at a richer history of the idea of socialism, it is just as significant to pursue why some ideas were not more successful and failed in their historical contexts. In Stein’s case, one likely reason why he was forgotten was that he in fact became a victim of his own success. As one early commentator, who set out to rescue him after decades of obscurity, observed:

We have here a perhaps unique case [...] of an author who was completely forgotten because he was too successful. During the time when he thrived and taught it was so absolutely self-evident that one had studied his fundamental works, that one was not in need of citing them; and the

¹¹ L. S. [Lorenz Stein], ‘Blicke auf den Socialismus und Communismus in Deutschland, und ihre Zukunft’, *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1844), II: 1-61 (p. 14): ‘Es ist [...] klar, daß [...] Aristoteles *Politeia* eine, und vielleicht vollendetste Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft enthält, die je geschrieben ist [...] Aristoteles hat überhaupt schon die Sache, wenn auch nicht den Begriff entwickelt.’

consequence of this was the paradoxical fact that the following generation no longer knew the man.¹²

Stein's role as a 'mainstream' thinker in his time is a strong reason to recover his vision. My account of Stein's intellectual development, that traces both the instances where his writings provoked fierce responses and where they were ignored, thus aims to illuminate our understanding of the changing and contested meaning of socialism in the mid-nineteenth century. This story, it is hoped, might also challenge some contemporary convictions regarding the meaning and potential of socialist ideas.

Historiography

While Lorenz Stein is obscure to Anglophone scholarship, German scholars repeatedly took up Stein throughout the twentieth century. He has been appropriated for different – indeed radically divergent – ideological purposes, and his case therefore demonstrates in a particularly striking way how contingent historical factors shape the reception of political ideas, and how easily thinkers go in and out of fashion. The history of Stein scholarship is thus worth surveying in some detail.

Having already become obscure at the end of his life, Stein's name first returned to public discussion in the course of the Revisionism debate in the late 1890s when Marxists and social democrats clashed on the question of whether the state could be used to implement socialist ideas. One of the 'revisionist' supporters of social democracy, Peter Struve, in 1897 put forward the argument that Karl Marx had been decisively influenced by Stein's 1842 book on French socialism, and that there was therefore a close conceptual relationship between the two thinkers.¹³

Werner Sombart also made this claim in his book *Sozialismus und soziale Bewegung*

¹² Franz Oppenheimer, 'Lorenz Stein und die deutsche Soziologie', *Die Neue Rundschau*, 33, 2 (1922), 888-901 (p. 891): 'Hier liegt der [...] vielleicht einzige Fall vor, daß ein Autor vollkommen vergessen worden ist, weil er allzugroßen Erfolg hatte. Es verstand sich zu der Zeit, wo er blühte und lehrte, so durchaus von selbst, daß man seine grundlegenden Werke studiert hatte, daß man nicht nötig hatte, sie zu zitieren; und die Folge davon war die verblüffende Tatsache, daß die folgende Generation den Mann und sein Werk nicht mehr kannte.'

¹³ Peter von Struve, 'Stein, Marx und der wahre Socialismus', in *Die neue Zeit*, 15, 2 (1897), 269-73.

im 19. Jahrhundert.¹⁴ These arguments were not merely historical, but served to make a case for the cooperation with statist institutions in the present, something to which orthodox Marxists were vehemently opposed. Struve and Sombart's discussions provoked a response from the Marxist Franz Mehring, who denied a conceptual relationship between Marx and Stein, and attacked Stein as an unoriginal, deeply 'bourgeois' writer, irrelevant to the history of socialism.¹⁵

The topic of Stein's relationship to Marx also dominated other discussions from the early twentieth century, such as the first doctoral dissertation on Stein by Ernst Grünfeld in 1908.¹⁶ In 1914, the state of this debate was summed up in an article by Béla Földes, who came to the conclusion that while Marx's must have read Stein's 1842 book, a lack of conclusive evidence makes it impossible to establish the full degree of its impact on the development of his thought. Therefore, 'the Stein-Marx problem remains unresolved.'¹⁷ Throughout the twentieth century, the question of Stein's and Marx's relationship remained a lingering concern of Stein scholarship. It was most recently directly revisited in an article from 1990 whose authors claim that the discussion of this topic has ignored the fact that Marx and Stein addressed conceptually highly distinct problems and it is therefore futile to look for mutual influence.¹⁸

The rise of sociology in the 1920s inspired a great surge in interest in Stein. Many sociologists saw in Stein an important precursor to their subject. Gottfried Solomon, for example, introduced Stein as the founding father of social theory in the

¹⁴ Werner Sombart, *Sozialismus und soziale Bewegung im 19. Jahrhundert* (Jena, 1897).

¹⁵ Franz Mehring, 'Stein, Hess, Marx', in *Die Neue Zeit*, 15, 2 (1896-7), 379-82. Around this time Stein was also first mentioned in an English publication. See J. K. Ingram, 'Stein, Lorenz von', in R. H. I. Palgrave (ed.), *Dictionary of political economy* (London, 1899), p. 474.

¹⁶ It was published as a book two years later: Ernst Grünfeld, *Lorenz von Stein und die Gesellschaftslehre* (Jena, 1910). See also the work by Georg Adler, *Die Anfänge der Marx'schen Sozialtheorie und ihre Beeinflussung durch Hegel, Feuerbach, Stein und Proudhon. Festgaben für Adolph Wagner* (Leipzig, 1905).

¹⁷ Béla Földes, 'Bemerkungen zu dem Problem Lorenz von Stein - Karl Marx', *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, 102 (1914), 289-99 (p. 298): 'Das Problem Stein-Marx bleibt [...] ungelöst.'

¹⁸ Aiman Ibrahim and Katharina Oßke, 'Karl Marx und Lorenz von Stein: Ein theoriegeschichtlicher Vergleich', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 38 (1990), 1059-68.

preface to his 1921 edition of Stein's 1850 *Geschichte der Sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage* – the first time that one of Stein's books was republished in Germany after his death.¹⁹ Franz Oppenheimer, who became Germany's first professor of sociology in 1919, published a piece on Stein where he claimed that his *Geschichte der Sozialen Bewegung* 'contains in the clearest exposition the first German sociology'.²⁰ Paul Vogel's book from 1925 examined how Stein had expanded Hegel's concept of society.²¹ Heinz Nitzschke's 1932 work, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie Lorenz von Steins: Ein Beitrag zur Geistesgeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, focused on Stein's vision of 'historical sociology', another area of contemporary scholarly interest. Nitzschke's work also made the first attempt at an intellectual biography of Stein, and discussed his important correspondences with Arnold Ruge.²² The discovery of Stein's letters to Johann Gustav Droysen in 1848 provided the background to another publication on Stein in the 1930s, by the historian Felix Gilbert.²³

Stein played an important and controversial role in Nazi Germany. In 1934, Heinrich Aschenbrenner published a book that reprinted a short extract from Stein's writing on the social dynamic in the modern state. In the introduction he put Stein's thought in direct relation to Nazi doctrine.²⁴ Aschenbrenner argued that Stein's writings, which combined nationalist and socialist ideas, were a crucial precursor to

¹⁹ Lorenz von Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage*, ed. by Gottfried Solomon (Munich, 1921).

²⁰ Oppenheimer, 'Lorenz Stein und die deutsche Soziologie', p. 893: 'es enthält in klarster Problemstellung die erste deutsche Soziologie'.

²¹ Paul Vogel, *Hegels Gesellschaftsbegriff und seine geschichtliche Fortbildung durch Lorenz Stein, Marx, Engels und Lassalle* (Berlin, 1925).

²² Heinz Nitzschke, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie Lorenz von Steins: Ein Beitrag zur Geistesgeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* [Historische Zeitschrift, supplement 26] (Munich and Berlin, 1932). I discuss these correspondences in chapter 1.

²³ Felix Gilbert, 'Lorenz von Stein und die Revolution von 1848: ein Beitrag zur Entwicklung Steins und zur Entstehung der deutschen Gesellschaftswissenschaft', in *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung*, 50 (1936), 369-87 [English translation 'From political to social history: Lorenz von Stein and the revolution of 1848', in Felix Gilbert, *History: Choice and commitment* (Cambridge, MA, 1977), pp. 411-21].

²⁴ Lorenz von Stein, *Staat und Gesellschaft*, ed. by Heinrich Aschenbrenner (Zürich, 1934).

the thought of the party that had recently come into power in Germany.²⁵ Adolf Hitler, as Aschenbrenner pointed out, shared Stein's notion of the sanctity of private property and of the virtue of labour. Aschenbrenner's commentary is striking: '[Stein's] arguments seem peculiarly current. Apart from the racial argument, they are very closely related to the ideas of National Socialism [...] This correspondence is by no means accidental. With National Socialism's recourse to the Prussian tradition, the work of Lorenz Stein, previously unjustly pushed in the background, also had to come alive again.'²⁶

The aspect of Stein's thought that appealed to National Socialists was his defence of a strong state and his aversion to liberalism. This was also the element that Carl Schmitt, one of the most famous commentators on Lorenz Stein, emphasized. One of the twentieth century's foremost political theorists, Schmitt remains controversial because of his relationship to the Nazi party.²⁷ At least in the early years of National Socialist rule, Schmitt was a close collaborator of the regime, and in his philosophical work sought to provide a justification for their doctrine. Schmitt first discussed Lorenz Stein in his 1935 essay 'Was bedeutet der Streit um den Rechtsstaat?'.²⁸ He there pointed to the vision of a strong, independent state among nineteenth-century thinkers like Robert von Mohl and Stein, and lamented its later decline. It was the National Socialists, as Schmitt wrote, who abolished the farcical and weak state that had predominated since the late nineteenth century.²⁹

²⁵ Ibid., p. 7: 'Die Verschmelzung von Staats-Idee und Nation-Idee, die die zweite und stärkste Wirkung des Steinschens Denkens charakterisiert und die heute in der Idee des nationalen Sozialismus zum beherrschenden Staatsprinzips Deutschlands wird, ist im Kern schon in Steins eigenem Ansatz enthalten gewesen.'

²⁶ Ibid., p. 10: '[Stein's] Argumente wirken eigentümlich gegenwärtig. Sie berühren sich bis auf das Rassenargument aufs engste mit der Ideenwelt des Nationalsozialismus [...] Diese Übereinstimmung ist keineswegs zufällig. Mit dem Rückgriff des Nationalsozialismus auf die preußische Tradition mußte auch das zu Unrecht in den Hintergrund gedrängte Werk Lorenz von Steins wieder lebendig werden.'

²⁷ See Günter Maschke, 'Im Irrgarten Carl Schmitts', in ed. Karl Corino, *Intellektuelle im Bann des Nationalsozialismus* (Hamburg, 1980), pp. 204-41.

²⁸ Carl Schmitt, 'Was bedeutet der Streit um den Rechtsstaat?', in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 95, 2 (1935), 189-201.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 196-97.

Schmitt returned to Stein in greater length in 1940, when he published an essay that served as the introduction to a reprint of Stein's 1852 essay 'Zur preußischen Verfassungsfrage', a piece in which Stein had voiced his disappointment with Prussia in the aftermath of the revolution of 1848.³⁰ Schmitt, who had by then distanced himself from the Nazi party, commented on the relationship between Stein's life and his historical context, and notably on his inability to have a wider impact.³¹ As Blasius suggests, Schmitt's analysis was strongly tainted by autobiographical motives, and was a reflection on his own dilemmas at the time.³²

Schmitt was not the only prominent Nazi sympathiser who developed an interest in Lorenz Stein's work. Ernst Forsthoff was a legal scholar specializing in administrative law who, like Schmitt, dedicated his efforts in the early years of Nazi rule to providing an intellectual justification for the regime. In 1934, he published his *Der totale Staat* which praised the National Socialists' abolition of liberalism, as well as their anti-Semitic policies.³³ Despite being removed from his university post in 1945, Forsthoff resumed teaching in 1950, and went on to become an important theorist of the democratic welfare state in post-war Germany. Although he renounced National Socialism after 1945, Forsthoff continued to argue for a strong state. For this, he saw an important source in Stein's thought, which he examined in his 1972

³⁰ Lorenz Stein, *Zur preußischen Verfassungsfrage*, ed. by Norbert Simon, afterword by Carl Schmitt (Berlin, 1940).

³¹ This essay was also published as Carl Schmitt, 'Die Stellung Lorenz von Steins in der Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts', in *Schmollers Jahrbuch*, 64 (1940), 641-46 (p. 644): 'einsame Brückenstellung [...] zwischen einer philosophischen Vergangenheit, der er selbst noch angehörte, und einer Zukunft, die er nicht mehr erlebte.'

³² On the wider context of Schmitt's preoccupation with Stein see Dirk Blasius, 'Zeitdiagnosen: Carl Schmitt und Lorenz von Stein', in Thomas Drepper et al. (eds), *Sozialer Wandel und kulturelle Innovation: Festschrift für Eckhart Pankoke* (Berlin, 2005), pp. 71-83 (p. 79): 'Es ist offenkundig, daß Schmitt die eigene Situation im Jahre 1940 auf die Situation Steins im Jahre 1852 projezierte.'

³³ Ernst Forsthoff, *Der totale Staat* (Hamburg, 1934). On Forsthoff as a Nazi sympathizer see Gerhard Maunz, 'Ernst Forsthoff und andere...', in Corino (ed.), *Intellektuelle im Bann des Nationalsozialismus*, pp. 193-203.

volume, *Lorenz von Stein: Gesellschaft, Staat, Recht*.³⁴ His student, Roman Schnur, would be the author of another important edited volume on Stein.³⁵

Similarly, a student of Carl Schmitt's went on to make a significant contribution to Stein scholarship. In 1956, Werner Schmidt, who was also the mayor of Stein's hometown Eckernförde, published what is to this day the only biography of Stein.³⁶ The work was based on a multitude of new archival sources and provided a detailed account of Stein's turbulent life. The work discarded many misleading ideas that had by that time been formed of Stein, such as the view that Stein was either a straightforward socialist or, as his Marxist critics had suggested, a bourgeois traitor of socialist ideas.³⁷ The 1950s moreover saw the republication of parts of Stein's *Gesellschaftslehre* from 1856 and a reprint of Solomon's 1921 edition.³⁸ This set the scene for what came to be a larger Stein revival in the 1960s.

Idealized by the National Socialists, after the war Stein was in turn rediscovered by the left. In post-war Germany, several social democratic politicians drew on Stein's thought. A wider context for this was certainly the need to find an acceptable 'alternative' German political tradition that could balance out the experience of National Socialism.³⁹ The SPD politician Carlo Schmid, for example, one of the authors of the 1959 Godesberg programme in which his party distanced itself from Marxism had a strong interest in Stein.⁴⁰ A widely-respected legal theorist

³⁴ Ernst Forsthoff (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein: Gesellschaft, Staat, Recht* (Frankfurt, 1972).

³⁵ Roman Schnur (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft: Studien über Lorenz von Stein* (Berlin, 1978). More on Schnur below.

³⁶ Werner Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein: Ein Beitrag zur Biographie, zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins und zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Eckernförde, 1956).

³⁷ Ibid., especially p. 50.

³⁸ *Lorenz von Stein: Begriff und Wesen der Gesellschaft*, ed. by Karl Gustav Specht and Fritz Voigt (Cologne and Opladen, 1956). Lorenz von Stein, *Geschichte der Sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage* (3 vols, Munich, Darmstadt and Hildesheim, 1959; repr. Munich, 1972).

³⁹ On the post-war development of the German historiography of political thought see Wolfgang J. Mommsen, 'History of political theory in the Federal Republic of Germany: strange death and slow recovery', in Dario Castiglione and Iain Hampsher-Monk (eds), *The history of political thought in national context* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 40-57.

⁴⁰ See Carlo Schmid, 'Lorenz von Stein', in H. Heimpel, Theodor Heuss and B. Reifenberg (eds), *Die großen Deutschen: Deutsche Biographie* (5 vols, Berlin, 1956-57), V (1957): 318-30; Carlo Schmid, 'Lorenz von Stein und seine Gesellschaftstheorie' [1957], in Carlo Schmid, *Gesammelte Werke in Einzelausgaben* (3 vols, Bern, 1973-80), II (1973): *Europa und die Macht des Geistes*, pp. 182-89.

in his own right, Schmid believed that the legacy of National Socialist legal positivism could be remedied through a return to an ethical conception of the state that was attuned to the social needs of the individual.⁴¹ Stein's theory of the interconnection of the state with society inspired Schmid's notion of the 'sozialer Rechtsstaat'. Following Stein, he did not propose a tutelary state welfare system, but emphasised individual autonomy.⁴² Another social-democratic admirer of Stein was Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, who had also been a student of Carl Schmitt's. An eminent legal philosopher in postwar Germany, Böckenförde explored Stein's legal and social thought in his 1976 volume *Staat, Gesellschaft, Freiheit: Studien zur Staatstheorie und zum Verfassungsrecht*.⁴³

The international rise of social theory in the post-war era additionally heightened interest in Stein on the left. Already in 1941, Herbert Marcuse, a neo-Marxist German philosopher in American exile, had discussed Stein in his work, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory*. Marcuse examined Stein's conception of sociology, and although he saw some limitations in his discussion, he overall portrayed Stein as an important transformer of Hegelian philosophy, and significant contributor to the history of philosophy and social and political thought.⁴⁴ Thanks to Marcuse's work Stein's ideas also became more widely known in the English-speaking world.

The expansion of sociology in the 1950s and 60s eventually provided the context for the first independent scholarly preoccupation with Stein in the Anglophone world. John Weiss, who examined Stein in his doctoral dissertation at Columbia University, in the late 1950s published the article 'Dialectical Idealism and the work of Lorenz von Stein'. It explained the basic tenets of Stein's political

⁴¹ See Olivier Duchatelle, 'Carlo Schmidt et l'Etat de droit social', in *Recherches Germaniques*, 29 (1999), 113-37 (p. 118).

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁴³ Ernst Wolfgang Böckenförde, *Staat, Gesellschaft, Freiheit: Studien zur Staatstheorie und zum Verfassungsrecht* (Frankfurt, 1976).

⁴⁴ Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and revolution: Hegel and the rise of social theory* (London, 2000), pp. 374-88.

thought, yet from a rather hostile, distinctly Marxist, perspective.⁴⁵ A more nuanced American contribution to Stein scholarship came soon after from the sociologist Kaethe Mengelberg. She first discussed Stein in an article in 1961, and in 1964 published the first English translation of Stein's writings.⁴⁶ In the introduction, Mengelberg put forward an overall compelling interpretation of Stein's political thought in its historical context that is, however, rather dated by contemporary historiographical standards.⁴⁷ Mengelberg's edition remains to this day the only English translation of Stein.

More historical Stein scholarship flourished in 1960s Germany. Additional details became known about Stein's life in this time, as commentators increasingly focused on the early episode in his life – an interesting parallel to the growing preoccupation with Karl Marx's early writings in the 1960s. Joist Grolle in a seminal article called attention to the fact that Stein had been a Prussian spy in the early 1840s.⁴⁸ Bodo Richter dedicated a study to Stein's journalistic writings and his views on nationalism and foreign affairs.⁴⁹ Especially important work on Stein in this period came from Manfred Hahn, who published his *Bürgerlicher Optimismus im Niedergang* in 1969. Hahn was critical of the superficiality and the political agenda of most previous Stein scholarship, and cautioned against seeing Stein as either a Left Hegelian, a sociologist, or a conservative. In order to fully understand Stein, Hahn made it his task to analyse his less well-known texts. He concentrated on

⁴⁵ John Weiss, 'Dialectical idealism and the work of Lorenz von Stein', *International Review of Social History*, 8 (1963), 75-93.

⁴⁶ Kaethe Mengelberg, 'Lorenz von Stein and his contribution to historical sociology', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 22 (1961), 267-74.

⁴⁷ Kaethe Mengelberg, 'Introduction. Lorenz von Stein 1815-1890. His Life and Work', in Lorenz von Stein, *The history of the social movement in France, 1789-1850*, trans. by Kaethe Mengelberg (Totowa, NJ, 1964), pp. 3-39.

⁴⁸ Joist Grolle, 'Lorenz von Stein als preussischer Geheimgent', in *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 50 (1968), 82-96.

⁴⁹ Bodo Richter, *Lorenz von Stein über die deutsche Einheit und die internationalen Aspekte des Schleswig-Holstein-Problems (1843-1890): Mit einem vollständigen Verzeichnis seiner Beiträge zur Allgemeinen* (Neumünster, 1970).

Stein's changing relationship to Hegel, and in his book also published some important sources, such as Stein's correspondences from the 1840s and 50s.⁵⁰

Another deeply insightful commentator on Stein since the late 1960s has been Dirk Blasius.⁵¹ His most significant contribution to Stein scholarship was the edited volume he published together with the sociologist Eckart Pankoke in 1977. The widely-read work covered diverse aspects of Stein's life and thought, and made Stein more widely known to the German public, reflecting in particular the joint interest in Stein as a historian and a sociologist in this period.⁵² This approach was clearly motivated by the rise of the 'new social history' in Germany, a historiographical tradition that developed in the early 1970s and focused on the interface of social and conceptual history. Driven by insights from sociology, it aimed to write a *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* which examined long-term structural change. Unsurprisingly, it found in Stein an inspiring precursor of this approach.⁵³

Blasius's and Pankoke's work, together with another edited volume, Roman Schnur's *Staat und Gesellschaft: Studien über Lorenz von Stein* (1978), led to the fact that, as Blasius observed retrospectively, 'in the 1970s [...] the long-forgotten Lorenz von Stein acquired the status of a classic in the history of political ideas.'⁵⁴ An increasingly critical attitude to Marxist theory was an important context for this development. In contrast to previous Marx-centred dismissals of Stein, the introduction to Schnur's volume, for example, claimed that Stein had developed his

⁵⁰ Manfred Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus im Niedergang: Studien zu Lorenz Stein und Hegel* (Munich, 1969). Hahn also published an anthology of Stein's writings. See Lorenz Stein, *Proletariat und Gesellschaft: Texte nach der zweiten Auflage von "Der Sozialismus und Kommunismus des heutigen Frankreichs" (1848)*, ed. by Manfred Hahn (Munich, 1971).

⁵¹ See his early works, Dirk Blasius, 'Lorenz von Stein und Preußen', in *Historische Zeitschrift*, 212, 2 (1971), 339-62; 'Gesellschaftsgeschichte und Gesellschaftswissenschaft bei Lorenz von Stein', in *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie*, 57 (1971), 261-85.

⁵² Dirk Blasius and Eckart Pankoke, *Lorenz von Stein: Geschichts- und gesellschaftswissenschaftliche Perspektiven* (Darmstadt, 1977).

⁵³ Ulrich Wehler was one of the leading figures of this school, and Blasius published a piece on Stein in his reference work on German historiography. See Dirk Blasius, 'Lorenz von Stein', in Ulrich Wehler (ed.), *Deutsche Historiker* (9 vols, Göttingen, 1971-82), I (1971): 25-38.

⁵⁴ Blasius, 'Zeitdiagnosen', p. 71: 'In den siebziger Jahren [...] der lange vergessene Lorenz von Stein den Status eines Klassikers in der Geschichte der politischen Ideen [gewann].'

thought on socialism much further than Marx. Not only was his analysis of the contemporary state and its shortcomings sharper than Marx's, but Stein also managed to come up with a much more detailed proposal for change.⁵⁵

Stein's importance was also recognized by another great German historian of the era: Reinhart Koselleck, the pioneer of 'conceptual history'. From 1972, Koselleck together with Werner Conze edited the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, a dictionary of historical concepts, and Stein was discussed in several articles. Wolfgang Schieder in his article on 'socialism', for example, credited Stein with having played a crucial role in the dissemination of socialist ideas in Germany.⁵⁶ Koselleck was particularly interested in Stein's approach to historical analysis and temporality. In his seminal work *Vergangene Zukunft* (1979), he dedicated an essay to Stein and his piece on the Prussian constitution which had also been the focus of Carl Schmitt's discussion.⁵⁷ Koselleck examined Stein's schemes of historical diagnostic and historical prognosis and saw in him a uniquely gifted historian and sociologist.

The internationally renowned Koselleck's preoccupation with Stein also inspired new interest in Stein in the Anglophone world. In the early 1980s, the journal *Economy and Society* dedicated a series of articles to Stein and recent German scholarship on him. Pasquino Pasquale admitted in his 'Introduction to Lorenz von Stein' that 'Lorenz von Stein remains to this day an entirely unknown figure in Anglo-Saxon countries'.⁵⁸ He argued that that it was Stein's complexity as a thinker that had made it difficult to make sense of him. Pasquino's assessment of the

⁵⁵ Schnur (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft*, pp. 15-16.

⁵⁶ Wolfgang Schieder, 'Sozialismus', in R. Koselleck et al. (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (8 vols, Stuttgart, 1972-97), V (1984), 923-96 (p. 947): 'Begriffsgeschichtliche Mittlerfunktion'. Stein was also mentioned in the articles on 'Kommunismus' (III: 482), and the one on 'Verwaltung' (VII: 6).

⁵⁷ Reinhart Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main, 1979). English edition: *Futures Past: on the semantics of historical times*; trans. by Keith Tribe (1985; New York, 2004), pp. 55-69: 'Historical prognosis in Lorenz von Stein's essay on the Prussian constitution'.

⁵⁸ Pasquale Pasquino, 'Introduction to Lorenz von Stein', *Economy and Society*, 10, 1 (1981), 1-6 (p. 1).

causes for Stein's neglect still rings true: 'The difficulty in arriving at a political assessment of the Steinian programme [...] is also a consequence of our political categories being for the most part founded on the Marxian critique of liberalism; and Stein escapes this grid because he is beyond it.'⁵⁹ *Economy and Society* also published a translation of the piece 'From the social question to the social state' by Karl-Hermann Kästner which had appeared in the Schnur edition, as well as of Eckart Pankoke's essay 'Social movement' and Koselleck's '*Begriffsgeschichte* and social history'.⁶⁰

Another product of the rise of interest in Stein in the early 1980s was the first, and so-far only, British doctoral thesis on Stein, Giles Pope's 1985 Oxford DPhil, *The political ideas of Lorenz Stein and their influence on Rudolf Gneist and Gustav Schmoller*.⁶¹ Pope provided a historical reconstruction of Stein's intellectual background, adding much useful biographical information based on archival research, as well as an insightful account of his relationship to the Rudolf Gneist and Gustav Schmoller, two important legal and economic theorists in the second half of the nineteenth century. However, the work was not very intellectually ambitious overall, failing to connect its findings to wider historiographical trends or to analyse Stein's thought in philosophical context. Unfortunately, Pope also did not pursue further research on Stein and the thesis remains unpublished.

To return to the German context, a significant event in the history of Stein scholarship was the opening of Stein's *Nachlass* in the early 1980s. Previously held by his family in Vienna, Stein's biographer Werner Schmidt transferred Stein's papers to Kiel. The Lorenz-von-Stein Institut für Verwaltungswissenschaften, dedicated to both the study of Stein's work and contemporary 'administrative

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 3.

⁶⁰ Karl-Hermann Kästner, 'From the social question to the social state', *Economy and Society*, 10, 1 (1981), 7-26. Eckart Pankoke, 'Social movement', trans. by David Frisby, *Economy and Society*, 11, 3 (1982), 317-46. Reinhart Koselleck, '*Begriffsgeschichte* and social history', trans. by Keith Tribe, *Economy and Society*, 11, 4 (1982), 409-27.

⁶¹ Giles Pope, 'The political ideas of Lorenz Stein and their influence on Rudolf Gneist and Gustav Schmoller' (unpublished DPhil dissertation, University of Oxford, 1985; abstract in *German History*, 4 (1987), 60-1).

science', was founded in 1980.⁶² One of the first publications based on the newly accessible archive was Heinz Taschke's 1985 edition of Stein's lecture manuscripts which offer important insights into Stein's intellectual development in the 1840s.⁶³ The Institute has since published a series of works, many of them concerned with Stein's relationship to Japan, a topic on which the *Nachlass* holds particularly many documents. It also holds a yearly memorial lecture on the day of Stein's death, which is also usually published.⁶⁴

By 1990, Stein was no longer an unknown figure among German intellectual historians and social scientists. A *Festschrift* edited by Mutius published on the occasion of the centenary of Stein's death brought together essays on a diverse range of topics, examining for example the circumstances of Stein's appointment to a professorial chair in Vienna in 1855⁶⁵, his relationship to Japan at the end of his life⁶⁶, his impact on German administrative law⁶⁷, the significance of his ideas on

⁶² On this occasion, Andrea Boockman published an inventory of the archive together with a biographical re-appraisal of Stein. See Andrea Boockmann, *Lorenz von Stein (1815-1890): Nachlass, Bibliothek, Biographie* (Kiel, 1980).

⁶³ Heinz Taschke, *Lorenz von Steins nachgelassene staatsrechtliche und rechtsphilosophische Vorlesungsmanuskripte: Zugleich ein Beitrag zu seiner Biographie und zu seinem Persönlichkeitsbegriff* (Heidelberg, 1985). I discuss these lecture notes in chapter 2.

⁶⁴ See Johann Nawrocki, *Der japanische Nachlaß Lorenz von Steins (1815-1890)* (Kiel, 1992) for an inventory of the Japanese part of Stein's *Nachlass*. Other works in the Institute's book series include Frank Schulze-Nieswandt, *Die Lehre vom öffentlichen Gesundheitswesen bei Lorenz von Stein* (Kiel, 1989); Thomas Riis, *Lorenz von Stein und die Frage der Armut* (Kiel, 1998); Jürgen Zander, *Die Pilgerfahrt zu Stein* (Kiel, 2002); Heinz Taschke, *Lorenz von Stein und Japan* (Kiel, 2005); Takayuki Shibata, *Innen- und Außenpolitik in der Staatswissenschaft Lorenz von Steins: Nach Japan und aus Japan* (Kiel, 2006); Martin Nolte, *Das System des Vereins- und Verbandswesens bei Lorenz von Stein* (Kiel, 2004); Utz Schliesky, *Von der organischen Verwaltung Lorenz von Steins zur Netzwerkverwaltung im europäischen Verwaltungsbund* (Kiel, 2009); Rainer Hering, *Lorenz von Stein und Schleswig-Holstein im Europa der Revolutionen 1848/9* (Kiel, 2012); Felix Welti, *Lorenz von Stein und das Recht auf eine gute Sozialverwaltung* (Kiel, 2013); Heinz Taschke (ed.), *Dokumente aus dem Leben Lorenz von Steins: Eine Inschrift, ein Adelswappen und ein Brief an einen „Gehrtesten Herrn Collegen“* (Kiel, 2013).

⁶⁵ Wilhelm Brauner, 'Lorenz von Steins Wirken in Wien', in Albert von Mutius (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein: Akademischer Festakt zum 100. Todestag* (Heidelberg, 1992), pp. 19-28.

⁶⁶ Reinhard Zöllner, 'Lorenz von Stein und Japan', in Mutius (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 29-40.

⁶⁷ Georg-Christoph von Unruh, 'Vorsorge für das Dasein: Auswirkungen auf die Entwicklung des deutschen Staats- und Verwaltungsrechts', in Mutius (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 43-58.

healthcare as well as on education,⁶⁸ and the contemporary relevance of his financial theory.⁶⁹ These varied contributions illustrated the way Stein had become of interest to not only historians, but scholars from a range of disciplines. Around this time, two book-length studies of Stein were also published by sociologists. The works by Carsten Quesel and Klaus Fischer interpreted Stein in light of the assumption that sociology represented a conservative reaction to the rise of nineteenth century bourgeois society, and that Stein was the leading representative of this movement.⁷⁰

In recent years, important insights into Lorenz Stein's work have come from Stefan Koslowski, a philosopher who began writing on Stein in the late 1980s.⁷¹ His most important work on Stein has been the 2005 study *Zur Philosophie von Wirtschaft und Recht: Lorenz von Stein im Spannungsfeld zwischen Idealismus, Historismus und Positivismus*. Koslowski in it argues that Stein formed the crucial link in the intellectual transition from idealism to positivism and political economy in the mid-nineteenth century. He also highlights Stein's philosophical concern with the needs of the person, arguing that this decisively marks off his thought from neo-liberalism.⁷²

Another significant commentator on Stein has been Norbert Waszek. As a German scholar who was educated in Britain and has been teaching in France, he has notably contributed to making Stein better known outside Germany. Waszek

⁶⁸ Frank Schulz-Nieswandt, 'Lorenz von Steins Bedeutung für Gegenwart und Zukunft: Sozial- und gesundheitspolitisch Ansätze', in Mutius (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 49-58; M. Schwab, 'Bildungspolitik Lorenz von Steins: Heute noch aktuell?', in Mutius (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 59-64.

⁶⁹ M. Heilmann, 'Zur Aktualität Lorenz von Steins als Klassiker der Finanzwissenschaft', in Mutius (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 65-73.

⁷⁰ Carsten Quesel, *Soziologie und die soziale Frage: Lorenz von Stein und die Entstehung der Gesellschaftswissenschaft in Deutschland* (Wiesbaden, 1989); Klaus Fischer, *Die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft: Gesellschaftsanalyse und Geschichtsphilosophie des Lorenz von Stein unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seines gesellschaftswissenschaftlichen Entwurfs* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990). See also the work on Stein by economists, for example Heinz Grosseckter, 'Die Staatsverschuldung aus der Sicht Lorenz von Steins', in *Studien zur Entwicklung der Ökonomischen Theorie IV [Schriften des Vereins für Sozialpolitik, 115]* (Berlin, 1990), pp. 19-55.

⁷¹ Stefan Koslowski, *Die Geburt des Sozialstaats aus dem Geist des deutschen Idealismus: Person und Gemeinschaft bei Lorenz von Stein* (Weinheim, 1989).

⁷² Stefan Koslowski, *Zur Philosophie von Wirtschaft und Recht: Lorenz von Stein im Spannungsfeld zwischen Idealismus, Historismus und Positivismus* (Berlin, 2005), p. 421.

published a number of French essays on Stein's legal ideas, and in 2002 edited the first French translation of Stein's work.⁷³ This adds to the already existing French scholarship on Stein.⁷⁴ Besides the attention in Britain and the US, Stein has also been taken up by Italian and Spanish scholars.⁷⁵ In addition, there has been a tradition of Stein scholarship in Japan since the late 1960s – a connection stemming from Stein's role as an advisor to the Meiji government in the later part of his life (which had made him a national celebrity). Kazuhiro Takii has published several books on Stein's impact in Japan in the late nineteenth century.⁷⁶

To turn to developments in Stein scholarship over the last decade, most notable is Michael Löbig's 2004 book on Stein's philosophical system. In a similar vein to Koslowski's examination, his *Persönlichkeit, Gesellschaft und Staat: Idealistische Voraussetzungen der Theorie Lorenz von Stein* focuses on Stein's concept of the person. Löbig traces the roots of Stein's approach in Kant and Hegel, before turning to a discussion of the nature of labour in Stein's account. Löbig's

⁷³ Norbert Waszek, 'L'Etat de Droit Social chez Lorenz von Stein', in Olivier Jouanjan (ed.), *Figures de l'Etat de droit: Le Rechtsstaat dans l'histoire intellectuelle et constitutionnelle de l'Allemagne* (Strasbourg, 2001), pp. 193-217; Norbert Waszek, 'Lorenz von Stein: Propagateur du droit français en Allemagne; « ambassadeur » officieux de la recherche juridique allemande en France', in Jean-François Kervégan and Heinz Mohnhaupt (eds), *Wechselseitige Beeinflussungen und Rezeptionen von Recht und Philosophie in Deutschland und Frankreich* (Frankfurt am Main, 2001), pp. 379-403; Lorenz Stein, *Le Concept de la société*, trans. by Marc Béghin (Grenoble, 2002). See also Norbert Waszek, 'Lorenz von Stein revisited', *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, 37 (1996), 378-84.

⁷⁴ Principal French works on Stein are Charles Rihs, 'Lorenz von Stein: Un jeune hégélien libéral à Paris (1840-1842)', *Revue d'histoire économique et sociale*, 47, 3 (1969), 404-46; Olivier Jouanjan, 'Lorenz von Stein et les contradictions du mouvement constitutionnel révolutionnaire (1789-1794)', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 328 (2002), 171-91.

⁷⁵ The main Italian works are F. De Sanctis, *Crisi e scienza: Lorenz Stein, alle origini della scienze sociale* (Napoli, 1976) and Sandro Chignola, 'Costituzione e potere sociale in Lorenz von Stein e Tocqueville', in G. Duso (ed.), *Il potere: Per la storia della filosofia politica moderna* (1999; Rome, 2001), pp. 341-61. A Spanish translation of parts of Stein's 1850 *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung* was published in 1957, see *Movimientos sociales y Monarquía*, trans. by Enrique Tierno Galván (Madrid, 1957). See also Jinú Carvajalino Guerrero, 'Solidaridad de intereses: la transformación del derecho social como dominación en Lorenz von Stein', in *Revista*, 46 (2013), 74-85. For the anglophone context, see also Warren Breckman's entry, 'Stein, Lorenz von (1815-1890)', in D. R. Woolf (ed.), *A Global Encyclopaedia of Historical Writing* (New York, 1998), p. 862.

⁷⁶ See Kazuhiro Takii, *Doitsu Kokkagaku to Meiji Kokusei--Shutain Kokkagaku no Kiseki* [The German science of state and the Meiji state system: Tracing Lorenz von Stein's science of state] (Kyoto, 1999); *The Meiji constitution: the Japanese experience of the West and the shaping of the modern state*, trans. by David Noble (Tokyo, 2007); *Ito Hirobumi: Japan's first prime minister and father of the Meiji constitution*, trans. by Takechi Manabu (New York, 2014).

conclusion is that Stein's critique of market society is inconsistent: the state is incapable of living up to the task Stein assigns to it, that of resolving the contradictions between members of society. As long as a capitalist social order stays in place, such conflicts will re-emerge in every generation. Stein's emphasis on the person can, according to Löbig, also been seen as too connected with the distinct cultural perspective of the *Bürgertum*. Nietzsche's critique of morality towards the end of Stein's life went hand in hand with the decline of bourgeois culture in a broader sense. The basis of Stein's thought thus reached an intellectual dead end within his own lifetime. This, according to Löbig, explains the limited success of Stein's philosophy.⁷⁷

Another important recent work has been Dirk Blasius's *Lorenz von Stein: Deutsche Gelehrtenpolitik in der Habsburger Monarchie* (2007) which examines Stein's journalistic writing and his attitude to central political issues in his time. It shows how much can be gained from paying attention to Stein's non-academic activities and seeing him in his broader historical context.⁷⁸ In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis Stein has also become relevant to wider public debate. His *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre und des Verwaltungsrechts* was republished by Utz Schliesky in 2010.⁷⁹ The newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* discussed Stein in a long article in 2013.⁸⁰ The most recent German book on Stein was published in summer 2014. The volume *Lorenz von Stein und der Sozialstaat* contains contributions by Stefan Koslowski, Dirk Blasius and Norbert Waszek – all longstanding commentators on Stein in Germany.⁸¹ Yet, it also points to new

⁷⁷ Michael Löbig, *Persönlichkeit, Gesellschaft und Staat: Idealistische Voraussetzungen der Theorie Lorenz von Steins* (Würzburg, 2004), pp. 138-39.

⁷⁸ Dirk Blasius, *Lorenz von Stein: Deutsche Gelehrtenpolitik in der Habsburger Monarchie* (Kiel, 2007).

⁷⁹ Lorenz von Stein, *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre und des Verwaltungsrechts: Mit Vergleichung der Literatur und Gesetzgebung von Frankreich, England und Deutschland*, ed. by Utz Schliesky (Tübingen, 2010).

⁸⁰ Ralph Bollmann, 'Der Mann der den Sozialstaat erfand', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 November 2013.

⁸¹ Stefan Koslowski (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein und der Sozialstaat [Staatsverständnisse, 63]*, ed. by Rüdiger Voigt (Baden-Baden, 2014).

directions in Stein scholarship. One of the essays, for example, explores Stein's impact in China, where there has recently been a surge of interest in his thought.⁸²

Themes and methodology

Despite the existence of a multitude of German publications on Lorenz Stein, significant facets of his work are still uncharted, or have been seriously misinterpreted and misunderstood. This dissertation is the first comprehensive intellectual biography of Lorenz Stein. Its goal is to examine Stein's thought in its historical context, and as a contribution to wider philosophical and political debates. Over the past thirty years – precisely the period in which English historiography of Stein has lain completely dormant – there has been great innovation in Anglophone scholarship in the study of political thought. The contextual approach argues that ideas need to be studied squarely in historical context. Every text of political philosophy should be primarily understood as an intervention made in the course of a specific debate.⁸³ The alternative, taking political concepts out of context and examining their general philosophical validity and contemporary applicability, is bound to critically distort the meaning of the ideas discussed. The goal of this thesis is to examine Stein from this methodological perspective and to connect his work with new debates that have been opened up as a result of this approach. As the preceding historiographical overview has shown, ahistorical treatments have been a central feature of German Stein scholarship. Although some German scholars have paid attention to Stein's historical environment, a comprehensive study of his political thought in historical and intellectual context does not exist, and the majority of his texts remain unexplored.

⁸² Daw-Yih Jang, Kuo-Ching Hsu and Stefan Koslowski, 'Lorenz von Stein und China', in *ibid.*, pp. 183-220. The article argues that, via Japan, Stein's ideas, influenced the constitutional debates in China in the early twentieth century and that this tradition is now being rediscovered, especially in Taiwan.

⁸³ Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics* (3 vols, Cambridge, 2002), I: *Regarding Method*. See especially p. 60 on the anachronistic pitfalls of intellectual biography.

The focus of my discussion is on Stein's relationship to socialist ideas. While he in the course of his life contributed to a range of academic and political discourses, his work on socialism represents his most continuous and original preoccupation. In that sense, my work responds to a further recent methodological innovation, namely the turn to study less well-known political writers. In order to gain new insights into the history of ideas it is necessary to depart from a small set of canonical thinkers and to study the writings of their contemporaries, who were often less prominent. It is these figures that usually challenge established notions about political concepts, and help approach the history of political thought from a more historically informed perspective.⁸⁴ My study of Stein is a contribution to this move, and hopes above all to counter the predominance of Karl Marx's vision of socialism in accounts of nineteenth-century political thought.

Stein's work on socialism had a dual function. He was on the one hand a historian of socialism (examining socialism's origins in a deep-seated class conflict in the late eighteenth-century and then tracing the changing shape of this ideas) and, on the other hand, a social theorist in his own right (developing his idea of 'science of society' and later a socially-spirited 'administrative science'). Stein's work thus offers a unique perspective on the history of socialism, and offers a crucial contribution to an alternative vision of nineteenth-century socialist thought that intellectual historians have begun to construct. Gareth Stedman Jones, for example, first challenged Marxist historiography when he revised the idea that socialism is inevitably an economic doctrine in his *Languages of Class* (1983).⁸⁵ This opened up

⁸⁴ The importance of this approach, especially with regards to overcoming the trauma of the Soviet experiment, has been well described by Jan-Werner Müller in 'The triumph of what (if anything)? Rethinking political ideologies and political institutions in twentieth-century Europe', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 14 (2009), 211-26 (p. 215): 'Thinkers who are often missing entirely from canons of academic twentieth-century European political thought, but who have a serious claim to having shaped political institutions (even if some of these institutions ultimately failed) should come to the fore and sometimes take centre stage [...] We ought to be more interested in what one might call 'in-between figures': statesmen-philosophers, public lawyers, constitutional advisors, 'bureaucrats with visions', philosophers close to political movements.'

⁸⁵ Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of class: Studies in English working class history, 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983).

a major new line of enquiry about the alternative content of socialism. In his recent work, Stedman Jones has emphasized the religious nature of much of early socialism, while other scholars have highlighted the philosophically and politically innovative vision of Karl Marx's so-far neglected contemporaries.⁸⁶ Lorenz Stein's vision of socialism (and its history) is a crucial addition to this restructuring of our picture of nineteenth-century socialist thought.

It is by recognizing that socialism in the nineteenth century consisted of a much wider set of ingredients than previously assumed that we can better understand its connection to the wider history of political thought. Socialist ideas did not appear in a vacuum, but were an outgrowth of the long-standing debate about the relationship between politics and economics that dated back to at least the seventeenth century, and that has arguably been the defining debate of the modern political tradition. As Istvan Hont put it:

Hobbes is often taken to be the first and greatest of the early modern political theorists. Yet there is no place for an economy in his politics in any important sense. It is practically pure politics. In contrast, Karl Marx's visionary theory of postcapitalism has no use for politics at all [...] For Marx, the ultimate goal was a pure exchange economy of genuine human utilities.⁸⁷

Lorenz Stein – with his elaborate theory of state socialism that was rooted in Cameralism – occupies a central place in this story of the changing relationship between politics and economics. Yet his contribution to this important debate has so far not been explored.

⁸⁶ Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Introduction', in Charles Fourier, *The theory of the four movements*, ed. by Gareth Stedman Jones and Ian Patterson (Cambridge, 1996), pp. vii-xxvi; Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Religion and the origins of socialism', in Ira Katznelson and Gareth Stedman Jones (eds), *Religion and the Political Imagination* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 171-89. Other works I have in mind are Warren Breckman, *Marx, the young Hegelians, and the origins of radical social theory* (Cambridge, 1999) and Douglas Moggach, *The philosophy and politics of Bruno Bauer* (Cambridge, 2003).

⁸⁷ Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of trade: International competition and the nation-state in historical perspective* (London, 2005), p. 2. See also John Dunn (ed.), *The economic limits to modern politics* (Cambridge, 1990).

Stein's work on socialism was deeply entwined with his nationalism. A broader theme I engage with is therefore the distinctly German character of Stein's thought. The German academic approach to politics that was predominant until the late nineteenth century, and that Stein was a part of, remains relatively obscure.⁸⁸ Against the long-standing commonplace that nineteenth-century Germany was an apolitical nation that did not produce any original political ideas, an added goal of my project is to highlight that Lorenz Stein was part of a larger group of intelligent *Staatsdenker* in nineteenth-century Germany who were concerned to grasp the nature of modern politics. By investigating the intricate relationship between nationalism and socialism in Stein's thought, my work aims to help move even further away from the one-dimensional history of socialism that has been predominant.

Another wider topic of this work is the nature of the revolutions of 1848 and their impact on intellectual history and political thought. Long dismissed as a 'decade of reaction', the 1850s have recently returned to the attention of historians, who are recognizing the significance of 1848 in inspiring new trends in political thought.⁸⁹ Like no other figure, Lorenz Stein captured this intellectual transition. Stein had prefigured many of the developments of 1848 years before the revolution, and his assessment of how the failure of the revolutions changed the agenda of the socialist project – shifting its focus to administration – proved to be visionary. Against the Marxist commonplace that the mid-century turning point in socialist theory consisted

⁸⁸ It has only relatively recently been illuminated by Wilhelm Bleek's *Geschichte der Politikwissenschaft in Deutschland* (Munich, 2001). See also Bleek's essay on Stein, 'Lorenz von Stein (1815-1890)', in Bernd Heidenreich (ed.), *Politische Theorien des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 2002), pp. 587-604. Another important work on the subject is David F. Lindenfeld, *The Practical imagination: The German sciences of state in the nineteenth century* (London, 1997). For the, similarly neglected, English context see Stefan Collini, Donald Winch and John Burrow (eds), *That noble science of politics: A study in nineteenth-century intellectual history* (Cambridge, 1983). On the impact of the German tradition of legal scholarship on political thought in the early twentieth century see Duncan Kelly, *The state of the political: Conceptions of politics and the state in the thought of Max Weber, Carl Schmitt and Franz Neumann* (Oxford, 2003).

⁸⁹ See Christopher Clark, 'After 1848: The European revolution in government', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, XXII (2012), 171-97.

in a shift from ‘utopia’ to ‘science’, Stein’s writings offer a more nuanced and insightful account of the way 1848 transformed socialist thinking.⁹⁰

My study of Lorenz Stein, in short, elucidates a set of issues centred on creating a more diverse understanding of nineteenth-century socialist thought. For that, it uses a biographical lens, tracing Stein’s intellectual development up to 1872, the period that is most relevant to Stein’s preoccupation with socialism (after that, his significance lay mostly elsewhere). Throughout this time, I examine both the forces that influenced Stein and the impact his ideas had on others. Rather than critiquing them on a philosophical level, my goal is to make sense of the genesis and impact of Stein’s ideas as thoroughly as possible. Although it was not without ample wider resonances, I argue that Stein’s political philosophy – which defies classification as either radical or conservative – was ultimately locked in his personal intellectual trajectory. The only way to make sense of Stein’s writings and his political visions is thus to not only examine them in historical and philosophical context, but also trace how they were shaped by his life experiences. It was no coincidence, for example, that Stein was only able to imagine a socialist society within the framework of a strong state. Throughout his life, Stein was paid by the state, and generous state-funded financial support had in his early years been crucial to shaping his life and his career. Equally, Stein’s account of a transformed meaning of socialism after 1848 is only comprehensible in the terms of his own experience of the revolution, that forced him to retreat to a subtler and less publicly recognizable form of ‘socialism’.

Beyond that, the biographical approach also allows addressing the metahistorical issues that are increasingly moving to the attention of historians of political thought.⁹¹ Because of his unique position as simultaneously a social theorist and a historian of socialism, Stein elucidates in a particularly striking manner the

⁹⁰ This vision of the development of nineteenth-century socialism was put forward in the pamphlet *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1880). See Frederick Engels, ‘Socialism: utopian and scientific’, in MECW, XXIV (1989): 281-325.

⁹¹ I have in mind the research pursued as part of the ‘A Cultural History of the History of Political Thought’ project at CRASSH, Cambridge.

manifold cultural and political factors that shape not only how political ideas are articulated, but also how they are received and studied. On the one hand, I explore the ways in which Stein wrote the history of socialist thought. I show how Stein was able to shape this yet unwritten history, and that the historical classification and narrative he presented were not always uncontested. On the other hand, I examine why Stein as a theorist himself was not more successful. I pursue the question of which factors led him not to end up as a canonical writer on socialism or state theory, which he arguably had every chance of becoming when he first started publishing on socialist thought in the 1840s.

As source material this thesis relies predominantly on the published writings of Stein and his contemporaries. My aim has been to discuss the majority of the works that Stein produced in the period I cover, as far as they are broadly relevant to his preoccupation with socialism. Most of these pieces have not been discussed in an Anglophone work before, and many have so far also been ignored by German commentators on Stein. In addition to his formal publications, I have consulted Stein's correspondences and other biographical documents that are reprinted in the secondary literature. The major archival source I used is Stein's library, preserved as part of his *Nachlass* at the Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek in Stein's hometown Kiel. This is the collection Stein owned at the time of his death in 1890. While it is in many cases impossible to establish when exactly he acquired or read individual books, it is nevertheless a crucial source for reconstructing Stein's intellectual context.

Findings

The thesis consists of five chapters that follow Stein's life and thought chronologically, providing a clear picture of his intellectual trajectory in wider historical context. Following a brief sketch of his family background and childhood, the first chapter focuses on the period from the time Stein entered university in 1835.

I examine the various philosophical influences and personal experiences that led Stein to write his first book, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* in 1842. I argue that the work's argument was a crucial intervention in German intellectual debate at the time. It managed to channel the mounting interest in socialism among German intellectuals and to make it directly relevant to their country's contemporary political situation.

The importance of Stein's first book lay not least in the manifold reactions it provoked. The second chapter surveys the reception of the work by different political groups and argues that it inspired the birth of a radical tradition of socialist thinking in Germany. A socialist discourse flourished in mid-1840s Germany that envisaged a range of grass-root initiatives in order to bring about a more harmonious society, and that explicitly rejected Stein's advocacy of centralized statist measures. At the same time, prominent scholars of *Staatswissenschaft* took up and extended Stein's argument. These developments forced Stein to further engage with socialism on a theoretical level, and his reflections culminated in the revised second edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*, published in late 1847.

The third chapter addresses Stein's experience and analysis of the 1848 revolutions in France and Germany. I argue that in response to the experience of the revolution – in which Stein was personally involved on behalf of his home duchy Schleswig – he developed a deeply insightful argument about the impact of 1848. In his work of 1850, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich*, Stein discussed the ways in which the revolution had transformed socialist thought, and claimed that it relocated the focus of the socialist movement to the administrative level of the state, instead of continuing the fight for constitutional reform, which had proven futile. In the second half of the chapter, I address Stein's analysis of 1848 in Germany. Stein argued that the intellectual changes brought about by 1848 would allow Germany to assume the role of Europe's future intellectual and political leader, as the transition to administration suited its national temperament and intellectual tradition.

Stein's dismissal from his professorship, owing to his involvement in Schleswig-Holstein's independence movement, was a significant break in his life and career, forcing him to relocate to Vienna in 1855. Many commentators have claimed that Stein consequently abandoned his interest in socialism. By contrast, in chapter 4 I argue that Stein held on to his project of creating a 'science of society' in the 1850s. By locating Stein's thinking in the context of the wider changes in political culture in this period, I show that he managed to find a new outlet for his socialist ambitions. These were in tune with wider cultural changes of this period that saw the subtle transition of radical ideas into mainstream politics. Stein's work from the 1850s reveals striking conceptual continuity with his earlier concern for the social dynamic. Stein's turn towards 'administrative science' was thus an attempt to find answers to the social problems he had outlined in his earlier work.

The fifth and final chapter analyses Stein's experience in the 1860s, the decade that saw the rise of a social democratic movement in Germany. I argue that while there were few formal connections between Stein and the German socialist activists and reformers, Stein intellectually remained closely engaged in a socialist project. His multivolume work *Verwaltungslehre* (1865-1869) can be read as the ultimate articulation of a 'science of society', the project he had first outlined in 1842. The book described how the totality of the state's institutions could be imbued with a 'social spirit' and thus gradually bring about a more egalitarian and harmonious society. The reasons Stein was increasingly misunderstood and marginalized by his contemporaries in this period were manifold. On the one hand, new intellectual trends, such as the rise of the historical school of economics, rivalled Stein's still deeply Hegelian vision. On the other hand, the *grossdeutsche* frame of Stein's socialist project undermined his ambitions in this period. The emergence of a united, but *kleindeutsch*, German state, from which Stein – now an Austrian – was excluded, can explain why he did not have a more lasting impact on the socialist tradition.

Lorenz Stein's story shows that various contingent factors – many of which were connected to personality traits or university politics – shaped what came to be understood as the idea of socialism in the nineteenth century. What Stein's writings also highlight is that socialism was not a short-lived experiment, but a phenomenon that was deeply rooted in the European intellectual tradition. Given this continuity in the history of socialist thought, Stein's insights and dilemmas potentially also resonate beyond his age. If there is one particular insight from Stein's trajectory that is worth calling to mind today, it is the way that socialism subtly changed its shape after 1848. To Stein, the administrative implementation of socialist values in the 1850s and 1860s did not represent a betrayal of the socialist project. Quite the opposite, he saw in the developments already underway in his time a move towards a long-term socialist future. With their manifold public administrative institutions, the majority of today's European states (and to an extent even the US) would, in Stein's terms, be considered profoundly socialist.

Yet, after 1848 Stein was too cautious to call his project 'socialism'. It may be that, in a comparable way, the impact of 1989 still prevents us from recognizing that socialist ideas have had a more profound impact on our society than we are willing to admit. A goal of this dissertation is thus to offer a broader perspective on the idea of socialism, especially in the nineteenth century, but also, obliquely, in our own day.

CHAPTER 1

Lorenz Stein's youth and intellectual background, 1835-42

In the autumn of 1842, the twenty-seven-year old Lorenz Stein published a book entitled *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*.¹ Written over the course of only a few months, it outlined the subject that would occupy him for the rest of his life. The work surveyed the different strands of French socialist thought that had emerged since the beginning of the nineteenth century, explained their relevance to contemporary Germany, and suggested ways in which German intellectuals could respond to this phenomenon. It had a profound effect on German intellectual life and made the previously unknown Stein, who had only recently completed his doctorate, famous across the German Confederation over-night. Two questions arise: why did the young legal scholar Stein take up socialism as the subject of his first book? And what led him to make his specific argument, namely to suggest that only a form of distinctly German state socialism represented an adequate response to this recent phenomenon?

This chapter traces Stein's life and intellectual experiences up to the publication of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*. It argues that Stein was brought to the study of socialism by a combination of contingent events and experiences in his early life as well as the broader intellectual climate in Germany in the first half of the nineteenth century. When Stein entered university in 1835, various intellectual movements in Germany were beginning to discover socialist ideas. Given his academic training, especially the study of Johann Gottlob Fichte's and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's thought, it was virtually inevitable that Stein developed an interest in socialist ideas in the early 1840s. Yet the precise way in which Stein came to address socialism in his book was highly contingent upon both his personal

¹ L. Stein, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs: Ein Beitrag zur Zeitgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1842).

experiences and a random trajectory of events in the early 1840s. Nevertheless, it managed to accomplish something very significant: Stein's book contributed to overcoming a major intellectual impasse which his countrymen had found themselves in by the early 1840s by explaining how exactly socialist ideas mattered to Germany.

Stein's education

Lorenz Stein's family background had a significant impact on his philosophical outlook and the course of his academic career. He was born as Wasmer Jakob Lorentz in the village of Barby, near the town Eckernförde in the Duchy of Schleswig, then under Danish rule, on 15 November 1815.² His mother, Anna Juliana Elisabeth Helms, came from a well-established local family, but her life was tainted by scandal. Her first two children were born outside marriage. In 1803 she married the sergeant Carl Friedrich Stein, but their marriage broke up. She then had two more illegitimate children. When Lorenz was born in 1815, it was at first unclear who his father was. Lorentz Jacob von Wasmer, a divorced nobleman and lieutenant in the Danish army, lived with Stein's mother during Stein's childhood, and a few years after his birth, eventually acknowledged fatherhood for Lorenz Jacob Stein, as he came to be called following his christening. Despite his mother's scandal-tinged background, the young Stein grew up in a relatively stable home, with two older sisters and a younger brother.

Stein came of age in the atmosphere of the Prussian reforms of the early nineteenth century. In the wake of Prussia's defeat by Napoleon in 1806, it embarked upon a comprehensive programme of reform led by Karl Freiherr von Stein and Karl August Fürst von Hardenberg. These reforms aimed to modernize Prussia's administration and encompassed not only administration, but also the military, as

² All subsequent biographical information is, unless otherwise stated, drawn from Werner Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein: Ein Beitrag zur Biographie, zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins und zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Eckernförde, 1956), p. 10.

well as educational and social reform. Serfdom was abolished and craftsmen were emancipated from the constraints of guild membership, allowing a greater mobility of labour.³ This was a central experience for the young Stein. Although Prussia for the most part of the nineteenth century continued to be governed by conservative monarchical rulers who had no interest in democratization, these measures demonstrated that the state was interested in popular reform, and gave rise to the widely-held notion that Prussia was capable of responding to the challenges of modernity. It was this sentiment that arguably ingrained in Stein a deep-seated respect and admiration for the state.⁴

From a very early age, Stein also benefited from various forms of state welfare. When he was six years old, Stein was admitted to the Christians-Pflegeheim, a pioneering educational institution established by the Danish King Frederick as an experimental space for the Bell-Lancaster educational method. Although the school had been founded as a charity institution for retired soldiers and their families and housed many orphans, Stein's father sought his son's admission because of his noted academic abilities. Under the rigorous regime of the Christians-Pflegeheim, the young Stein flourished. When in 1831 King Frederick IV of Denmark visited the school, its brightest student, Stein, was introduced to the monarch. Deeply impressed with his academic ambitions, Frederick granted Stein a royal stipend which allowed him to attend a Latin school in Flensburg, where he also excelled.⁵ Stein would always remember his earliest mentors, and dedicated his doctoral dissertation to his teachers at the Pflegeheim.

In his further education, Stein continued to rely on public financial support. A stipend from the city of Flensburg for his performance in the *Abitur* enabled Stein to attend university. Stein matriculated at the law faculty of the University of Kiel in

³ On the reform era see Reinhart Koselleck, *Preußen zwischen Reform und Revolution: Allgemeines Landrecht, Verwaltung und soziale Bewegung von 1791 bis 1848* (Stuttgart, 1967).

⁴ See Dirk Blasius, 'Lorenz von Stein und Preußen', in *Historische Zeitschrift*, 212, 2 (1971), 339-62. Blasius argues that the Prussia of the Reform era remained Stein's ideal of a state throughout his life.

⁵ Ernst von Stein, 'Brief an Carl Th. von Inama-Sternegg über L. von Stein', in Carl Theodor von Inama-Sternegg, *Staatswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen* (Leipzig, 1903), pp. 52-56 (p. 53).

1835. As his grant was meagre, and Stein could not rely on his family for financial assistance, he regularly entered essay competitions to win much-needed extra funds.⁶ His outstanding performance in the first part of his degree, for example, earned Stein a prize that allowed him to go on a study visit to the University of Jena. Later travel scholarships enabled Stein to spend time in Berlin and in Paris, trips that were crucial to his intellectual formation. It is obvious that Stein would have not become who he was – ultimately a successful professor – had it not been for state-sponsored stipends and other types of public assistance. This reliance on public welfare very likely inspired Stein's later ideas on social mobility and equality of opportunity that were at the heart of his political thought.⁷

Stein's loyalty to the state was notably much stronger than any religious allegiance. Although he came from a very Protestant area, religion appears not to have played a major role in his life. His complete lack of interest in religion is striking in an age in which the majority of Germans were deeply religious and the country witnessed the phenomenon of Protestant revivalism and a growing Catholic political movement. Religion was central to the identity of most of Stein's contemporaries, and also informed the ideas of the country's major political thinkers at the time. Friedrich Julius Stahl, for example, in his influential work *Philosophie des Rechts* (1830-7) argued for the importance of upholding Christianity as a public faith given in order to preserve stability in the Prussian monarchy.⁸ Despite covering over the course of his life an impressive array of topics in his writings, Stein not once made an extended statement on religion, and it also does not appear to have played any major role in his private life. At the end of his school years, Stein briefly considered becoming a theologian, but only because this would have been an

⁶ See Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 22.

⁷ This point has been acknowledged by a number of commentators. See for example Norbert Waszek, 'L'état de droit social chez Lorenz von Stein', in Olivier Jouanjan (ed.), *Figures de l'état de droit: Le Rechtsstaat dans l'histoire intellectuelle et constitutionnelle de l'Allemagne* (Strasbourg, 2001), 193-217 (p. 216).

⁸ Friedrich Julius Stahl, *Die Philosophie des Rechts nach geschichtlicher Ansicht* (2 vols, Heidelberg, 1830-37).

inexpensive option. He quickly abandoned the plan in favour of law – ultimately as a way to study the state.⁹

Despite its small size (barely 200 students) and provincial location, the University of Kiel provided an intellectually stimulating environment for the young Stein. During his studies, he was introduced to the major intellectual controversies of the time. The law faculty boasted several renowned professors, and a few years before Stein's arrival had nearly managed to convince Friedrich Carl von Savigny to take up a professorship.¹⁰ Savigny was one of the leading representatives of the at time deeply influential, yet controversial, historical school of law.¹¹ It had originated in the early nineteenth century and began to flourish after Barthold Georg Niebuhr, one of Germany's experts on ancient legal sources, discovered in 1816 a copy of the *Institutes of Gaius* in a library in Verona.¹² This gave renewed impetus to the use of Roman sources. Roman law had been officially abandoned after the demise of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, yet retained major practical significance in Germany, which in the absence of political unity also lacked a codified legal system.

There were a number of reasons to oppose the historical school. One of them was its proponents' defence of the legitimacy of private property, which they derived from an account of the *ager publicus* and the gradual evolution of ownership in the Roman texts.¹³ But the historical school was also controversial on wider methodological grounds. Its underlying ideas was an opposition to abstract reasoning in favour of reliance on historic wisdom and tradition. Savigny claimed that 'the

⁹ Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 20.

¹⁰ Erich Hofmann, Rudolf Jaeger and F.A. Schmidt-Künsemüller (eds), *Geschichte der Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel, 1665-1965* (6 vols, Neumünster, 1965-9), III (1965): Erich Döhring, *Geschichte der juristischen Fakultät 1665-1965*, p. 106.

¹¹ See Olivier Jouanjan, *Une histoire de la pensée juridique en Allemagne (1800-1918): Idéalisme et conceptualisme chez les juristes allemands du XIX^e siècle* (Paris, 2005).

¹² See Cristina Vano, *Der Gaius der Historischen Rechtsschule: Eine Geschichte der Wissenschaft vom römischen Recht* (Frankfurt am Main, 2008), pp. 168-69.

¹³ This was the reason why Karl Marx, for example, launched an attack on the historical school in the early 1840s. See Norman Levine, 'The German historical school of law and the origins of historical materialism', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 48 (1987), 431-51 (especially p. 444).

entire legal science is nothing else but the history of law'.¹⁴ To those dissatisfied with the Prussian state, this presented an obstacle to change, and a critique of the historical school of law therefore had important political implications. As Prussia at the time lacked a written constitution, political possibilities were anchored solely in existing laws. Many critics of the historical school called for the introduction of a German legal code that would put an end to the use of outdated Roman sources. This call for codification was an important early expression of nationalism in Germany.¹⁵

Several of Stein's professors at Kiel were critics of the historical school. Georg Christian Burchardi and Nikolaus Falck were concerned in their lectures to demonstrate the practical applicability of law and to debate over the limitations of the historical method.¹⁶ While Stein studied the arguments of the historical school in depth and acquired familiarity with this prominent approach, he thus from the start had a critical perspective on it, and in the process also absorbed important nationalist arguments. Stein's university years coincided in a wider sense with the rise of nationalism in Germany. The Hambacher Fest, an assembly of radical students who presented demands for a united Germany, took place in 1832. In Schleswig, nationalist sentiments were additionally stimulated by centuries of Danish rule which was perceived as oppressive. As an active member of the *Burschenschaft* Albertina, Stein was as a student soon introduced to radical nationalist thought.¹⁷

Stein was also exposed to another radical tradition during his university years: Hegelianism. Arguably the most influential political thinker during the first half of the nineteenth century, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel articulated a revolutionary view of the state and the nature of historical development that attracted a major following. Stein probably first learned about Hegel in Johann Friedrich Martin Kierulff's history of law lectures. Moreover, the Hegelian legal scholar

¹⁴ Quoted in Vano, *Gaius der Historischen Rechtsschule*, p. 45: '[die] ganze Rechtswissenschaft selbst nichts anderes ist, als Rechtsgeschichte'.

¹⁵ Michael John, *Politics and the law in late nineteenth-century Germany: The origins of the Civil Code* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 19-20.

¹⁶ Döhring, 'Geschichte der juristischen Fakultät', pp. 108, 114.

¹⁷ Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 24.

Johannes Christiansen lectured on the philosophy of law during Stein's time in Kiel.¹⁸ The main idea that Stein would have encountered in these lectures was Hegel's notion of law as the embodiment of reason. What was radical about Hegel's philosophy was that it denied the possibility of abstract reason and truth, claiming that history went through stages of development that lead to a continuously higher stage of reason. By implication, the legal system at a given age could only be as advanced as the age itself. This idea would be central to Stein's political thinking.

Stein's intellectual and political outlook was also significantly shaped by his stay at the University of Jena between the spring of 1837 and the spring of 1838. In Jena, Stein focused on his philosophical studies, and attended the lectures of Heinrich Luden, a radical philosopher, political activist, and a former student of Johann Gottlob Fichte.¹⁹ Luden left a strong impression on the young Stein, and most importantly, introduced him to Fichte's ideas – an important early German articulation of 'state socialism'.²⁰ In *Der geschlossene Handelsstaat* (1800) Fichte had argued that in order for citizens to enjoy liberty, the state had to provide labour and subsistence. As foreign trade and competition had the potential to create 'commercial anarchy' and undermine these liberties, Fichte proposed that trade should only take place among nations who complied with this premise of guaranteed work and supply.²¹ In Fichte's writings, Stein thus encountered a powerful, nationalist, argument for the reliance on the state, which was notably not opposed to property ownership.²²

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁹ Cf. Joachim Bauer et al. (eds), *Die Universität Jena in der frühen Neuzeit* (Heidelberg, 2008), pp. 74. On Luden's impact on Stein see Heinz Taschke, *Lorenz von Steins nachgelassene staatsrechtliche und rechtsphilosophische Vorlesungsmanuskripte: Zugleich ein Beitrag zu seiner Biographie und zu seinem Persönlichkeitsbegriff* (Heidelberg, 1985), p. 232.

²⁰ See the early work by Marianne Weber, *Fichte's Sozialismus und sein Verhältniss zur Marx'schen Doktrin* (Tübingen, 1900).

²¹ Isaac Nakhimovsky, *The closed commercial state: Perpetual peace and commercial society from Rousseau to Fichte* (Princeton, NJ, 2011).

²² See Nedim Nomer, 'Fichte and the idea of liberal socialism', in *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 13, 1 (2005), 53-73, which offers a useful re-assessment of Fichte as socialist.

Several of the intellectual influences to which Stein had been introduced in his early years came together in his doctoral thesis in 1839-40. Supervised by Nikolaus Falck, the work was concerned with the history of the Danish civil trial. Subtitled 'a contribution to comparative legal science', it was written in opposition to the historical school, and also displayed what would later be Stein's distinct intellectual method: an international comparative approach inspired by a Hegelian belief in historical progress. In the introduction to his thesis, Stein stated that, in contrast to the historical school, he wanted to write about existing conditions. The comparative approach allowed him to study 'not the law of *one* nation, but of *all* nations simultaneously'.²³ Stein used a deeply Hegelian argument to explain why he thought the study of foreign legal system was deeply valuable. Legal practitioners often found themselves confronted by unprecedented situations. In such cases, it was useful to have foreign examples to draw on. Eventually the law makers would be influenced by such new practices, and thus real political change would take place. The Danish civil trial procedure was more praxis-oriented and less academic than the German one, and thus provided an interesting case study.

The deeper philosophical point of such comparative studies, Stein made clear, was to understand the reasons why there were different legal systems. As the historical 'stage of development' manifested itself in more ways than just in the nature of the legal system, by studying different legal systems one was able to arrive at insights into the dynamic nature of states and peoples in a more general sense. Stein enthusiastically concluded that the method of comparative legal science allowed one to reach the very 'climax of knowledge'.²⁴ Stein's first book-length work thus already displayed the ambition that characterized his later writing. The notion that it was possible to gain insights into historical reason through an

²³ Lorenz Stein, *Die Geschichte des dänischen Civilprocesses und das heutige Verfahren: Als Beitrag zu einer vergleichenden Rechtswissenschaft* (Kiel, 1841), p. xi: '[nicht das] Recht eines Volkes, sondern *aller* Völker zugleich'.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xxvii: 'Höhepunkt alles Wissens'.

international comparative approach would also be essential to the study of socialism Stein wrote two years later.

The background of *Staatswissenschaft*

Central to Lorenz Stein's intellectual formation was also another distinctly German philosophical and academic tradition: *Staatswissenschaft*. Like all law students of his generation, Stein had been required to study a range of subjects alongside his main degree, including history and statistics.²⁵ This interdisciplinary approach was a legacy of the eighteenth-century Cameralist tradition in Germany, that in Stein's age lived on in the faculties of *Staatswissenschaft*. Although this was not a subject that was actually taught at Kiel in Stein's time (he would campaign for its introduction when he returned to the university as a lecturer in the 1840s), the idea behind it was so pervasive across Germany that also in Kiel lawyers needed to be equipped with a broader knowledge to be considered suitable for the profession.²⁶ Through this tradition, a distinctly German conception of welfare politics entered Stein's political imagination.

The cornerstone of the Cameralist conviction was that a good king was characterized by benevolence for his people, which he manifested through material provisions and a generous system of public welfare.²⁷ Rooted in the thought of Christian Thomasius, Christian Wolff and Samuel von Pufendorf, this system received the most thorough philosophical justification in the writings of Johann

²⁵ Döhring, 'Geschichte der juristischen Fakultät', p. 131.

²⁶ See Keith Tribe, *Governing economy: The reformation of German economic discourse 1750-1840* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 35. And more broadly: Wilhelm Bleek, *Von der Kameralausbildung zum Juristenprivileg: Studium, Prüfung und Ausbildung der höheren Beamten des allgemeinen Verwaltungsdienstes in Deutschland im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1972).

²⁷ A useful introduction to the meaning of *Staatswissenschaft* is Klaus-Gert Lutterbeck, 'Christian Wolffs philosophische Staatswissenschaft', in Jürgen Stolzenberg and Oliver-Pierre Rudolph (eds), *Christian Wolff und die europäische Aufklärung: Akten des 1. Internationalen Christian-Wolff-Kongresses, Halle, 4-8 April 2004* (5 vols, Hildesheim, 2007-10), III (2007): 195-215.

Heinrich Gottlob in the eighteenth century.²⁸ In *Grundriß einer Guten Regierung* (1759), Justi argued that good government had to be goal-oriented, seeking to best fulfil the needs of the citizens.²⁹ In order to do so, government had to have access to a reliable stream of income, and an important facet of Cameralist science was the quest to make public administration as efficient as possible and to generate revenue for the state.³⁰

As an academic discipline *Kameralwissenschaft* was first introduced at the universities of Halle and Frankfurt in the 1720s.³¹ Over the coming decades, it became a significant intellectual tradition in Germany. The writings of Christian Wolff and his students came to be, as one historian has put it, ‘a good of general knowledge and contributed to a supra-confessional national consciousness.’³² *Staatswissenschaft*, as it was called in the nineteenth century, was a discipline that lay at the crossroads of theory and practice.³³ On the one hand, it was a practical subject, specifically designed for future lawyers and administrators. On the other hand, it was considered essential that those in charge of the state receive a rigorous philosophical education, and learned about the ‘ethical’ aspects of politics. What the Cameralist background further meant was that ‘economics’ did not exist as a separate discipline, but was connected to a study of *Polizeiwissenschaft* (police science)

²⁸ See Hans-Christoph Schmidt am Busch, ‘Cameralism as “political metaphysics”: human nature, the state, and natural law in the thought of Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi’, *The European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 16 (2009), 409-30.

²⁹ Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, *Grundriß einer guten Regierung* (Frankfurt, 1759).

³⁰ See Andre Wakefield in *The disordered police state: German Cameralism as science and practice* (Chicago, 2009), p. 6.

³¹ Erik Grimmer-Solem, *The rise of historical economics and social reform in Germany 1864-1894* (Oxford, 2003), p. 40.

³² See Hasso Hofmann, ‘Christian Wolff’s *Deutsche Politik*’, in Stolzenberg and Rudolph (eds), *Christian Wolff und die europäische Aufklärung*, I (2007): 205-20 (p. 219): ‘Durch Wolff und dann noch mehr durch die populäre Philosophie seiner Schüler, wurde die Philosophie einschließlich der *Politik* [...] als Teil der deutschen Geistesleben zu einem Gut allgemeiner Bildung und trug zu einem überkonfessionellen Nationalbewußtsein bei. Zugleich prägte sie in nachhaltiger Weise das ethische Staatsverständnis der preußischen Bürokratie.’

³³ Wakefield in *The disordered police state* argues that Cameralism was mostly an academic and political ideology that through a discourse of orderliness sought to mask the mismanagement and disorder that characterized local government in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Germany in reality. This claim does not, however, diminish the pervasive intellectual force of Cameralism at the time.

which did not yet have its modern meaning of ‘policing’, but encompassed a range of administrative measures, including domestic politics, and *Kammersachen*, the field distinctly concerned with running a royal household. Notably these subjects were in the eighteenth century taught in the philosophy faculties, and only later moved to the law faculties.³⁴

Philosophically, Cameralism, with its quest for collective happiness, came increasingly under attack from the late 1700s.³⁵ Immanuel Kant dismissed this tradition as paternalistic and relocated the goal of politics to freedom, instead of happiness. At around the same time, Adam Smith’s philosophy, though slow to spread in Germany precisely because of the strong tradition of Cameralism, also presented an alternative model for thinking about the role of economics in society.³⁶ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel’s political philosophy in the early nineteenth century was ultimately an intervention in this wider debate. His *Elements of the philosophy of law* (1820) was subtitled *Outline of Natural Law and State Science*. As Riedel writes:

The two phrases ‘natural law’ and ‘political science’ in the subtitle designate two disciplines of pre-Hegelian metaphysical thinking, of which the one belonging to modern Europe was developed principally in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while the other is found in the old European tradition under the name ‘politics’ and had a fixed place in school philosophy down to the time of Wolff.³⁷

Hegel transformed the German academic outlook on the state by introducing the concept of ‘civil society’, a unit between ‘the family’ and ‘the state’. ‘Civil society’ was the sphere of ‘subjective freedom’, selfish economic activity, which was essential to self-fulfilment. In order to preserve order, however, the state acquired an

³⁴ See Keith Tribe, *Strategies of economic order: German economic discourse, 1750-1950* (Cambridge, 1995), Chapter 2. ‘Cameralism and the science of government’, p. 13. Cf. Grimmer-Solem, *The rise of historical economics*, p. 41.

³⁵ Douglas Moggach, ‘Post-Kantian perfectionism’, in Douglas Moggach (ed.), *Politics, religion and art: Divisions and debate in the Hegelian school* (Evanston, IL, 2011), pp. 179-200.

³⁶ Tribe, *Strategies of economic order*, p. 25.

³⁷ Manfred Riedel, *Between tradition and revolution: The Hegelian transformation of political philosophy*, trans. by Walter Wright (Cambridge, 1984), p. 162.

even more important function as the location of reason, and all other higher goods.³⁸ Alongside the dialectical method he had already encountered in his law lectures, this aspect of Hegelian philosophy – the idea of a social sphere that was of equal importance to the state – would become crucial to Stein’s political thinking.

There has been extensive debate regarding the extent to which Hegel was an early theorist of the social question.³⁹ His account of ‘civil society’ seemed, on the one hand, to incorporate modern economic ideas into the German tradition of political thought. On the other hand, the Smithian model of unregulated exchange was significantly modified in Hegel’s system by an emphasis on *Polizei* and other administrative institutions. The impact of Kant’s ethics was also reflected in his ideas, as the notion of ‘civil society’ was clearly distinct from technical and materialistic conceptions of stately happiness and social achievement.⁴⁰ While Hegel addressed issues such as the formation of an impoverished class (*Pöbel*), the goal of his philosophy was ultimately not to bring about a better form of social and economic organization. Instead, his ambitions were still metaphysical, concerned with creating *Sittlichkeit* (ethical life).⁴¹ As Stedman Jones writes, ‘Hegel’s *Pöbel* was introduced not as the victim of economic and social change, but rather as the penalty for the dismantling of the moral and juridical framework necessary to civil society.’⁴² Hegel’s thought thus remained locked in an eighteenth-century philosophical system, and it was left to later thinkers – especially Stein – to truly adjust this philosophical tradition to the nineteenth century.

Despite the growing philosophical controversy surrounding Cameralist ideas, *Staatswissenschaft* remained an important academic discipline until later in the nineteenth century. Student numbers peaked in the 1830s, and when Stein entered

³⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the philosophy of right* [1820], ed. by Allen W. Wood, trans. by H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge, 1991).

³⁹ See Gareth Stedman Jones, ‘Hegel and the economics of civil society’, in S. Kaviraj and S. Khilnani (eds), *Civil society: history and possibilities* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 105-30.

⁴⁰ Cf. Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 107.

⁴¹ Stedman Jones, ‘Hegel and the economics of civil society’, pp. 111, 114.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 128.

university, a debate about the modern purpose of *Staatswissenschaft* was in full swing.⁴³ A fellow Schleswig-Holsteiner, Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann, had in 1835 published *Die Politik, auf den Grund und das Maaß der gegebenen Zustände zurückgeführt*, one of the most striking nineteenth-century examples of Aristotelian political thought.⁴⁴ Arguably the ‘most influential book on politics in the pre-1848 period’, it used recent empirical examples to illustrate the practice of good politics.⁴⁵ Another significant work in *Staatswissenschaft* was published in 1832-33 by Robert von Mohl, later an important mentor for Stein. His *Polizei-Wissenschaft nach den Grundsätzen des Rechtsstaates* reflected on the transition in the meaning of ‘Policey’ towards ‘policing’ and formulated the vision of a *Rechtsstaat*, a state rooted in laws (which was in many ways represented a departure from the Cameralist tradition).⁴⁶ Mohl was notably also one of the first German academics to pick up the topic of proletarian social grievances. In 1835 he published an essay that explored the consequences of industrialization.⁴⁷

The German debate on *Staatswissenschaft* would be at the heart of Stein’s argument about socialism. Having dismissed the historical school, it was the language of the ‘sciences of the state’ which he adopted when he began his independent academic work. What Stein understood *Staatswissenschaft* to be emerges most from an essay he wrote at a later point. He wrote that this tradition

⁴³ On student numbers see Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 90.

⁴⁴ Friedrich Dahlmann, *Die Politik auf den Grund und das Maß der gegebenen Zustände zurückgeführt* (Göttingen, 1835). See Wilhelm Bleek, *Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann: Eine Biographie* (Munich, 2010), p. 150: ‘Es ist offensichtlich, dass wir in Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann einen der letzten Aristoteliker im deutschen politischen Denken des 19. Jahrhunderts vor uns haben.’ Although Dahlmann left Kiel before Stein began his studies there, he evidently knew him, not least through their shared involvement in Schleswig-Holstein’s national movement that took off in the 1840s. Stein’s *Nachlass* contains handwritten notes on Dahlmann’s work. See Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek, Kiel: Nachlass Lorenz von Stein, 1.7:05. In the 1850s, Dahlmann also wrote an academic reference for Stein. See chapter 4 below.

⁴⁵ Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 110.

⁴⁶ See Robert von Mohl, *Die Polizei-Wissenschaft nach den Grundsätzen des Rechtsstaates* (2 vols, Tübingen, 1832-33).

⁴⁷ See Robert von Mohl, ‘Über die Nachteile, welche sowohl den Arbeitern selbst, als dem Wohlstande und der Sicherheit der gesamten bürgerlichen Gesellschaft von dem fabrikmäßigen Betriebe der Industrie zugehen’, in Karl-Heinrich Rau (ed.), in *Archiv der politischen Ökonomie und Polizeiwissenschaft*, II (1835), 141-203.

‘had come out of philology and the commentaries on Aristotle, or out of the philosophy of law; and the fact speaks for itself that already Chr. Wolff conceived of his politics as a science of society’.⁴⁸ In his work on socialism, Stein would seek to extend the idea that politics had to be rooted in academic study, a core conviction of *Staatswissenschaft*, and come up with his vision of a ‘science of society’.

Stein, the Left Hegelians, and socialism in Germany before 1842

Another central context for Lorenz Stein’s discovery of socialism was his contact with the Left Hegelians. In the spring of 1839, Stein, at the time still a student, wrote to Arnold Ruge, the editor of the *Hallische Jahrbücher*, a radical Left Hegelian journal, and asked to submit contributions. Stein justified his quest with financial concerns, notably his humble background and his reliance on public scholarships, as well as intellectual compatibility. He believed that the journal would be a good outlet for his criticism of the historical school of law.⁴⁹ Two pieces by Stein ended up being published in the journal, both critical reviews of works written in this tradition, the first by Stein’s teacher Johann Christiansen, the second by Savigny himself.⁵⁰ In his articles, Stein rejected the excessive preoccupation with the past in contemporary

⁴⁸ L. Stein, ‘Die Lage der staatswissenschaftlichen Studien und Vorträge auf den deutschen Universitäten’, in *Akademische Monatsschrift: Centralorgan für die Gesamtinteressen deutscher Universitäten*, 4 (1852), 530-42 (p. 541): ‘Daneben stand die Politik noch ganz selbstständig; sie kam ihrerseits aus der Philologie oder den Commentatoren des Aristoteles, oder aus der Rechtsphilosophie herüber, und bezeichnend genug ist es jedenfalls, daß schon Chr. Wolff seine Politik als die Lehre von der Gesellschaft dachte.’

⁴⁹ ‘Q 1 [Lorenz Stein to Theodor Echtermeyer, 4 June 1839]’, in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 141-42 (p. 141): ‘Nun hat Se[ine] Majestät der König von Dänemark mich aus einem Waisenhaus hervorgezogen, und mich studieren lassen. Jetzt, da ich damit fertig bin, hört die Unterstützung auf [...] Ich habe mich viel mit Philosophie, mehr noch mit der Rechtsgeschichte beschäftigt.’; ‘Die *Hallischen Jahrbücher* haben bis jetzt noch kein Urtheil über einen Gegenstand, des Gegensatzes willen zurückgewiesen. Sie haben ihre Tendenz, dem juristischen Kreise der Literatur nicht ferne stehen zu wollen, ausdrücklich erklärt.’

⁵⁰ L.S. [Lorenz Stein], ‘*Die Wissenschaft der römischen Rechtsgeschichte in Grundrissen* von Dr. Christiansen, Privatdocenten an der Universität zu Kiel. Erster Band. Altona, 1838. Verlag von Johann Fr. Hammerich’, *Hallische Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Kunst* (August 1839), nos 201-05, pp. 1601-38 (p. 1603); Dr. L. Stein, ‘*Zur Charakteristik der heutigen Rechtswissenschaft. System des heutigen römischen Rechts*, von Friedrich Carl von Savigny. B. 1-4. Berlin 1840 i. 41. Veit u. Comp’, *Deutsche Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Kunst* (October 1841), nos 92-100: pp. 365-66, 369-70, 373-74, 377-87, 389-87, 389-91, 393-95, 397-99 (p. 369).

legal studies and called for a more present-focused approach, a real political theory that was embodied in the institutions of the state.⁵¹ The contact with Ruge and his Left Hegelian circles proved crucial to Stein's intellectual evolution. These thinkers were at the time tackling the same question that was also beginning to preoccupy Stein: the potential of Hegelian philosophy to provide a progressive political theory for Germany.

The Left Hegelian movement had originated in the mid-1830s when followers of the recently deceased Hegel began to use his philosophy for a radical critique of religion. In opposition to those thinkers on the right who used Hegel's thought to justify the status quo in Prussia, the Left Hegelians attempted to transform his ideas into an emancipatory doctrine. The Right Hegelians believed that the Prussian state had divine justification, and that its Protestant universality made it inherently rational. They merged this theological belief with Hegel's dictum that 'what exists, is rational' to argue for the infallibility of the monarchical regime.⁵² These religious arguments explain why the Left Hegelians initially also focused on a religious critique. Their movement gained momentum when in 1835 David Friedrich Strauss published his *Das Leben Jesu*, a work that attacked religious mystique by historicizing Jesus. By the late 1830s, a number of figures, Bruno Bauer, Arnold Ruge, and Ludwig Feuerbach among them, had launched similar attacks. The Left Hegelian journal the *Hallische Jahrbücher* began to appear in 1838.⁵³

Despite their common target – the conservative Prussian state – there were plenty of intellectual disagreements among the Left Hegelians, and they remain hard

⁵¹ [Stein], 'Die Wissenschaft der römischen Rechtsgeschichte in Grundrissen von Dr. Christiansen', pp. 1609, 1627.

⁵² Hermann Lübbe, 'Die politische Theorie der hegelschen Rechten', *Archiv für Philosophie*, 10 (1962), 175-227.

⁵³ There is a number of Anglophone accounts of the history of Left Hegelianism. See David McLellan, *The young Hegelians and Karl Marx* (1969; Aldershot, 1993); William J. Brazill, *The Young Hegelians* (New Haven and London, 1970) and Warren Breckman, *Marx, the Young Hegelians and the origins of radical social theory: Dethroning the self* (Cambridge, 1999).

to grasp as a group.⁵⁴ It has been suggested that it would be more fruitful to make sense of them as a sociological, rather than a philosophical phenomenon.⁵⁵ Lorenz Stein was a part of the social milieu which most Left Hegelian writers belonged to, Protestant and bourgeois. Yet, given his complete lack of interest in religion, he certainly did not fully associate himself with the group, and it would be futile to try and make sense of Stein's intellectual trajectory in this early period solely in terms of his relationship to the Left Hegelians.

The intellectual goal Stein definitely shared with these radical figures was, as he would put it, to 'free himself from all schools' – that is to find a critique of the predominant conservative intellectual tendencies, such as the historical school of law and the Right Hegelian monarchical apologists. Arnold Ruge became an important mentor for Stein in this undertaking. In a letter to him in summer 1839, Ruge's recommendation to Stein was to further his philosophical education. Commenting on his first piece for the *Hallische Jahrbücher*, Ruge wrote:

It is a refreshing read, and overall correct. Yet I would very much wish that you could leave Kiel and Schleswig and see something of the world, especially in order to emancipate yourself through the free branch of the new philosophy and to master this current movement. If cannot do so, then make sure to read the Hegelian books. Your solid foundation and talent protect you against enslavement [...] I am happy to have made your acquaintance [...] I do not doubt that you will gradually reach an independent position on all matters, including philosophy. You know how important this at present, especially as far as the dead legal science is concerned.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ See Martin Hundt (ed.), *Der Redaktionsbriefwechsel der Hallischen, Deutschen und Deutsch-Französischen Jahrbücher (1837-1844)* (Berlin, 2010), p. 78. 'Eine wirkliche Geschichte des Junghegelianismus, der junghegelianischen Bewegung steht noch aus.'

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 35: 'Wichtig wäre eine soziologische Analyse der Autoren und Korrespondenten.' See also the work by Wolfgang Essbach, *Die Junghegelianer: Soziologie einer Intellektuellengruppe* (Munich, 1988).

⁵⁶ 'Arnold Ruge to Lorenz Stein, 19 July 1839', in Hundt, *Redaktionsbriefwechsel*, p. 374: 'Zuschrift u Zusendung habe ich empfangen u[nd] die Rec[ension] über Christiansen gern aufgenommen, wenn sie gleich im Einzelnen bisweilen zu weit sich einläßt u[nd] philosophisch etwas mehr Schule haben könnte. Sie ist frisch u[nd] gewiß im Ganzen im Recht. Wie sehr wäre es Ihnen zu wünschen, wenn Sie aus Ihrer Kieler u[nd] Holsteiner Ecke etwas in die Welt könnten, um sich namentlich durch die

Stein was very soon able to follow Ruge's advice and to immerse himself in the study of idealist philosophy away from Schleswig. Having completed his doctoral degree and equipped with a travel stipend, Stein left for Berlin in summer 1840. As Ruge had recommended, he there embarked on expanding his intellectual horizons. In January 1841, he reported to Ruge: 'My immediate and most urgent task is to free myself from all the schools [...] By being forced to build my own systems, I will be able to understand the meaning of the different other representatives [...] The only ones whose relation I have grasped so far are Savigny and Stahl.'⁵⁷

Stein's studies in Berlin – about which not much is known aside from what emerges from the correspondence with Ruge – pushed him to his limits. In another letter to Ruge from September 1841, Stein wrote: 'I have to work through not only the entire field of philosophy, but also of positive jurisprudence. The task is enormous.'⁵⁸ Stein was through these studies beginning to develop a sense of the limitations of Hegelian philosophy. In another letter to Ruge, he wrote: 'It is impossible to bring the science of law and of the state to completion from a Hegelian standpoint. Yet I am not yet able to find what would be the true perspective. The first thing that needs to be done is a critique of existing theory, of the doctrine of jurisprudence as such.' Stein then set out that he would begin with the study of common and private law, and asked Ruge for intellectual guidance: 'I would be so pleased to have someone with whom I could discuss the principle of law in the state

freiere Richtung der neusten Philosophie gänzlich zu emancipieren u[nd] zum Herrn der jetzigen Bewegung zu machen. Können Sie das nicht so versäumt Sie es nicht, die Hegelschen Bücher zu lesen. Ihre gute Basis u[nd] Ihr Talent schützt Sie vor Sklaverei. Ich freue mich der neuen Bekanntschaft mit Ihnen [...] Ich zweifle nicht, daß Sie Sich nach und nach in allem auch in der philosophischen Richtung vollkommen in freien Besitz setzen werden. Wie wichtig dies aber gerade jetzt in der todten Juristerei ist, - das wissen Sie.'

⁵⁷ 'Q 5 [Lorenz Stein to Arnold Ruge, 6 January 1841]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 144-45 (p. 145): 'Meine zunächst liegende und mich drängende Aufgabe ist die, mich frei zu machen von den Schulen [...] indem ich mir selber meine Systeme bilden muss, werde ich erst dann die Bedeutung der einzelnen Vertreter anderer begreifen können [...] Die einzigen, deren Verhältnis mir klar geworden ist, sind Savigny u. Stahl.'

⁵⁸ 'Q 6 [Lorenz Stein to Arnold Ruge, 23 September 1841]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 147-48 (p. 148): 'Ich muss nicht nur das ganze Gebiet der Philosophie, sondern auch das der positive Jurisprudenz durcharbeiten. Die Arbeit ist ungeheuer.'

and in private matters.’⁵⁹ Whether Ruge followed up on Stein’s request is unknown, but what is certain is that at some point during his time in Berlin, Ruge must have introduced Stein to another novel intellectual phenomenon: the ideas of socialism and communism.

The origin of these doctrines lay in the aftermath of the French Revolution, and despite important contributions by English theorists such as Robert Owen, it was mostly a French phenomenon. Its original object had been to address the issues left unresolved by the revolution of 1789 and its aftermath. Early socialists were not concerned with the industrial proletariat and class struggle. Instead they had a broader, cosmological ambition, and are perhaps best understood as a pseudo-religious movement.⁶⁰ After the French Revolution had failed to abolish religion, the French socialists searched for alternative ways to bring new cohesion to society. Equality was not the early socialists’ goal. Instead, Saint-Simon’s later well-known doctrine was that in an ideal society labour should be taken from everyone according to their individual abilities, and goods and services given ‘according to their needs’.⁶¹

These ideas were not entirely unknown in Germany by the early 1840s. The liberal writer Friedrich Buchholz was probably the first German to engage with French socialist thinkers, publishing translation of Saint-Simonian texts in the *Neue Monatsschrift* in the 1820s.⁶² The French revolution of 1830 gave additional impetus to the preoccupation with radical French ideas in Germany. Throughout the 1830s, German radicals based in Paris published reports on the activities of the

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 148: ‘Es ist ganz unmöglich, die Wissenschaft des Rechts und des Staats von Hegel’s Standpunkt aus zur Vollendung zu bringen; doch bin ich noch nicht im Stande, den wahren zu finden. Das Erste, was geschehen muss, ist eine Kritik der bisherigen Theorie – der Doctrin in der Jurisprudenz überhaupt. Ich werde mit dem Privatrecht und dem System des Gemeinen Rechts und des deutschen Privatrechts beginnen.’; ‘Wäre ich doch so glücklich, jemand zu haben, mit dem ich über das Prinzip des Rechts im Staat und Privatverhältnisse mich einmal aussprechen könnte.’

⁶⁰ Gareth Stedman Jones, ‘Religion and the origins of socialism’, in Ira Katznelson and Gareth Stedman Jones (eds), *Religion and the political imagination* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 171-89.

⁶¹ See G. G. Iggers (ed.), *The doctrine of Saint-Simon: An exposition. First year 1828-1829* (1958; New York, 1972).

⁶² On Buchholz see Rütger Schäfer, *Friedrich Buchholz: ein vergessener Vorläufer der Soziologie* (Göppingen, 1972).

French socialists in the German press.⁶³ Many Germans were alarmed at the attack on both state and church that they saw in the Saint-Simonian doctrine, yet at the same time doubted that these ideas had any relevance to Germany.⁶⁴ In 1831, the philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Carové published the book *Der Saint-Simonismus und die neuere französische Philosophie*, which was frequently referred to by German intellectuals during the 1830s.⁶⁵ Among those to take an interest in socialism were the poets Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Börne. The social and religious ideas of Saint-Simon were also at the heart of the ‘Young Germany’ literary movement that was critical of romanticism.⁶⁶ Through various channels, the neologism ‘Sozialist’ had entered the German language by 1840.⁶⁷

It is particularly notable that it was often the students of Hegel who developed an interest in French socialism. As Waszek writes, ‘the realization [was] already reached at the time that the German reception of Saint-Simonism was primarily carried by Hegelians’.⁶⁸ Hegel himself had been a reader of the Saint-Simonian journal *Le Globe*.⁶⁹ His student Eduard Gans lectured on Saint-Simon from the early 1830s, and began to use Saint-Simonian ideas for his own philosophy.⁷⁰ In an extension of Hegel’s philosophy of civil society, Gans promoted ‘corporations’ as

⁶³ See the discussion of this literature in Carsten Quesel, *Soziologie und soziale Frage: Lorenz von Stein und die Entstehung der Gesellschaftswissenschaft in Deutschland* (Wiesbaden, 1989), pp. 12-19.

⁶⁴ Thomas Petermann, *Der Saint-Simonismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main, 1983), pp. 54-56.

⁶⁵ Friedrich Wilhelm Carové, *Der Saint-Simonismus und die neuere französische Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1831).

⁶⁶ See E.M. Butler, *The Saint-Simonian religion in Germany* (Cambridge, 1926).

⁶⁷ E. Czobel, ‘Zur Verbreitung der Worte Sozialist und Sozialismus’, in *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus*, 3 (1913), 481-85; Wolfgang Schieder, ‘Sozialismus’, in R. Koselleck et al. (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (8 vols, Stuttgart, 1972-97), V (1984): 923-96 (pp. 944-68).

⁶⁸ Norbert Waszek, ‘Saint-Simonismus und Hegelianismus. Einführung in das Forschungsfeld’, in Hans-Christoph Schmidt am Busch (ed.), *Hegelianismus und Saint-Simonismus* (Paderborn, 2007), pp. 13-35 (p. 13): ‘der schon seinerzeit konstatierte Befund, dass die deutsche Rezeption des Saint-Simonismus vorzugsweise von Hegelianern getragen wurde.’

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁷⁰ Myriam Bienenstock, ‘“Die soziale Frage” im französisch-deutschen Kulturaustausch: Gans, Marx und die deutsche Saint-Simon-Rezeption’, in Norbert Waszek et al. (eds), *Eduard Gans (1797-1839): Politischer Professor zwischen Restauration und Vormärz* (Leipzig, 2002), pp. 153-76 (p. 162); Myriam Bienenstock, ‘Between Hegel and Marx: Eduard Gans on the “Social Question”’, in Moggach (ed.), *Politics, religion, and art*, pp. 164-178; Warren Breckman, ‘Eduard Gans and the crisis of Hegelianism’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 62 (2001), 543-64 (pp. 558-59).

a form of social organisation. Their goal was to bring about so-called *Vergesellschaftlichung*, a term that described the formation of a more harmonious society. Like Stein, Gans was a declared opponent of the historical school, which he attacked from a Hegelian position. There is evidence that Stein studied Gans's writings as a student.⁷¹ Gans died suddenly in 1839, but it is nevertheless likely that his thought inspired the Left Hegelians' turn to politics in the early 1840s, a development also crucial to Stein's thought.⁷²

The 1830s had also seen the rise of the idea of a 'social kingdom' among Prussian conservatives. In the aftermath of the 1830 revolution in France, a group of bureaucrat intellectuals around the Gerlach brothers set up the journal *Berliner Politisches Wochenblatt* in which they promoted a top-down approach to social tensions.⁷³ A stable monarchy, they believed, was best suited to undermine the class struggle's sedition potential. Typically such authors rejected abstract philosophy and instead saw an improvement of the bureaucracy and other practical measures as a way to resolve the social question.⁷⁴ Beck notes: 'Even though backward-oriented in some of their concepts, such as the *Ständestaat*, Prussian conservatives of the *Vormärz* reacted to something new.'⁷⁵ Later on associated with such a conservative approach, it is important to stress that at the time Stein had no connection to these circles.

Besides these broader tendencies, there were also a few important individuals in Germany who had discovered socialism before 1840. Moses Hess, for example, who came from a deeply religious Jewish family from Cologne, published in 1837 his *Heilige Geschichte der Menschheit*, a communistic work inspired by his eclectic

⁷¹ Stein's *Nachlass* contains excerpts from Gans which suggests that Stein knew his work. See *Nachlass Lorenz von Stein*: 1.7:06.

⁷² See Egga Magdanz, 'Gans' Stellung im Kontinuierungsprozeß der jungehegelianischen Bewegung', in Waszek et al. (eds.), *Eduard Gans*, pp. 177-206; Breckman, 'Eduard Gans and the crisis of Hegelianism'. The latter is positive that there was a direct impact, see p. 564.

⁷³ See Hermann Beck, *The origins of the authoritarian welfare state in Prussia: Conservatives, bureaucracy, and the social question, 1815-1870* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1995), especially pp. 33-62.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

studies of philosophy and theology.⁷⁶ Another figure was Wilhelm Weitling, an itinerant tailor from Magdeburg who in 1838 wrote the communistic work *Die Menschheit wie sie ist und wie sie sein sollte*, inspired by his visit to communist and socialist exiles in Paris.⁷⁷ In 1840, Weitling went to Switzerland where he set up radical workers' clubs in which he promoted communist ideas.

Another German with an early interest in socialism was Karl Rodbertus, a lawyer and owner of a large estate in Pomerania. In 1837, he wrote the essay 'Die Forderungen der arbeitenden Klassen', in which argued that recent social transformations called for urgent action by the state.⁷⁸ While he did not completely reject the free market economy, Rodbertus demanded that the state had to protect the working class from the fluctuations of the economy. Rodbertus submitted his article to the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* which refused to publish it, claiming that the social danger Rodbertus pointed to, 'could not at all be found in our social organisation.'⁷⁹

The *Allgemeine Zeitung*'s rejection of Rodbertus's essay highlighted a broader problem that marked the German preoccupation with socialism in the late 1830s and early 1840s: that of making socialism relevant to Germany's contemporary political situation and national mission. Germany was in the first half of the nineteenth century widely considered a politically and economically backward country among its European neighbours. Its level of industrialization was low, and its political regimes strikingly conservative, lacking any form of constitutionalism. Germany's reputation was that of a land of poets and philosophers, rather than practical statesmen or revolutionaries. Although a growing population also produced

⁷⁶ [Moses Hess], *Die heilige Geschichte der Menschheit: Von einem jünger Spinozas* (Stuttgart, 1837; repr. Hildesheim, 1980). For a modern English edition see Moses Hess, *The holy history of mankind and other writings*, ed. by Schlomo Avineri (Cambridge, 2004)

⁷⁷ Wilhelm Weitling, *Die Menschheit wie sie ist und wie sie sein sollte* (1838; 2nd edn, Bern, 1845).

⁷⁸ See Johann Karl Rodbertus, 'Die Forderungen der arbeitenden Klassen', in Johann Karl Rodbertus, *Gesammelte Werke und Briefe*, ed. by Th. Ramm (6 vols, Osnabrück, 1972), I: 1-31.

⁷⁹ The article remained unpublished until the 1870s. See Moritz Wirth, 'Rodbertus, Johann Karl', in ADB (1889), pp. 740-63 <<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118745638.html>> [accessed 19 April 2013].

social problems in Germany in the first half of the nineteenth-century, it was considered impossible that Germans would respond to this with radical political measures.⁸⁰ Ever since the late eighteenth-century, many Germans had prided themselves on the fact that their country had not need for revolution.⁸¹

One important argument surrounding the Germans' lack of a propensity for revolution was connected to their religious history. Germans in the early nineteenth century were renowned for their religiosity, and this was by many considered a substitute for political progress and revolution. The argument was that the Protestant reformation had brought a revolution in individual freedom that was comparable to the achievements of the French Revolution and thus explained the absence of political reform in Germany.⁸² This notion provided an important starting point to German radical thought in the early nineteenth century, yet was also contested. In the 1830s, those disappointed republicans and liberals in Germany who had hoped for the advance for constitutionalism in their country, began to blame 'philistinism', the lack of interest in public political life, and the preference for domestic religious inwardness, among their countrymen.⁸³ The fact that the growing preoccupation with radical politics in the early 1840s was entwined with a debate on Germany's distinct national character would be crucial to Stein's intervention.

Against the notion that it was an unknown phenomenon in Germany, discussions of socialism were in fact commonplace during the time Stein spent in Berlin. Through various channels, he was introduced to debates about socialism, as well as the wider problems of radical philosophy. Stein would – rather by chance – come to be the person to bring together many of these intellectual developments. Yet,

⁸⁰ See W. Conze, 'Vom "Pöbel" zum "Proletariat". Sozialgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen für den Sozialismus in Deutschland', in Hans-Ulrich Wehler (ed.), *Moderne deutsche Sozialgeschichte* (Cologne, 1973), pp. 111-36.

⁸¹ On this background see Warren Breckman, 'Diagnosing the "German Misery": Radicalism and the problem of national character, 1830-1848', in David E. Barclay and Eric D. Weitz (eds), *Between reform and revolution: German socialism and communism from 1840 to 1900* (New York and Oxford, 1998), pp. 33-62.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 35-37.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-41.

another important experience preceded this. Having spent the first year of his two-year travel scholarship in Berlin, Stein decided to go abroad in his second year. In October 1841, he headed to Paris – the place where he could study socialism at its source.

Stein in Paris and the genesis of *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*

Lorenz Stein's immersion in the socialist and communist movement already began en route to Paris. There is evidence that on Ruge's recommendation Stein stopped in Switzerland and visited Wilhelm Weitling's communist community.⁸⁴ The official purpose of Stein's stay in France was to conduct research on French legal history. Shortly after his arrival in Paris in autumn 1841, however, Stein was approached by an envoy of the Prussian interior ministry and asked if he would be interested in becoming a spy for the government. As during his student days, Stein had serious financial difficulties. Allegedly he had 'lost' his scholarship on his way to France.⁸⁵ The government service provided an attractive source of income and Stein accepted the proposal. What the government wanted Stein to assess was whether the radical German émigré community that had fled to Paris in the 1830s provided any risk to the Prussian homeland, now that radical ideas were also increasingly discussed in Germany. Between November 1841 and May 1842, Stein supplied five reports to *Regierungsrat* Franz Hugo Hesse in Berlin, which were then also shown to the Prussian foreign minister Heinrich von Bülow.⁸⁶

Stein did not see this espionage activity as a betrayal of his radical Hegelian friends or his progressive political ambitions. Despite his contacts to the Left

⁸⁴ Stein's alleged visit to Switzerland is only mentioned in one source, the report of an Austrian agent in Paris to Metternich from 7 April 1843, cited in Ludwig Brügel, *Geschichte der österreichischen Sozialdemokratie* (6 vols, Vienna, 1922-5), I (1922): *Vom Vormärz bis zum Wiener Hochverratsprozess, Juli 1870*, p. 31.

⁸⁵ Ernst von Stein, 'Brief an Carl Th. Von Inama-Sternegg über L. Von Stein', p. 53.

⁸⁶ See Giles Pope, 'The political ideas of Lorenz Stein and their influence on Rudolf Gneist and Gustav Schmoller' (unpublished DPhil dissertation, University of Oxford, 1985), p. 50.

Hegelians in Berlin, Stein had by that point not definitively identified with any political movement. He certainly still had a strong appreciation for the Prussian state and – in addition to the financial incentive – probably saw his work as an important patriotic service. As Joist Grolle highlights, Stein's stay in Paris coincided with a period of heightened national optimism in the early 1840s.⁸⁷ Belief in Prussia reached a peak when the reputedly progressive King Frederick William IV acceded to the throne in June 1840. He was expected to fulfil the long-standing promise of constitutional reform. The success in the *Rheinkrise* of July 1840 additionally heightened the nationalist euphoria and enthusiasm for Prussia. In December 1841 the censorship of the press was loosened. In this context, even Left Hegelians like Arnold Ruge and Bruno Bauer were still enthusiastic about the Prussian state, and Stein's espionage activity thus not at all inconsistent.⁸⁸

In his reports, Stein downplayed the relevance of the émigré community, arguing that most of them were too preoccupied with making a living to become seriously involved in radical politics, let alone seek to propagate them at home.⁸⁹ As Grolle suggests, it is hard to tell whether Stein took his spying activity seriously. Stein conducted his research mainly by reading newspaper articles, and only (briefly) met one of his surveillance subjects in person, the writer Jacob Venedey.⁹⁰ In these reports, Stein began to sketch the argument that would be at the heart of his book about socialism. Stein argued that a crucial reason why the German émigrés were not a dangerous group was their national character. Stein emphasized that the split between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat that was characteristic of French life did not exist in Germany. In one of the reports, Stein for example suggested that there

⁸⁷ Joist Grolle, 'Lorenz von Stein als preussischer Geheimagent', in *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 50 (1968), 82-96 (p. 95): 'Der Zufall wollte es, daß Stein gerade so lange in Paris war, wie Preußen einen neuen Kurs zu steuern schien.' On Stein in Paris see also Charles Rihs, «Lorenz von Stein. Un jeune hégélien libéral à Paris (1840-1842)», in *Revue d'histoire économique et sociale*, 47, 3 (1969), 404-46.

⁸⁸ On the changing relationship of the Left Hegelians to Prussia see the classic article by Gustav Mayer, 'Die Junghegelianer und der preußische Staat', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 121, 3 (1919), 413-40.

⁸⁹ Grolle, 'Stein als preußischer Geheimagent', p. 87.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

was no need to ban recent French socialistic writings in Germany as their argument would not even be understood by the German public.⁹¹

While he did not seek contact with the German radicals he was expected to survey, Stein quickly became acquainted with French socialists – in fact with the movement's leading figures. Little is known about the precise circumstances of these encounters, but later on, Stein would acknowledge his friendship with Victor Considerant, Louis Reybaud, Louis Blanc and Cabet.⁹² At one point, a four-hour long meeting took place between Stein and Louis Blanc, in which they exchanged ideas.⁹³ The contact with Blanc was decisive. Blanc had in the early 1840s formulated the influential idea that the state should actively address workers' issues, a concept that would serve as inspiration for the national workshops in the revolution of 1848.⁹⁴ This notion of strong state involvement resonated with Stein's experience of Cameralist politics in Germany and might explain why he particularly sought out Blanc.

By January 1842, Stein had developed the plan to publish a book about the ideas of the French socialists. In the spy report from 7 January 1842, he wrote: 'I have set myself the task to show the wrongness of revolutionary ideas and the curse of the present conditions here to those for whom national sentiment and an innate ability to know right from wrong will not suffice to turn away from France, through an account of French social life and its relation to revolution.'⁹⁵ As he explained, Stein intended his work to have a preventive function, and to warn his contemporaries of the danger of socialism and communism. He still did not see in

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 90.

⁹² Stein, *Der Socialismus und Communismus* (1842), p. x.

⁹³ Karl Grün, *Die soziale Bewegung in Frankreich und Belgien: Briefe und Studien* (Darmstadt, 1845), pp. 315-16.

⁹⁴ Louis Blanc, *Organisation du travail* (3rd edn, Paris, 1848).

⁹⁵ Quoted in Grolle, 'Stein als preussischer Geheimagent', p. 92: 'Ich habe es mir zur Aufgabe gestellt, demjenigen, dem das nationale Gefühl und das innere Rechtsbewußtsein nicht hinreicht, um sich von Frankreich abzuwenden, und dem Wege zu folgen, den eine höhere Fügung uns führt, die innere Verkehrtheit einer jeden revolutionären Ideen and dem Unsegen, mit dem der hiesige Zustand in jeder Beziehung behaftet ist, nachzuweisen, in einer Darstellung des französischen sozialen Lebens und seiner Verhältnisse zur Revolution.'

this project any contradiction with his Hegelian principles, and also proudly announced his plan to publish a book to Arnold Ruge in a letter of January 1842:

I have reached the conclusion that all those different phenomena that have occurred at different times have one common source, and that they reflect a central facet of the French national spirit. I have therefore decided to present these results in one unified account. This seems to me all the more important because among the German public these internal connections, the deeper meaning of this phenomenon is frequently misunderstood, and even more often entirely unknown.⁹⁶

This announcement was accompanied by a request: Stein asked Ruge to help him find a publisher, and in particular to approach Otto Wigand, who was at the time the foremost publisher of German radical literature. Wigand had also brought out Arnold Ruge's and Moses Hess's works, earning him the nickname 'patron of the Hegelian Left'.⁹⁷

Stein's quest was successful, Wigand agreed to publish his book, and from the beginning of 1842, journals across the German Confederation announced the publication of his book. The *Rheinische Zeitung*, set up by Left Hegelian radicals in Cologne following the relaxation of the Prussia press law at the end of 1841, mentioned Stein's book in its first issue from 1 February 1842: 'Another young German, called L. Stein, who is here [in Paris], is fervently engaging with the Saint-Simonians, Fourierists and communists, and you can expect to later see something solid published about this important phenomenon in contemporary France by Mr. Stein, who is a thorough man.'⁹⁸

⁹⁶ 'Q 8 [Lorenz Stein to Arnold Ruge, 4 January 1842], in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 148-49 (p. 149): 'Ich bin zu der Überzeugung gelangt, daß alle jenen grundsätzlichen und zeitlich verschiedenen Erscheinungen aus einem gemeinsamen Momente hervorgegangen sind, und daß in ihnen sich die eine Hauptseite des ganzen französischen Volksgeistes widerspiegelt. Ich habe mich daher entschlossen, die Ergebnisse in einer geschlossenen Darstellung zusammen zu fassen. Das ist mir um so mehr als notwendig erschienen, da man im deutschen Publikum jenen inneren Zusammenhang, die tiefe Bedeutung jener -Erscheinung oft missversteht, öfter gar nicht kennt.'

⁹⁷ Quoted in Inge Kießhauer, 'Otto Friedrich Wigand', in *Leipziger Jahrbuch zur Buchgeschichte*, 1 (1991), 155-88 (p. 163): 'Herbergsvater der Hegelschen Linken'.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Grolle, 'Stein als preußischer Geheimagent', pp. 83-84: 'Ein anderer junger Deutsche[r], der sich hier aufhält, namens L. Stein, beschäftigt sich eifrig mit den St. Simonisten, Fourieristen und

Germany's most radical newspaper, the *Rheinische Zeitung*, not only endorsed Stein's project, but also offered him employment. After his espionage activity had come to an end, Stein from May 1842 derived additional income by serving as a Paris correspondent for the *Rheinische Zeitung*. His anonymously published pieces provided descriptions of Parisian society, exploring in particular the class division that Stein saw at its heart. In his first article, for example, Stein took as his starting point the celebration of the May Day in Paris to offer a description of the sombre spirit prevailing in French society, asking how one could rejoice during May Day celebrations given the social injustice omnipresent.⁹⁹ Another piece recounted an incident Stein had observed in the Tuileries gardens on a Saturday afternoon. Two workingmen in typical blue shirt attire were denied entrance to the public gardens by national guards. Seeing the men walk off, their heads hanging in shame, reminded him of the fact that contemporary France was visibly lagging behind its former glory. A visit to Versailles left Stein with a similar impression. Being 'truly a royal corpse', it made him seriously question whether the present age would be able to reach similar cultural heights, and in general left him feeling uncomfortable.¹⁰⁰ Other aspects of French society were equally disappointing.¹⁰¹ All in all, Stein saw deep class inequality as a major cause of France's decline.

Stein's book, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*, published later that year, thus reflected a variety of influences. Stein had studied the writings of the leading French socialists and had, as his articles in the *Rheinische Zeitung* made clear, experienced social tensions in French society first-hand. He was also still under the influence of the German debate on the potential of Hegelian philosophy and the distinct strengths of Germany's philosophical and political tradition. Moreover, the book would display the influence of his university

Kommunisten, und sie dürfen erwarten, von Hrn. Stein, der ein gründlicher Mann ist, über diese wichtigen Erscheinungen des heutigen Frankreichs später Gediegenes veröffentlicht zu sehen.'

⁹⁹ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], 'Das Maifest in Paris', in *Rheinische Zeitung*, 8 May 1842.

¹⁰⁰ Anon., 'Das Schloss von Versailles', in *Rheinische Zeitung*, 27 and 28 July 1842: 'Eine wahrhaft königliche Leiche'.

¹⁰¹ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], 'Der Leichenzug des Herzogs von Orléans in Paris', 6 August 1842.

education, his appreciation for national comparisons, and his recent insights from the study of Hegel under Arnold Ruge's guidance. Written over the course of only about ten months, many of the ideas Stein articulated in the book were at this stage only half-formed and not elaborated upon until later editions. Yet, Stein nevertheless managed to outline in it themes that he would continue to study for the rest of his life.

Stein's analysis of French socialism

While Stein remained in Paris until the spring of 1843, his book, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreich*, appeared in German bookshops in September 1842.¹⁰² It was subtitled *Ein Beitrag zur Zeitgeschichte* (a contribution to contemporary history), thus invoking a tradition of writing that stood between journalism and academic writing and that sought to address both 'the broad public as well as to influence the political decision-makers'.¹⁰³ Stein's book opened with the claim that in times of change, written contributions on a subject could take one of two possible shapes. They could either be purely analytical, or they could be intellectual contributions to the process of change itself. Stein made clear that his work was of the first kind. It was a description of the French socialist and communist literature of the previous decades from a historical and analytical perspective that did not intend to make a political statement or to contribute to socialist theory.

However, Stein at the outset announced that his book's actual subject was more than it said on the cover, and presented his original thesis. The study of socialist and communist ideas, he explained, served to elucidate a deeper point. This was that 'the age of purely political movements was over', and future change would

¹⁰² See the announcement in *Deutsche Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Kunst*, 14 September 1842, p. 876.

¹⁰³ See Iwan-Michelangelo D'Aprile, *Die Erfindung der Zeitgeschichte: Geschichtsschreibung und Journalismus zwischen Aufklärung und Vormärz* (Berlin, 2013), p. 7: 'Ihre Akteure [...] suchten die breite Öffentlichkeit ebenso wie die Einflussnahme auf die politischen Entscheidungsträger.'

be of a social nature.¹⁰⁴ As Stein wrote, ‘the next revolution can already only be a social one’.¹⁰⁵ This deeper meaning explained why the recent French socialistic and communistic publications had recently attracted so much attention. On their own terms, the socialist and communist proposals were of no philosophical value. As Stein wrote, ‘they can be neither considered great systems, nor truly bold ideas. To be the former, they lack a specific philosophic erudition, to be the latter, a true connection to reality. There is too little in them that is profoundly logical, and even less that would be really doable.’¹⁰⁶ Only if one read their deeper message, did it become clear why socialism and communism occupied an important place in the history of philosophy.

The argument of Stein’s book was that social, rather than political, structures would be the new driving force of history – an inversion of Hegel’s argument that the form of state reflected ‘world-historical’ developments. The point of *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* was to prove this new condition by describing the nature and history of socialist ideas in France. Stein’s book was therefore methodologically innovative through its claim that these ideas had to be studied in their historical, and also national, context. As Stein wrote, ‘criticism occupies only a small space, as truth lies not in the system, but in its relation to its time.’¹⁰⁷ The ‘idea of society’ Stein was discussing was thus not expounded by the texts and theories he reviewed, but was implicit in them and had to be inferred through contextual study.

The national context was central. Stein argued that socialist ideas could only be understood as a phenomenon that had occurred at a particular moment in French

¹⁰⁴ Stein, *Socialismus und Communismus* (1842), p. iii ‘Die Zeit der rein politischen Bewegung in Frankreich ist vorbei.’

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. iii: ‘die nächste Revolution kann schon jetzt nur eine sociale sein.’

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 5: ‘An und für sich betrachtet, sind sie weder sehr großartige Systeme, noch auch wahrhaft kühne Gedanken zu nennen. Zu dem ersten fehlt ihnen die eigenthümliche philosophische Bildung, zu dem letzteren ein wahres Verhältnis zur Wirklichkeit. Es ist wenig in ihnen, was tief logisch, wenig noch was wirklich ausführbar wäre.’

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 125: ‘Der Kritik bleibt eine geringe Stelle, denn die Wahrheit liegt nicht in dem Systeme, sondern in dem Verhältnis desselben zu seiner Zeit.’

national history. It was a ‘volksthümliche Erscheinung’.¹⁰⁸ To stress the conceptual innovation of his work, Stein explained how it differed from other books on socialism and communism, especially Louis Reybaud’s *Études sur les réformateurs ou socialistes modernes* (1840), a popular work which he had read in France. Stein admitted that Reybaud’s book served as a major source for his factual information. But he ultimately found it unsatisfactory because it did not contain a broader conceptualization of socialism. Instead of addressing the ‘idea of society’, which was for Stein the main intellectual message of socialist theories, Reybaud’s book falsely portrayed the socialist and communist doctrines as a continuation of the tradition of utopian literature from the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁹ Another mistake of Reybaud’s was that he included Robert Owen in his discussion. While Owen’s thought showed similarities to the socialist doctrines of Fourier and Saint-Simon, according to Stein, one was missing the deeper point of French socialism by grouping it together with Owen’s ideas.¹¹⁰

Der Socialismus und Communismus consisted of an overview of the different strands of French socialist and communist thought, and was made up of four parts: a general first part describing ‘the principle of equality’, a second part on the socialist thinkers Saint-Simon and Fourier, a third part on more recent socialist writers, and a concluding part on communism. The ‘principle of equality’ was, as Stein saw it, the broader message that lay behind socialist and communist ideas. One aspect of this message was its emphasis on the proletariat, a group in society that was distinct from the ‘poor’ in other episodes in history.¹¹¹ The proletariat stood out because it was by no means idle. Its aim was to work hard, but under humane conditions and for a fair salary. Following Louis Blanc’s account in *Histoire des dix ans*, Stein claimed that their ‘class consciousness’ had developed in the years since 1830.¹¹² The proletariat

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. viii.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. vii.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. viii.

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 7-8.

¹¹² Louis Blanc, *Histoire des dix ans* (Paris, 1841).

was a 'danger' to the existing social order because it attacked the existence of private property, an institution hitherto considered unchallengeable.¹¹³

The 'discovery' of the proletariat, Stein argued, invited one to re-think the nature of historical conceptualization more broadly. Traditional historiography focused on states and nations. Stein proposed that a form of 'social history', which encompassed the development of 'civilization' across all European nations, might be a more fruitful undertaking. Stein saw tentative attempts at such a project in François Guizot's *History of Civilization*, yet argued that even more attention should be paid to the dynamics of society.¹¹⁴ In a Hegelian manner, Stein believed that history represented the unfolding of 'civilization'.¹¹⁵ Stein explained what this encompassed by posing the following questions: 'What drives us to encourage the exhibition of artefacts in all cities of our states? What is it that increasingly puts the nobility's honour on the same level as that of non-nobles? What does this fight for a constitution of the estates hold?'¹¹⁶ As Stein explained, the higher goal behind the desire to organize industry was to enable every human being of personal self-fulfilment.¹¹⁷

In his discussion, Stein proceeded to locate the idea of equality in historical context. As he wrote, the 'abstract I' had since the eighteenth century been the main subject of French philosophy. From this followed the idea of the union of individuals in a state contract. The idea of equality was central to this.¹¹⁸ Stein discussed the thought of Voltaire, and Claude Adrien Helvétius's elaborations on the equality of all human beings in *De l'Esprit*. This strand of philosophy culminated in Rousseau's philosophy, which caused the move of 'the idea of personhood from the abstract field

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 10.

¹¹⁴ François Guizot, *Histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe* (Paris, 1828).

¹¹⁵ Stein, *Socialismus und Communismus*, pp. 17-18.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 17: 'Was treibt uns, die Ausstellung der Kunstschatze über alle Städte unserer Länder zu verbreiten? Was ist es, was täglich die privilegierte bürgerliche Ehre des Adels mehr und mehr in gleichen Rang mit der der Nichtadligen stellt? Was enthält jenes Ringen nach einer ständischen Verfassung?'

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 131.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 37.

into the practical area of state law and society'.¹¹⁹ The idea of equality thus reached popular conscience, Stein wrote, and this had dramatic – revolutionary – consequences. Yet, none of the successive French constitutions of 1791, 1793 and 1795 delivered the promise of equality.¹²⁰ The constitution of 1791 failed to translate into reality the promised equality of labour because of the simultaneous emergence of the proletariat in this time. The constitution of 1793 consequently attacked property more specifically. Yet in its aftermath, class divisions were still manifest in society, which the amended constitution of 1795 could not abolish either. It became clear that the existing social conflict could not be overcome by constitutional measures.¹²¹ Under Napoleon, the significance of property ownership increased, and with it social divisions widened, giving rise to the rule of 'materialism'.¹²²

The occurrence of the ideas of socialism and communism in France was a reaction to this tendency.¹²³ Property was, according to Stein, central to understanding the contemporary predicament of political theory. Property was a fluid good. It could be acquired through work. Labour could therefore be a means to overcoming social tensions. For this reason, Stein in part defended free competition, but concluded that its negative consequences outweighed its benefits. Because it encouraged egoistic action, free competition produced pauperism and destroyed the organic cohesion of society.¹²⁴ This destruction of organicism led to a Hobbesian condition of 'war of all against all'.¹²⁵ Hobbes would have advocated a resolution of this situation through state power, yet, as Stein wrote, France lacked the strength of the Napoleonic days. A form of spiritual power, a god, a belief, was necessary.¹²⁶

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 39: 'die Idee der Persönlichkeit von dem abstracten Gebiet auf das practische des Statsrechts und der Gesellschaft.'

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 45.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 57.

¹²² Ibid., p. 60.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 68.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 83.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 109.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 111.

Stein thus recognized the primarily pseudo-religious function of early French socialist thought.

This lack of social cohesion, Stein continued, degenerated into a condition of immorality, a lack of *Sittlichkeit*. A way out of this condition, Stein argued, lay in the very socialist doctrines that proliferated in France. The only way to reconcile the hitherto conflicting concepts of liberty and equality was through an emphasis on industry, a widely discussed idea since the publication of Louis Blanc's pamphlet in 1840. This turn towards the organisation of labour signalled, as Stein wrote, the 'beginning of a truly new epoch, which, beginning with industry, will not hesitate to spread over to the political and even the religious consciousness.'¹²⁷ This triumph of industry, its rise to the decisive factor of political life, represented the ultimate implication of the occurrence of the 'principle of equality'.

Stein's definition of 'socialism' was consequently complex and multi-faceted. He first introduced it in the following terms:

The term itself does not yet have a fixed technical definition; sometimes it is used to describe all movements, material as well as intellectual, that aim towards the improvement of social conditions; on other occasions, it denotes solely the school of the Fourierists, who call their theories the *science sociale*. We have the advantage of being able to use this term, as it is still free and unambiguous, to denote a new concept that is about to be created. Socialism is therefore the embodiment of the intellectual and material efforts that seek to realize a system of the organization of labour as an organization of society. We take this term to encompass all phenomena, in which organizational ideas rest on a specific and conscious base idea, or are at least aspiring towards one.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 123: 'Beginn einer wahrhaft neuen Epoche, die bei der Industrie beginnend nicht zaudern wird, sich über das Staatliche und selbst das religiöse Bewußtsein zu verbreiten.'

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 129: 'Das Wort selbst hat noch keine feste technische Bedeutung; bald wird es für alle Bestrebungen, materielle wie intellektuelle genommen, die auf die Verbesserung der gesellschaftlichen Zustände hinzielen, bald ist es allein die Schule der Fourieristen, die ihre Theorie die *science sociale* nennen. Wir haben den Vortheil, für den neu zu schaffenden Begriff jenen Ausdruck noch als einen freieren und nicht vieldeutig gewordenen in Anspruch nehmen zu können. Der Socialismus ist daher der Inbegriff der intellectuellen und materiellen Arbeiten, die ein System

In line with the Saint-Simonian vision, Stein believed that socialism was a ‘science’. As he wrote further along: ‘Socialism does not merely seek an organization of industry, it is not only thinking of improving the lot of the proletariat, but it is a science in its own right; and by attributing its principles to the highest ideas of God and world consciousness, it forms part of the history of France’s the philosophical development.’¹²⁹ In addition, Stein distinguished socialism from communism: ‘The difference is substantial; socialism is positive, communism is negative; the former wants to create a new society, the latter only to overthrow the existing one.’¹³⁰ Such a clear definition of the two concepts was unusual for the time. By drawing such a sharp distinction with them, Stein was able to distance himself from the violent revolutionary implications of these radical ideas, which he attributed exclusively to communism, leaving the possibility to endorse socialism as something positive.

As Stein continued his account of the ‘principle of equality’, socialist philosophy in France had a role similar to that of the philosophy of law in Germany. It was an all-encompassing system of thought that went beyond the state itself.¹³¹ This led Stein to address the important issue of socialism’s relationship to the state:

There is the seeming contradiction that socialism, although it contains a system of industry, and wants to guarantee to everyone absolute material independence, is entirely indifferent towards the form of state, and never cuts through to the idea of freedom, so that St. Simon’s school advocates the absolute rule of the spiritual and scientific authorities, Fourier has no conception of the state at all, and even communism is not seeking any constitution exclusively, but only wants that which will help the individual best secure his

der Organisation der Industrie als Organisation der Gesellschaft suchen und realisieren wollen. Wir umfassen mit diesem Begriff alle Erscheinungen, in denen wir die organisativen Ideen auf einen bestimmten bewußten Grundgedanken zurückführen, oder auch nur diesen letzten selbst angestrebt sehen.’

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 129: ‘Der Socialismus will nicht bloß eine Organisation der Industrie, er denkt nicht allein darauf, das Loos des Proletariats zu verbessern, sondern er ist selbst eine Wissenschaft; und indem er seine Sätze auf die höchsten Ideen des Gottes und Weltbewusstseins zurückführt, gehört er in die Geschichte der philosophischen Entwicklung Frankreichs.’

¹³⁰ Ibid., pp. 130-31: ‘Der Unterschied ist wesentlich; denn der Socialismus ist positiv, der Communismus negativ; jener will eine neue Gesellschaft bilden, dieser nur die bestehende umstürzen.’

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 136.

property [...] What results from this one-sided conception of the state is socialism's inability to ever pervade the entire life of a nation [...] this is the reason why it so far plays only a small role in the current movement, which is essentially still political.¹³²

On top of that, Stein lamented that it struggled to find a place for nationalism: 'The second consequence of referring all principles back to personality is [...] the complete inability to grasp nationality.'¹³³ Stein therefore believed that the socialist project had to be connected to a national one.

Stein went on to clarify the relationship of socialism to two other intellectual traditions, utopian literature and political economy. Stein's verdict on modern utopias was that they were not sufficiently academic, and too removed from real life to be of any value. While it was easy to construct an imaginary holistic system that encompassed state and society, existing proposals did not, as he wrote, contain a single 'true thought'.¹³⁴ In addition, utopias were not a truthful product of their age, which also made them meaningless. Texts such as More's *Utopia* or Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* admittedly described ideas evocative of those voiced in the recent socialist writings, but there was no evidence that Saint-Simon or Fourier had ever read these works.

Stein also criticized the limited scope of political economy. It was only interested in 'industrial power and its laws'.¹³⁵ This field therefore did not pay

¹³² Ibid., p. 137: 'Daraus ergibt sich das scheinbar widersprüchliche Verhältnis, daß der Socialismus, obgleich er ein System der Industrie enthält, und jedem Einzelnen die absolute, materielle Selbstständigkeit sichern will, dennoch gegen die Staatsform gänzlich gleichgültig ist, und zur Idee der Freiheit auf keinem Punkte hindurchbricht, so daß St. Simons Schule zur absoluten Herrschaft der geistlichen und wissenschaftlichen Gewalten, Fourier zu gar keiner bestimmten Anschauung vom Staat gelangt, und selbst der Communismus nicht irgend ein Staatsrecht als ein absolutes sucht, sondern nur dasjenige will, was dem Einzelnen am sichersten zu seinem Besitze verhilft [...] Es ergibt sich aber aus dieser einseitigen Auffassung des Staats die Unmöglichkeit für den Socialismus, je das ganze Leben einer [...] Nation zu erfüllen [...] Das ist der Grund, warum er in den gegenwärtig noch wesentlich politischen Bewegungen so geringe Bedeutung hat.'

¹³³ Ibid., p. 138: 'Die zweite Consequenz aller Zurückführung des Allgemeinen auf die Persönlichkeit ist [...] die gänzliche Unmöglichkeit, zu einem Begreifen der Nationalität zu gelangen.'

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 140: 'allein dies breitgeschlagene Glück enthält doch nirgends einen einzigen wahren Gedanken.'

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 139: 'die industrielle Kraft und ihre Gesetze'.

sufficient attention to individuals and their needs, and ignored the significance of class membership. The division between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, however, decisively shaped contemporary society. Stein's conclusion was that socialism with its all-encompassing scope was better suited to make sense of this phenomenon.¹³⁶ He thus began to make his argument that the solution to current shortcomings was contained in the ideas of socialism themselves.

Having addressed these broader conceptual issues, the rest of Stein's book was dedicated to a discussion of the lives and works of Comte de Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier and their respective followers. Stein recounted the adventurous life of Saint-Simon and discussed his major works, especially the *Nouveau Christianisme*. He reminded his readers that Saint-Simon's books were ignored upon publication and only saw increased attention after 1830, when class divisions in French society became more dramatic. Stein thus stressed that socialist ideas were connected to class tensions. Also important to the reception of Saint-Simon had been that the revolution of 1830 demonstrated 'that there is a political moment in the science of industry, and that the history of constitutional law is connected with the history of political economy, or as we can now say, with the history of property.'¹³⁷ Saint-Simon's achievement was to present, in his *Catéchisme des industriels*, a history of political economy that described the development of industry in its relationship to the state.¹³⁸ His followers, Bazard, Enfantin, and Olinde Rodrigues, developed Saint-Simon's thought further. Together they attracted a lot of attention during the late 1820s and 1830s, yet eventually the group fell apart over an internal conflict in 1831.

Stein had far less intellectual respect for the socialist writer Charles Fourier than he did for Saint-Simon. The main difference, Stein suggested, was that while

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 139.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 170: 'Daß in der Wissenschaft der Industrie ein staatliches Moment verborgen liege, und daß die Geschichte der Staatsrechts genau zusammenhängt mit der Geschichte der Volkswirtschaft, oder wie wir es jetzt sagen können, mit der des Besitzes.'

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 170. See Henri Comte de Saint-Simon, *Catéchisme des industriels* (4 vols, Paris, 1823-24).

Saint-Simonism aimed at practical solutions, Fourierism saw itself from the beginning as a holistic ‘social science’. The main conviction of this school was that pleasure constituted the highest good, an idea that was, according to Stein, strictly opposed to ‘German values’ – the central reason why he could not be favourable to Fourier. He also disagreed emphatically with Fourier’s rejection of the institution of marriage. For Stein this was position completely irreconcilable with the ‘German spirit’.¹³⁹

The arguably most original part of Stein’s discussion was his treatment of recent socialist thinkers in the third part of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*. While being united by their concern to create the ‘organic principle in the shape of association’, they had very different strategies.¹⁴⁰ The Catholic writer Hugues-Félicité Robert de la Mennais (in Stein’s unusual spelling) brought God and religious back into the discussion. Before the July revolution, his pseudo-religious doctrines were ridiculed in France. Yet with the rise of a marked contrast between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat de La Mennais’ thought began to see a more positive reception. In this time, he also fine-tuned his message and directed it specifically to the fight against poverty.¹⁴¹ Another figure Stein discussed was Pierre Leroux. His significance lay in bringing aspects of German metaphysical thought into French philosophy. In his work *De l’Humanité* (1840) he claimed that the ‘dogma of equality’ was the most important feature of contemporary human consciousness.¹⁴² Because he recognized the centrality of the idea of equality, Stein praised Leroux for having an excellent understanding of the spirit of his age.

Stein then turned to Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, the famous author of *Qu’est-ce que la Propriété?* (1840). Attacking the economic thought of theorists such as Destutt de Tracy, Jean-Baptiste Say, Adam Smith and Victor Cousin, the work’s

¹³⁹ Ibid., pp. 220-21.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 295: ‘organische Princip in der Gestalt der Association’.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 304.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 313. See Pierre Leroux, *De l’humanité, de son principe, et de son avenir* (2 vols, Paris, 1840).

main message was that all constitutional promises of equality were made irrelevant by the existence of private property, which was perpetuated by inheritance rights.¹⁴³ Stein found this criticism convincing. Yet he complained that besides this criticism, Proudhon did not put forward a positive message. Stein hoped that Proudhon's future work might develop in this direction. As he wrote, 'there is word that he is currently working on an idea for a constitution of society; if he can find an organic principle, it will show how far he has advanced.'¹⁴⁴

Stein's discussion of Louis Blanc provided particularly important insights into recent developments in French socialist thought. Stein started with a general analysis of the relationship between journalism and politics in France. The state of public opinion, he observed, could be accurately read from the nature of the journals that were published. At first, even leftist publications had neglected socialist ideas.¹⁴⁵ This could be explained with the nature of the opposition in France in the 1830s. 'Up to the year 1835', Stein wrote, 'all struggles and movements in France were of an essentially stately nature.'¹⁴⁶ There was a republican opposition to the conservative party, as well as a strong democratic movement, of which the journal *Le Peuple* was the mouthpiece. Then distinctly proletarian journals were founded, the *Journal du Peuple* and *Le Bon Sens* which preached radical democracy, while rejecting communism.¹⁴⁷ Soon the popular support of communism grew, and since the *Journal du Peuple* refused to follow this trend, it had lost many supporters by 1839.

That year, Louis Blanc made his first intervention. Stein wrote: 'Louis Blanc, although young, had nevertheless already penetrated deeply enough into the content

¹⁴³ Ibid., pp. 323-24. See Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *What is property?* [1840], ed. and trans. by Donald R. Kelly and Bonnie G. Smith (Cambridge, 1994).

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 329: 'Man sagt, daß er gegenwärtig an einer Idee der Verfassung der Gesellschaft arbeitet; kann er ein organisches Princip finden, so wird es hier sich zeigen müssen, wie weit er fortgeschritten ist.'

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 322.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 333: 'Bis zum Jahre 1835 waren alle Kämpfe und alle Bewegungen Frankreichs wesentlich staatlicher Natur.'

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 337.

of his time to draw his own conclusions.¹⁴⁸ To understand Blanc's impact, more pre-history needed to be told. As Stein wrote, since the early 1830s, the workers had begun to realize 'that the improvement of their situation was an independent task and would not be accomplished through the purely political movements and fights of the parties, which only wanted to use it.'¹⁴⁹ At the same time the bourgeoisie became aware that: 'in the struggle against the form of state nothing is won for the good of the people itself, but much is lost of that which has already been achieved.' Most importantly, representatives of the industry developed the view that 'every form of state as such could achieve this ultimate higher goal'.¹⁵⁰ All this put together led to Louis Blanc's argument about the need for an 'organization of labour', the idea that 'actual socialism [...] leaves state and society as they are, and only demands one thing from them, the organization of labour.'¹⁵¹

As Stein continued his account, following his initial formulation of this idea in 1839, Blanc was overcome by doubts and started to question whether 'the reform of the state, which he represented as a member of the opposition, was the first and necessary step, or the attempt to improve the position of the workers.'¹⁵² The occurrence of violent communist groups in around 1839 motivated Blanc to defend the state with even more determination. His *Organisation du travail* (1841) denounced the disastrous consequences of competition and called for a radical reform of the state, which would involve the introduction of public workshops. According to Stein, Louis Blanc was the most influential socialist thinker in France

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 339: 'Louis Blanc, obwohl jung, war dennoch schon tief genug in den Inhalt seiner Zeit eingedrungen, um ein eigenes Resultat aus dem, was um ihn her vorging, zu schöpfen.'

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.: 'daß die Verbesserung ihrer eigenen Lage eine selbstständige Aufgabe sei und nicht durch die rein politischen Bewegungen und Kämpfe der Parteien, die sie nur benutzen wollten, erreicht werde.'

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 339: 'In dem Kampf gegen die bloße Staatsform für das Wohl des Volkes selber nichts gewonnen, sondern vieles von dem Errungenen nur wieder verloren werden.'; 'jede Staatsform als solche diesen letzten höheren Zweck erreichen könne, und über der leeren Opposition die wichtigere Aufgabe vernachlässigt werde.'

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 340: '[Der] eigentliche Socialismus [...] Staat und Gesellschaft bestehen läßt wie sie sind, und nur Eins von ihnen fordert, die Organisation der Arbeit.'

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 341: 'Die staatliche Reform, die er als der Opposition gehörig vertrat [...] das erste und nothwendige sei, oder der Versuch, die Lage der Arbeiter zu verbessern.'

in 1842. His ideas certainly resonated most strongly with the statist tradition in Germany in which Stein had been brought up.

Turning to communist thought, Stein explained why this ‘most dreaded and mysterious phenomenon’ was in fact a rather empty concept.¹⁵³ Despite its conceptual closeness to republicanism and its affinity with the broader move towards ‘equality’ in recent French intellectual history, it was despicable because it took these principles to extremes through its radical call for communal property ownership. Stein rejected communism as a tenable principle not only because of its violent implications, but more importantly, because of its negative nature.¹⁵⁴ He pointed out that the only author who had thought through the political implications of communism was Proudhon, and he after all came to defend outright anarchism. Intelligent people could not believe in communism, Stein argued, and the most important defence against it was therefore education.¹⁵⁵

Yet Stein’s diagnostic method allowed him to nevertheless draw something useful from the study of the history of communist thought – which he discussed in a sub-section of his book entitled ‘character of the history of communism’. It was important to realize, Stein reminded his readers, that the advent of the proletariat had not been accidental. Using a deeply Hegelian language, he argued that it had been bound to emerge given the overall course of the history of the last centuries. A study of communism was therefore a useful project: it could teach those outside France about the nature of the ‘movement towards equality’ that was undoubtedly underway. It could do so even better because communism was such an extreme manifestation of this tendency.¹⁵⁶

Stein divided his ‘history of communism’ into several sections, and first addressed the political debates that formed the background to Babeuf’s revolt in the

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 349: ‘Von allen Erscheinungen der neuesten Zeit ist keine zugleich so gefürchtet und unbekannt wie diese.’

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 358.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 356.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 369.

late eighteenth century. Babeuf's significance lay in realizing that purely political claims were no longer sufficient.¹⁵⁷ Babeuf's project that aimed at radical equality ('diese wahrhaft fürchterliche Gleichheit'¹⁵⁸) was futile. Stein wrote: 'Even the most desperate thinkers will not be able to push the principle of equality further than these overexcited dreamers.'¹⁵⁹

By the time of the July Revolution, the content of communist thought had moved on from the crude version of Babeuf's thinking and addressed new questions. The first stage of this new communism occurred between 1830 and 1835, in the 'epoch of republicanism'. The most radical republicans organized themselves in secret societies, and a highly significant development took place: previously, the proletariat had been characterized by a respect for authority. It was the republicans who encouraged the radical questioning of existing institutions, and as a result, the secret societies began to preach an uncompromising destruction of authority and order. A rift eventually emerged between republicanism and communism, because republicans reject communist violence.¹⁶⁰

The next episode lasted from 1835 to 1839 and was the 'epoch of Babouvismus'. The idea of a complete abolition of private property was increasingly discussed, inspired by the proliferation of Philippe Buonarroti's book on Babeuf. The book had originally been published in 1828, but had seen little attention at the time. In the late 1830s, a book trader by accident discovered unsold copies and immediately sold them at very high prices. This period was followed, since 1839, by that of 'the proletariat and actual communism'. This recent era saw a break between liberalism and radical democracy which meant that the proletariat ended up standing alone. Stein wrote: 'As one side did no longer want to use the *people*, and the other did not dare to use it, it was quietly pushed to the side, or simply used as a scarecrow

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 365.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 370.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 369: 'Es ist auch dem verzweifeltsten Denker nicht möglich, das Princip der Egalität weiter zu treiben, als jene überreizten Phantasten.'

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 383-93.

against the vehement opposition.’¹⁶¹ At the same time, communist ideas spread rapidly across France, and precisely because they felt left alone, the workers developed a stronger sense of class consciousness.¹⁶²

As a final step, Stein distinguished between three sub-groups among contemporary communists: the *travailleurs égalitaires*, a group known as ‘reformers’, and the followers of Etienne Cabet who constituted the ‘real’ communists. The *travailleur égalitaires* were defined by the aim to set up national workshops.¹⁶³ The *reformistes* were close to the left and hence more of a political than a social movement. As Stein wrote, they represented the ‘common sense’ branch of the workers’ movement, who had relatively modest demands and rejected the terrorist attacks and insurrections of other communist groups.¹⁶⁴ Last, Stein turned to the ‘communists in a narrow sense’, namely the followers of Étienne Cabet who had in 1840 published his socialist utopia *Voyage en Icarie*. The book had a watershed effect because it presented a new communist vision at precisely the right time – just as the proletariat had become disillusioned with most other socialist and communist doctrines.¹⁶⁵ On the one hand, Cabet’s system was, like all communist doctrines, a ‘negating’ one. On the other hand, its rejection of revolutions made Cabet’s *Icarie* stand out. The community of goods which he advocated should under no circumstances be brought about by violent means, which made Cabetism in

¹⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 412-13: ‘Indem die Einen den Peuple nicht mehr gebrauchen wollten, die Anderen ihn nicht zu gebrauchen wagten, schob man ihn stillschweigend zur Seite, oder benutzte ihn einfach als Schreckgestalt gegen die gar zu scharfe Opposition.’

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 416.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 421.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 432.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 437: ‘Die ausschweifenden Grundsätze der Egalitaires hatten im Proletariat [...] vielfachen Widerspruch erregt. Ein großer Theil desselben fühlte das Bedürfnis seine communistischen Ideen auf der einen Seite mit der Geschichte zu begründen, auf der anderen durch sie selber zu einem bestimmten, greifbaren Bilde zu gelangen, dem man entgegen arbeiten könne. Der Fourierismus stand ihnen zu fern, Louis Blanc, Proudhon, Lamennais, Pierre Leroux waren ihnen theils zu allgemein, theils nicht entschieden genug dem eigentlichen Communismus zugewendet. Sie suchten daher nach einem Schriftsteller, der beide Forderungen zugleich befriedige; und gerade dieses bot ihnen die *Voyage en Icarie*.’

Stein's view the most promising tendency of communism. With this account, Stein once again underlined the importance of voicing ideas at the right moment in history.

The idea of a 'science of society' and Stein's Germanification of French socialism

How did this history of French socialism and communism impact on Germany? Stein left his readers in no doubt that his book was as much about Germany as it was about France, and that it served a patriotic purpose. The way he made this argument was by invoking a Hegelian notion of historical evolution. Immediately upon introducing his general argument – that socialist and communism thought pointed to the existence of a powerful 'idea of society' – Stein declared that 'no deep-seated movement in a European nation belongs to it alone'.¹⁶⁶ France was, as Stein believed, only the first nation to experience socialism. In accordance with the Hegelian idea of historical progress, the social movement would ultimately reach the German Confederation. Although originally rooted in French national context and the country's distinct historical experience, socialist ideas were at their core of such significance that it was inevitable that they would also affect France's neighbour Germany.

In writing his book, Stein's goal was to allow his fellow countrymen to get to know the phenomenon ahead of time and be able to prepare for it. There were clear resonances in this argument to the methodological claims Stein had made in his doctoral dissertation, namely that by comparing legal developments in different countries one could improve legal practice (and, moreover, gain insights into the progress of reason). Although it might take a transformed shape when it reached Germany, the French idea of socialism was, according to Stein's argument, still something which Germans could learn a lot from. By extending this comparative approach to the occurrence of socialist ideas, Stein was therefore able to present a clear argument for why socialism was relevant to Germany.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. iv: 'Keine tiefere Bewegung eines europäischen Volkes gehört ihm allein.'

As he stressed in the conclusion to *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, Stein also believed that Germany could not only learn from France, but ultimately supersede it. Once again, Stein used the language of Hegelian dialectics to get his point across: 'If a movement is true, it must not only know its goal. Every point between beginning and end must be conquered individually if it wants to come to a resolution.' Stein added: 'If the movement skips a single step, it must go back and start what it had begun again, against what is now a double doubt. The internal unreadiness of truth is a bigger enemy than error.'¹⁶⁷ Stein concluded that, given the presently dismal state in France, the country had to take a step back and catch up on the development it had missed out on. He wrote: 'The history of France and its whole political consciousness must take a big step back to resolve the point which it has skipped [...] if we survey the present situation, we can see that the current constitution is in relation to freedom behind that of 1791.'¹⁶⁸ Germany, by contrast, still had the opportunity to avoid France's mistakes.

Moreover, as he made clear right at the beginning of the book, Stein already had in mind how Germans should respond to socialism. With his book Stein, Stein wanted to encourage the creation of a so-called 'science of society'. To make his point, Stein invoked the tradition of *Staatswissenschaft* and suggested that the existence of this academic discipline made Germans well equipped to also study society. Stein wrote, 'Germany has the great duty to resolve in its science all the contradictions that exist across of Europe'.¹⁶⁹ As Stein explained, existing academic disciplines lacked the means to make the overall conceptualization of the 'social' that

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 444: 'Soll eine Bewegung wahr sein, so muß sie nicht bloß ihr Ziel kennen. Jeder Punkt, der sich zwischen Beginn und Ende findet, muß einzeln überwunden und aufgelöst daliegen, wenn mit dem letzten zugleich die Ruhe in ihm gefunden werden soll.'; 'Überspringt sie [die Bewegung] auch nur eine einzige Stufe, so muß sie zurück, und das Begonnene gegen den jetzt zweifachen Zweifel noch einmal beginnen. Die innere Unfertigkeit des Wahren ist ihm ein größerer Feind, als der Irrthum.'

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 446: 'Die Geschichte Frankreichs und sein ganzes politisches Bewußtsein muss einen mächtigen Schritt zurück machen, um jenen Punkt aufzulösen, den es übersprang [...] sehen wir uns jetzt in dem Gebiete des Geschehenden um, so steht die gegenwärtige Verfassung in Beziehung auf jene Freiheit noch hinter der von 1791.'

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. iv-v: 'Deutschland hat die hohe Aufgabe, alle Widersprüche der europäischen Welt in seiner Wissenschaft zu versöhnen.'

had become necessary: 'The philosophy of law does not cover industry and trade, or estates and classes; the state does not give this unity. Political economy knows nothing of the people's education or their right, it does not and cannot address the issues of honour and property.'¹⁷⁰ All these subjects deserved to be studied both in their own right and in terms of their unifying concept of 'society'.

With his book Stein therefore wanted to inspire the development of a new academic discipline – a so-called 'science of society'.¹⁷¹ In *Der Socialismus und Communismus* Stein sketched only in a very tentative way what this would entail. He cited a few central questions that needed to be addressed:

What is this social movement, the existence of which is being indicated by the socialist and communist impulse? What is a social revolution? What does it want, and where does it lead? How is it different from the political one? In short, what is society and how does it relate to the state?¹⁷²

Over the coming years, Stein repeatedly returned to the idea of a 'science of society'. To elaborate what it encompassed became his lifework.

It was the notion of a 'science of society' that gave Stein's book its major intellectual force. This idea allowed to make sense of socialism from a distinctly German perspective. In formulating his argument, Stein addressed a range of intellectual challenges that at the time preoccupied German intellectuals. His principal achievement was to find a way to explain French socialism in German terms. For this, he drew primarily on the toolkit of Hegelian philosophy. First, Hegel's conception of 'civil society' was by the time Stein was writing a commonplace idea in Germany. Stein's argument about the power of the 'social'

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. v: 'Die Rechtsphilosophie kennt die Industrie und den Handel nicht, nicht die Stände und Classen; der Staat vermag nicht jene Einheit zu geben. Die Volkswirtschaftslehre weiß nichts von der Bildung des Volkes noch von seinem Recht, sie kümmert sich nicht um die Ehre und Besitz, und kann es nicht.'

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p. v: 'Ich weiß, was man erwidern wird [...] Haben wir den nicht alles, was ihr angehören mag, in unserer Wissenschaft des Staats? [...] Nein.'

¹⁷² Ibid.: 'Was ist denn jene sociale Bewegung, deren Dasein uns die socialistischen und communistischen Treiben und Drängen andeuten? Was ist eine sociale Revolution? Was will sie, und wohin wird sie führen? Wie unterscheidet sie sich von der politische? Kurz, was ist die Gesellschaft und wie verhält sie sich zum Staat?'

drew directly on it. By contrasting – just as Hegel had done – the social and the political, Stein was able to make a powerful argument, easily intelligible to Germany's educated public, who might have previously been confused about the meaning of socialism.

Second, Stein utilized Hegel's notion of historical evolution to make the phenomenon of socialism relevant to Germany. By reminding his readers that history was a process of the evolution of reason, and by making a sophisticated argument about why socialism was a significant historical phenomenon, Stein managed to make the case that socialism would in due course become relevant to Germany. The argument that socialist ideas were a 'world historical' phenomenon that was bound to affect Germany gave the book a great sense of urgency, and helped overcome a major conceptual impasse that had developed in relation to Germany and radicalism: the fact that Germany was hardly industrialized, and at the time lacked an impoverished proletariat that could be the carrier of radical ideas.

In other ways too, *Der Socialismus und Communismus* was sensitive to issues in contemporary German debate. In making his case for socialism's relevance to Germany, Stein's strategy was to stress certain elements of French socialism, while downplaying others. For example, while Stein did not deny the originally religious nature of French socialism, he did not present it as socialism's central feature. This way he could avoid getting entangled in the complex debates surrounding the advantages and disadvantages of the German religious tradition to the country's potential for developing a progressive politics. While Hegel had stressed the virtues of 'universality' arising out of the Protestant Revolution, later critics blamed the Germans' religiosity for their inwardness and reluctance to embrace radical politics.¹⁷³

Instead, Stein put his emphasis on the more recent trends in French social thought, which were indeed – with the exception of Lamennais – less focused on

¹⁷³ See Breckman, 'Diagnosing the "German Misery"', pp. 35-37.

religion. The most important French socialist thinker in the early 1840s was Louis Blanc, with whom Stein had established a close connection. The fact that Blanc had a vision of ‘state socialism’ allowed Stein to easily draw parallels between French socialism and the German experience. Stein invoked the state-focused Cameralist tradition in Germany, and its academic outgrowth, *Staatswissenschaft*. This permitted him to not only make socialism relevant to Germany – by defining it essentially as the state-led redistribution of resources – but also to specify a distinct task for Germany: that of creating a ‘science of society’. This ingenious double move allowed Stein’s book to provide an answer to what was a pressing question at the time: how could Germany develop its own tradition of progressive politics?

Conclusion: What was socialism?

Through his sophisticated argument about the deeper meaning of socialist thought Stein managed to make socialism relevant to Germans by assigning to it a distinct place in their political imagination. As one commentator already summed up the achievement of Stein’s book in 1901, owing to *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, ‘socialism was granted a real sphere in the history of civilization and allocated a specific area, namely the economic-legal one.’¹⁷⁴ What is significant is that Stein with his book managed to – at least in parts – dis-associate the ideas of socialism and communism from revolution, something which the majority of the public in Germany were not only naturally afraid of, but which they moreover regarded as ‘non-German’.

This not only prepared the grounds for further discussions about socialism in Germany, as it could now safely be addressed as an ‘academic’ subject, rather than a subversive doctrine. Stein’s arguments also, almost in passing, were responsible for a

¹⁷⁴ David Koigen, *Zur Vorgeschichte des modernen philosophischen Socialismus in Deutschland: Zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Socialphilosophie des Junghegelianismus* (Bern, 1901), p. 249: ‘Damit wurde meines Erachtens dem Socialismus eine reale Sphäre in der Geschichte der Kulturmenschheit eingeräumt und ein bestimmtes Gebiet, nämlich das hauptsächlich wirtschaftlich-rechtliche, angewiesen.’

number of innovations in the intellectual history of socialism. Stein was for example one of the first authors to explicitly link socialist ideas with the disadvantaged position of the proletariat. This became a commonplace trope later on, not least thanks to the powerful narrative with which Friedrich Engels described the condition of the proletariat in *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England* (1845).¹⁷⁵ Stein's work precedes Engels's by three years. Also, a distinction between socialism and communism had so far not been drawn as clearly as in Stein's work. While it did not go on to become as famous as for example Karl Marx's account of socialism and communism as two consecutive stages of development, in the early 1840s Stein's arguments represented a crucial contribution as far as the definition of these two terms was concerned.

Stein notably did not make his arguments because he followed a particular political agenda. He did at the time not associate himself with any particular group. A young scholar, who had not long before his departure for Paris complained to Arnold Ruge about his intellectual confusion, Stein was during his time in France also searching for his own philosophical path. In *Der Socialismus und Communismus* he managed to bring together – often in a not entirely coherent fashion – all the elements of his intellectual formation to date, while also making a clever and sensitive contribution to contemporary German debate. In making his argument, Stein was largely proceeding intuitively, sensing out important issues, without necessarily being able to fully rationalize them. Stein's book was therefore neither, as some commentators have suggested, a distinctly political piece, nor an unoriginal one, that simply summarized the French tradition because Germany lacked an own way to express its political claims.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ Friedrich Engels, 'The condition of the working class in England: From personal observation and authentic sources', in MECW, IV (1975): 295-596. On the crucial impact of his work on the history of socialist thought see Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Engels and the invention of the catastrophic conception of the Industrial Revolution', in Douglas Moggach (ed.), *The New Hegelians: Philosophy and politics in the Hegelian School* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 200-19.

¹⁷⁶ This is an accusation made for example by Robert James Hellman in *Berlin: the Red Room and white beer: the "Free" Hegelian radicals in the 1840s* (Washington, DC, 1990), pp. 49-50: 'The

Instead, Stein's *Der Socialismus und Communismus* was a sharp contribution to intellectual history that gave an overall balanced account of existing conditions at the time. It managed to be insightful because of its methodological innovation, which had come out of a combination of Hegelian dialectics and Stein's comparative approach to legal study. It was precisely because it captured the contemporary spirit so well that the book became successful and influential. Yet, the place Stein assigned to socialism in the wider German political imagination did not remain uncontested. This was shown by the manifold reactions to his book, which will be examined in the next chapter.

remarkable influence of Lorenz von Stein's treatment of French social thought [...] is best understood as borrowing out of necessity.'

CHAPTER 2

Lorenz Stein and German socialism, 1842-1848

Lorenz Stein's *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* was a remarkably successful publication. Several hundred copies were sold and the book was discussed in numerous reviews.¹ In the months following the work's publication in the autumn of 1842, Stein's name became ubiquitous in literary and political journals across the German Confederation. Yet the book's impact was very different to what Stein had expected. He had hoped for his book to contain the spread of revolutionary socialism and contribute to finding a more peaceful solution to social tensions. Instead, it stimulated further interest in radical ideas in Germany. In the aftermath of Stein's publication, German intellectuals became increasingly interested in devising their own socialist theories. Stein thus inadvertently inspired the birth of a radical socialist discourse in Germany.

It was the Left Hegelians, who by the time of the publication of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* were in the midst of an intellectual crisis, who used Stein's book to formulate a distinctly German idea of socialism. Rejecting Stein's vision of state socialism, Moses Hess argued that a union of the French and German intellectual traditions was imminent, which would be accompanied by the birth of a 'philosophy of the deed'. This was a specifically state-less vision of socialism that was over the course of the coming years explored by many German thinkers, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels among them. German socialist writing flourished in the mid-1840s, and this burgeoning radical tradition retained Stein's book as a central reference point, on the one hand acknowledging its achievement in having brought

¹ Sales numbers of the original publication are not known. However, in 1849, following the publication of the book's second edition, Stein's publisher Otto Wigand stated in a letter to Stein that 216 copies of the first (1842), and 300 of the second (1848) edition were still unsold, while a total of 1200 of the two editions together had been sold. See Dirk Blasius, *Lorenz von Stein: Deutsche Gelehrtenpolitik in der Habsburger Monarchie* (Kiel, 2007), p. 3.

the socialist tradition to the fore, and, on the other hand, rejecting Stein's argument about socialism's deeper meaning.

Meanwhile, Stein's book was also fervently discussed among Germany's leading 'state scientists'. The *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* was founded in 1844, a new journal inspired explicitly by the need to extend the traditional discipline of 'state science' to a social dimension, as Stein had suggested in his work. Stein dedicated his main efforts to his academic career as a legal scholar. However, he in the course of the 1840s also responded to his Left Hegelian critics. Their reactions to his work inspired him to fine-tune his theoretical analysis of socialism. This effort culminated in the publication of a revised version of *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* at the end of 1847 in which Stein presented a more detailed 'science of society'. This chapter traces this multi-faceted development of German socialist thought in the 1840s.

The Left Hegelian reception of *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreich*

Initial reviews of Stein's book were overwhelmingly positive. Most readers agreed that Stein had addressed an important topic and were intrigued by his argument, although some struggled to follow why Stein believed that Germany faced the imminent risk of a proliferation of socialistic demands as had been seen in France. One reader of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, the mayor of Osnabrück, for example commented: 'But here in Germany we're not concerned with this kind of revolutionary upheaval. We are completely removed from it.'² Others read Stein's work as an expression of German nationalism and a statement of Germany's intellectual superiority.³ Even in France, Stein's book received positive comments.

² Quoted in Joist Grolle, 'Lorenz von Stein als preussischer Geheimagent', in *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 50 (1968), pp. 167-79 (pp. 92-93 n33): 'Mit dieser Art des Revolutionierens hat's aber in Deutschland keine Not. Davon sind wir toto coelo entfernt.'

³ See for example the review in *Beiblatt zu No. 75 der Rheinischen Zeitung*, 16 March 1843 which is discussed below.

The Fourierist journal *La Phalange* praised Stein for his overall ‘fair and truthful’ account, and only corrected his representation of Fourier, towards whom Stein had been rather critical.⁴ Overall, however, Stein’s book appears to not have been widely known in France. Two years after its publication, Louis Blanc, with whom Stein had had lengthy conversations about socialism, asked another visitor from Germany what had happened to Stein and his book project.⁵

It was only gradually that the Left Hegelians in the months after the book’s publication developed a critique of Stein’s argument. This was closely entwined with their own intellectual trajectory in this time, notably the growing disagreement over the shape of radical politics. In the beginning of the 1840s, many Left Hegelians had not in principle been opposed to the Prussian state and were confident of its potential for reform. Yet King Frederick William IV soon disappointed. Instead of responding to the constitutional demands, he in 1841 appointed as culture minister the reactionary Johann Albrecht Friedrich von Eichhorn who was a declared enemy of the Left Hegelians. This move prompted Bruno Bauer, one of the most politically engaged Left Hegelians, to launch a philosophical attack on the Prussian state, challenging especially its alleged religious legitimacy.⁶ In March 1842, this cost Bauer his university lectureship, a shocking development for the wider community of the radical Hegelians.⁷ Bauer’s dismissal demonstrated that their views were no longer tolerated and that there was no hope that Prussia would change in accordance with the Left Hegelian vision.

⁴ Victor Considérant (ed.), *La Phalange: Journal de la science sociale: politique, industrie, sciences, art et littérature* (Paris, 1843), p. 1307: ‘On trouve chez cet écrivain, qui est loin de se déclarer partisan de notre doctrine, l’exemple d’une discussion loyale et franche, qui pourrait servir de modèle à beaucoup de nos publicistes.’

⁵ See Karl Grün, *Die sozialen Bewegungen in Frankreich und Belgien* (Darmstadt, 1845), pp. 315-14.

⁶ Bruno Bauer, ‘Der Christliche Staat und unsere Zeit’, in H.-M. Saß (ed.), *Feldzüge der reinen Kritik* (Frankfurt, 1968), pp. 7-43.

⁷ The complex dynamic of the group is discussed in Wolfgang Essbach, *Die Junghegelianer: Soziologie einer Intellektuellengruppe* (Munich, 1988), especially pp. 99-140.

Bauer was at the time the Left Hegelian with the clearest political vision. He advocated a form of ‘refurbished republicanism’.⁸ According to Bauer, the individual could achieve freedom in community through the association with universal historic goals.⁹ Yet in addition to being attacked by the Prussian authorities, Bauer was by 1842 also challenged by his fellow Left Hegelians who began to articulate alternative visions of radical politics. Bauer’s major intellectual contender came to be Ludwig Feuerbach. A former student of Hegel, Feuerbach by the late 1830s developed a radical critique of Hegel’s understanding of religion. He rose to fame in early 1841 with the publication of his book, *Das Wesen des Christentums*. In it Feuerbach presented an anthropological critique of religion, arguing that God was a creation into which humans projected their own desired qualities.¹⁰ This argument contained a critique of the atomized concept of individuality which had been the basis of Bauer’s republicanism. Feuerbach articulated the notion of ‘species-being’ through which true social integration could be achieved.¹¹ His humanist ideas were widely discussed in 1841-42, and would form the basis of a German socialist vision.

It is crucial that these tensions among the Left Hegelians escalated at the precise moment when Lorenz Stein’s book was published. Bruno Bauer, looking back at this time a few years later, noted that radicals had by the end of 1842 begun to ‘turn against the state’. Stein’s book happened to be published precisely when their disappointment with state institutions peaked.¹² Instead of buying into Stein’s argument of the intellectual superiority of the German state, Left Hegelian readers of Stein’s book picked up in his description of French socialist systems an appealing

⁸ See Widukind de Ridder and Douglas Moggach, ‘Hegelianism in Restoration Prussia, 1841-1848: Freedom, Humanism, and “Anti-Humanism” in Young Hegelian Thought’, in Lisa Herzog (ed.), *Hegel's Thought in Europe: Currents, Crosscurrents and Undercurrents* (New York, 2013), pp. 71-92 (p. 72).

⁹ Ibid., p. 78. On Bauer’s political philosophy see Douglas Moggach, *The philosophy and politics of Bruno Bauer* (Cambridge, 2003).

¹⁰ Ludwig Feuerbach, *Das Wesen des Christentums* (Leipzig, 1841).

¹¹ See Warren Breckman, ‘Ludwig Feuerbach and the political theology of restoration’, *History of Political Thought*, 13 (1992), 437-62 (pp. 454, 459).

¹² Bruno Bauer, *Vollständige Geschichte der Partheikämpfe in Deutschland während der Jahre 1842-1846* (Charlottenburg, 1847), pp. 76-77.

alternative tradition which they believed they could appropriate for their radical mission.

The decisive intellectual input that allowed German radicals to make this move came from Moses Hess, one of the earliest followers of communist ideas in Germany. In early 1841 he published his second book, *Die europäische Triarchie*, which addressed the central question of how the radical philosophical critique developed in Germany could be translated into real political change.¹³ In addition to editing the newly founded *Rheinische Zeitung*, Hess dedicated the time after his book's publication to a close study of Bauer and Feuerbach's writings.¹⁴ By the end of 1842, this allowed him to emerge with a truly innovative move: the formulation of a 'philosophy of the deed' which used Feuerbachian humanism to devise an anti-statist radical alternative to Bruno Bauer's constitutionalism. This idea was formulated in the course of an engagement with Lorenz Stein's book.

Hess believed that he was the only one who could at the time see through the Left Hegelians' initial confusion regarding the meaning of Stein's book. As Hess observed retrospectively (in an essay on the origins of socialism in Germany of 1844), despite the growing political ambitions of Left Hegelian thought in the early 1840s, the movement never became ready for a transition to real political radicalism.¹⁵ This was manifested when the *Rheinische Zeitung* in spring 1843 published a positive review of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*. The (anonymous) author agreed with Stein on all points and urged readers to take Stein's work seriously.¹⁶ He praised it as 'a truly German deed' and a clever contribution to Germany's national cause.¹⁷

¹³ Anon. [Moses Hess], *Die europäische Triarchie* (Leipzig, 1841).

¹⁴ Horst Stuke, *Philosophie der Tat: Studien zur "Verwirklichung der Philosophie" bei den Junghegelianern und den Wahren Sozialisten* (Stuttgart, 1963), p. 224.

¹⁵ Moses Hess, 'Ueber die sozialistische Bewegung in Deutschland', in Karl Grün (ed.), *Neue Anekdoten* (Darmstadt, 1845), pp. 188-227 (p. 220).

¹⁶ Although there is no firm evidence, the author of the review could have been Karl Marx. See Eva Meyer, *Lorenz von Stein und die Anfänge des Sozialismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt, 1965), p. 98.

¹⁷ *Beiblatt zu No. 75 der Rheinischen Zeitung*, 16 March 1843: 'Eine wahrhaft deutsche That'.

This positive assessment of Stein by the *Rheinische Zeitung*, Hess argued, demonstrated the distance that remained between the Left Hegelians and a commitment to socialism. As he stressed, at no point during its short life from early 1842 to early 1843 did the paper openly embrace socialism or communism, despite such accusations by its opponents.¹⁸ By agreeing with Stein, the Left Hegelians betrayed their philosophical convictions. As Hess wrote, ‘out of pure fear of socialism, which one shared with Stein, Stein’s theological nonsense was overlooked.’¹⁹ The failure to see in Stein’s claims about socialism another instance of the controversial argument about Prussian universality – this is what he meant by ‘theological nonsense’ – according to Hess demonstrated that the Left Hegelians had not grasped the essence of radical politics.

Similarly, Arnold Ruge’s rejection of Stein’s argument was, according to Hess, a symptom of the Left Hegelians’ confusion and backwardness as far as radical politics were concerned. Ruge, Stein’s former mentor who had helped him to get his book published, ended up writing a critical review of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* in spring 1843. Ruge dismissed Stein’s suggestion that Germany did not yet face the same social problems as France and argued that his advocacy of calmness in the face of the socialist danger demonstrated that Stein was out of touch with reality.²⁰ As Hess suggested, Ruge’s negative review of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* could be explained by the fact that he had a very limited knowledge of socialism. Ruge attacked Stein for not being sympathetic *enough* to socialism because he, in 1843, still believed that socialism represented the natural extension of Left Hegelian thought. Shortly after writing this review, Ruge visited Paris and for the first time encountered the socialist movement with its practical, often

¹⁸ See Karl Marx ‘Communism and the Augsburg *Allgemeine Zeitung*’, in MECW, I (1975): 215-223.

¹⁹ Hess, ‘Ueber die sozialistische Bewegung in Deutschland’, p. 208: ‘Aus purer Angst vor dem Sozialismus, die man mit Stein theilte, wurde der theologische Unsinn Stein’s übersehen.’

²⁰ [Arnold Ruge], ‘Vorwort zur Verständigung der Deutschen und Franzosen von einem deutschen Publizisten in der Fremde’, in *Louis Blanc’s Geschichte der zehn Jahre von 1830 bis 1840: Aus dem Französischen übersetzt von Gottlob Fink* (3 vols, Zürich und Winterthur, 1843), I: iii-xxx (pp. vii-viii).

revolutionary, implications. As Hess pointed out, henceforth Ruge distanced himself from socialism.²¹

In his retrospective assessment of this time, Hess admitted that Stein's work was crucial to launching the discussion about socialism in Germany. His book made it legitimate to publicly talk about this subversive phenomenon.²² This not least benefited Hess himself, who had written about communism as early as 1837, yet had not seen many reactions to his work at the time. The new intellectual environment created by the publication of Stein's book provided a platform on which Hess could present his ideas. Hess described how the unexpected level of attention Stein's work received among the radicals puzzled Stein and made him afraid that he could be blamed by the conservative authorities for his (unintended) advocacy of socialism. According to Hess, Stein consequently decided to reduce the number of his enemies by rebranding himself as a conservative. Hess wrote: 'He acts like a Hegelian. The trickery works. He is highly optimistic not to have a single person in Germany disagree with him on principle.'²³ Hess thus admitted that Stein's roots had been more progressive than they appeared retrospectively, and that he only came to present himself as a conservative following the reactions to his book.

In this situation, Hess saw it as his task to challenge Stein and his 'trickery' and to provide a critique of his argument. Hess read *Der Socialismus und Communismus* as soon as it was published in autumn 1842, and probably discussed it with others in his communist reading group which he held in Cologne. By the winter, when he left for Paris to serve as a correspondent for the *Rheinische Zeitung* there, he was working on a lengthy review of Stein's work – which went on to be the perhaps most significant reaction to Stein's work.

²¹ Hess, 'Ueber die sozialistische Bewegung in Deutschland', pp. 205-06.

²² Ibid., p. 210: 'Stein hat die Beschäftigung mit diesem gefährlichen und gemiedenen "Auswuchs" des französischen Geistes legitim gemacht.'

²³ Ibid., p. 211.

Hess in his review unveiled Stein's call for a 'science of society' as a paternalistic solution to the social question.²⁴ Because of his narrow academic background Stein lacked a broader perspective on the meaning of socialism and mistakenly connected the striving for equality with a materialistic quest for pleasure. According to Hess, material desire was only a marginal aspect of the principle of equality, which was a much broader, holistic concept. Stein's statist vision preserved divisions between humans and stood in contrast with the 'absolutely human society, with communism'.²⁵

Hess's aim was to go beyond the state. Recalling his argument from the *Europäische Triarchie*, Hess argued that this could be achieved through a marriage of Germany's humanist philosophy with France's materialism. He pointed out that the development of German idealism had run in parallel to the emergence of socialism in France. Hegel had brought into German thought the notion that human freedom was not found in private endeavours, but in community.²⁶ Germany's tradition of atheism was also crucial, as previously the relegation of hope to the hereafter had undermined attempts to change conditions in this world. French social ideas about the nature of labour added the other component. Proudhon's notion of anarchism mirrored the recent German philosophical attention to self-consciousness. The union between the French and German traditions, Hess suggested, could give rise to a so-called 'philosophy of the deed', a concrete programme for practical action. Such a translation of abstract philosophy into practice would happen automatically once philosophers became aware of the existence of social grievance. They would no longer confine their efforts to constitutional reflections, but would advocate 'activity', fulfilling labour carried out by conscious individuals.²⁷ An

²⁴ [Moses Hess], 'Sozialismus und Kommunismus', in Georg Herwegh (ed.), *Einundzwanzig Bogen aus der Schweiz* (Zürich, 1843), pp. 74-91 (p. 75).

²⁵ Ibid., p. 88.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 80.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 86-87.

anarchic society centred on labour thus represented Hess's alternative to Stein's statist solution to the social question.

Hess and Stein met in Paris in the winter of 1842-43. When Hess announced to Stein that he was preparing for publication a critique of his work, Stein was distraught to learn that somebody disagreed so profoundly with what he had argued, and claimed to be misunderstood. As Hermann Ewerbeck, a German communist in Paris, commented on Stein's meeting with Hess in a letter to Wilhelm Weitling: 'Doctor Stein has been thoroughly humiliated by the critique of the young Dr. Hess from Cologne, and he has admitted in conversation with him that this is not what he had had in mind [when writing the book].'²⁸ Hess had not bought into Stein's methodological claims about the possibility of examining social disharmony in a scientific manner, and following the tradition of *Staatswissenschaft*, to find peaceful, academic and statist solutions to it. Rejecting Stein's diagnostic method, Hess had instead pointed to what he saw as the implicit political message of Stein's argument, and debunked him as a conservative supporter of the existing order.

Although Hess wrote this review in the winter of 1842, it was not published until the summer of 1843. The reason for the delay was a series of dramatic events that unfolded in the first half of 1843. The new censorship law from autumn 1842 was implemented in spring 1843 and led to the closure of the *Rheinische Zeitung* in March, soon followed by Arnold Ruge's *Deutsche Jahrbücher* (as the *Hallische Jahrbücher* had been renamed in 1841). Originally intended for one of these journals, Hess's review eventually appeared in the *Einundzwanzig Bogen aus der Schweiz*, a collection of essays by radical writers that was edited by the radical poet Georg Herwegh, and illegally printed by Julius Fröbel in Zürich in July 1843. The title was an allusion to the fact that pieces over twenty printed sheets did not, unlike short journalistic articles, have to be submitted to the censor prior to publication.

²⁸ Quoted in Edmund Silberner, *Moses Hess: Geschichte seines Lebens* (Leiden, 1966), p. 142: 'Doktor Stein ist ja eigentlich durch eine Kritik des jungen Kölners Dr. Hess ganz gedemütigt worden und hat im Gespräch ihm gestanden, daß er sich unter der Sache doch nicht solcher gedacht habe.'

Shortly after, another publication fuelled fears of socialism in Germany. The workers' leader Wilhelm Weitling was arrested in Switzerland June 1843, and the police report produced upon his arrest published by the legal scholar Johann Caspar Bluntschli. The report detailed the communistic activity of the Swiss workers' clubs and portrayed Weitling as a revolutionary. This publication created the impression that Lorenz Stein's prediction was coming true: previously believed to be a distant French phenomenon, communism had nearly reached Germany. Bluntschli in fact referred to Stein to justify his allegation that Weitling was a revolutionary. After all, Stein had in his recent book proved the link between communism and the revolutionary tradition.²⁹

All these events contributed to the summer of 1843 becoming the birth hour of German socialism. As Hess put it, 'Fröbel [the publisher of the *Einzundzwanzig Bogen*] gave birth to socialism in Germany and Bluntschli became its godfather.'³⁰ After the appearance of these two publications in summer 1843, socialism was discussed more widely than ever. As Hess wrote, 'from this moment Germany's best minds were won over by socialism.'³¹ Stein's book, read in a very selective fashion, and in large parts misunderstood, had played a crucial role in this process. Instead of following his suggestion that Germans should respond to socialism with a 'science of society', Left Hegelian readers used Stein's book to learn more about the content of socialist doctrines. These reactions would over the coming years also force Stein to

²⁹ Johann Caspar Bluntschli (ed.), *Die Kommunisten in der Schweiz nach den bei Weitling vorgefundenen Papieren: Wörtlicher Abdruck des Kommissionalberichtes an die H. Regierung des Standes Zürich* (Zürich, 1843), p. 2. It was followed by a range of works that addressed the fate of Weitling and his communist community, in many cases defending him against the negative portrayal by Bluntschli: See [Sebastian Seiler], *Der Schriftsteller Wilhelm Weitling und der Kommunistenlärm in Zürich. Eine Vertheidigungsschrift* (Bern, 1843); [anon.], *Ueber den Communismus in der Schweiz. Eine Beleuchtung des Kommissionalberichts des Herrn Dr. Bluntschli über die Kommunisten in der Schweiz [angeblich!] nach den bei Weitling vorgefundenen Papieren* (1843); [anon.], *Rück Erinnerungen an den in Zürich entdeckten Schweizer Communismus* (1843); [anon.], *Der Communismus in seiner praktischen Anwendung auf das soziale Leben. Nebst eines Anhangs: Die Kommunisten in der Schweiz, ein Beitrag zur genaueren Kenntniß der jetzigen Parteiverhältnisse im Kanton Zürich* (Schaffhausen, 1845). See also appendix below.

³⁰ Hess, 'Ueber die sozialistische Bewegung in Deutschland', p. 219.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

engage more with socialist theory, and to depart from the purely historical and diagnostic approach of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*.

Stein as a lecturer

Less than three years after he had left his provincial home to explore the intellectual scenes of Berlin and Paris, Stein returned to Kiel in 1843 to become a lecturer at his former university. Over the next five years, a period of relative stability in his life, Stein had the opportunity to digest the diverse influences he had absorbed during his travels, and to work on his distinct philosophical outlook. One of Stein's principal goals was to build his career as a legal scholar, and immediately upon his return to Kiel, he published the fruits of his research in France, a study of *Die Municipalverfassung Frankreichs* (1843).³² It was followed by a book on French criminal law in 1846.³³ In addition, Stein in the 1840s wrote countless reviews of legal works.³⁴ In his work as a legal scholar, Stein's principal stance continued to be an opposition to the historical school, and the call for an international comparative approach to law and its history.³⁵

His duties as a lecturer and his legal research at first absorbed Stein so much that he had little time to continue his studies of socialism. Nevertheless, he retained an interest in its development, as emerges from a letter he wrote to a friend in October 1843:

The imminent start of my first lectures makes it impossible for me, for the time being, to seriously consider writing

³² L. Stein, *Die Municipalverfassung Frankreichs* (Leipzig, 1843).

³³ L. A. Warnkönig and L. Stein, *Französische Staats- und Rechtsgeschichte* (3 vols, Basel, 1846-8), III (1846); L. Stein, *Die Geschichte des französischen Strafrechts und des Processes*.

³⁴ For a comprehensive list of these reviews, see the bibliographies of Stein's work: Max Munding, 'Bibliographie der Werke Lorenz von Steins und der Sekundärliteratur', in Roman Schnur (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft: Studien über Lorenz von Stein* (Berlin, 1978), pp. 561-625 (pp. 563-66 for his legal reviews from the mid-1840s); 'Bibliographie der Werke Lorenz von Steins', in Klaus Fischer, *Die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft: Gesellschaftsanalyse und Geschichtsphilosophie des Lorenz von Stein unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seines gesellschaftswissenschaftlichen Entwurfs* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990), pp. 260-278 (pp. 261-64).

³⁵ Stein, *Geschichte des französischen Strafrechts*, p. viii.

bigger and theoretical works. Yet this is something I would like to do if I have some time to spare. I have already thought much about German communism; however I think it is not yet something worth addressing, as several strands are yet to develop. The only feasible project would be an account of the relationship between Hegelian philosophy and the basic idea of communism! Yet I fear that this would be all too theoretical and dialectical.³⁶

A few weeks later, Stein asked Albert Schwegler, the editor of the *Jahrbücher der Gegenwart*, to inquire with a mutual contact, a Dr Plank, about Moses Hess's current project. Stein also showed an interest in Karl Marx, who had been editing the *Rheinische Zeitung* since the summer of 1842 and about whom Hess Moses probably told Stein when they met in Paris:

I would love to know how he [Marx] stands towards Lamartine, whether they are really thinking about an international journal, and what plans they have in mind. Plank would be able to find all that out through Hess easily, if he doesn't know it already; if he could ask Hess to write to me, or I would prefer it even more if the latter would get Marx to write me a few lines.³⁷

Despite the harsh judgement they had passed on his *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, Stein did not regard Hess and other Left Hegelians as enemies, but continued to take an interest in their thinking.

³⁶ 'Q 9 [Stein to Dr G. Colb, 20 October 1843]', in Werner Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein: Ein Beitrag zur Biographie, zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins und zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Eckernförde, 1956), p. 150: 'Nun stehe ich gerade jetzt unmittelbar vor dem Beginne meiner ersten Vorlesungen, und das macht es mir vorläufig fast unmöglich, an größere und theoretische Arbeiten ernsthaft zu denken. Doch will ich gerne versuchen, ob ich Zeit genug erübrige. Oft schon habe auch ich an den deutschen Communismus gedacht; nur glaube ich kaum, daß die Sache schon ganz spruchreif ist, indem mehrere einzelne Seiten sich erst entwickeln müssen. Das einzige wäre eine Darstellung der Hegelschen Phil. In ihrem Verhältnis zur Grundidee des Communismus! Aber das, fürchte ich, würde gar zu theoretisch und dialectisch ausfallen.'

³⁷ '1. Lorenz Stein an Albert Schwegler, 7 December 1843', in Manfred Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus im Niedergang. Studien zu Lorenz Stein und Hegel* (Munich, 1969), pp. 183-87 (pp. 186-87): 'Ich möchte unendlich gern wissen, in welcher Beziehung er zu Lamartine steht, ob wirklich an ein internationales Journal gedacht wird, und welche Pläne man im Sinne hat. Plank würde das alles durch Heß leicht erfahren, wenn nicht schon wissen; wollte er Heß bitten, mir zu schreiben, oder durch diesen Marx veranlassen, mir einige Zeilen zukommen zu lassen, wärs mir allerdings noch lieber.' I have not been able to establish who Dr Plank was. The international journal Stein probably referred to was the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* which Marx together with Arnold Ruge was preparing in Paris at the time. Its first and only issue was published at the beginning of 1844.

It is, however, unlikely that Hess or Marx took Stein up on this request and made contact with him. Perhaps it is out of this disappointment that Stein in the first half of 1844 decided to write about German socialism after all, in a lengthy essay entitled ‘Blicke auf den Socialismus und Communismus in Deutschland und ihre Zukunft’. The reactions of the Left Hegelians who had refused to read *Der Socialismus und Communismus* as a diagnostic work and attacked its alleged political and philosophical message forced Stein to also move towards a more abstract philosophical discussion. As anticipated in the letter of October 1843, his essay thus consisted mainly of a refutation of the idea of communism from a Hegelian standpoint. For Stein, communism was irreconcilable with the Hegelian principle of dialectic. As he wrote, Hegelian political philosophy presupposed private property as it rested on the belief that individuals sought to achieve self-fulfilment through property ownership. They constantly tried to challenge existing property relations and thereby called into existence a ‘movement’. As communism denied property boundaries, it put an end to this healthy dynamic.³⁸

Stein in the essay explicitly addressed Hess’s attack on his work. He wrote that the ‘Author of the *Triarchy*’ had accused him of not seeing the concept of freedom in equality. Stein retorted that it was communism that undermined freedom and translated into anarchism.³⁹ As he put it, communism was a mere ‘freedom for children’, and a more sophisticated, adult version, contained in the tradition of *Staatswissenschaft*, was within easy reach.⁴⁰ Stein also referred to Arnold Ruge’s critique of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*. In response to Ruge’s accusations that he had underestimated the danger of socialism to Germany, Stein once again

³⁸ Lorenz Stein, ‘Blicke auf den Socialismus und Communismus in Deutschland und ihre Zukunft’, *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1844), II: 1-61 (pp. 11-12).

³⁹ Ibid., p. 12n1: ‘S. den Aufsatz vom Verf. der Triarchie in den Einundzwanzig Bogen.’

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 22: ‘jene Freiheit ist die des Kindes [...] Es gibt eine bessere; sie ist die des Mannes [...] welche [...] die Selbstbestimmung nicht allein der Person überhaupt, sondern jeder einzelnen Person will. Ihre Erscheinung im Gebiete des Wissens vom wirklichen Leben der Menschen ist die Staatswissenschaft.’

stressed that his work had been purely historical and that Ruge's suggestion that he had not properly made sense of a current political phenomenon therefore unjust.⁴¹

In the essay Stein thus showed that he had followed closely the German debate on socialism and communism that had erupted in the year following the publication of his book. Besides taking up Hess and Ruge, he also made reference to a number of further recently published works, for example Heinrich Wilhelm Kaiser's *Die Persönlichkeit des Eigenthums in Bezug auf den Socialismus und Communismus im heutigen Frankreichs* (1843), which Stein criticized as not sufficiently ambitious.⁴² Stein also engaged with Wilhelm Weitling and the effects of the scandal caused by his arrest in summer 1843.⁴³ His work was familiar to Stein because Weitling had at the height of the debate surrounding *Der Socialismus und Communismus* sent him a copy of his latest book, *Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit* (1842).⁴⁴ In the enclosed letter, Weitling had commented: 'I don't believe you are a communist, though some of my friends think you are one and rave about you [...] yet I see that your work has done more good than harm to our cause.'⁴⁵ Stein had certainly not been pleased to hear this. He was not sympathetic to Weitling's communist ideas and in the 1844 essay blamed him for the, in his view, disappointing course of development of German socialism over the past two years.⁴⁶ The scandal surrounding Weitling's communist activism had, according to Stein, diverted Germany from the course of an 'intelligent' preoccupation with socialism on which he had tried to set it with his book.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 4-5 n1.

⁴² Ibid., p. 21-22 n1. See Heinrich Wilhelm Kaiser, *Die Persönlichkeit des Eigenthums in Bezug auf den Socialismus und Communismus im heutigen Frankreich* (Bremen, 1843).

⁴³ See Stein's references to Bluntschli's book and also Sebastian Seiler's work *Der Schriftsteller Wilhelm Weitling und der Kommunistenlärm in Zürich. Eine Vertheidigungsschrift...* (Bern, 1843), in *ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

⁴⁴ Wilhelm Weitling, *Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit* (Vevey, 1842).

⁴⁵ 'Wilhelm Weitling to Lorenz Stein', in Herbert Uhl, Hebert, 'Lorenz von Stein und Karl Marx: zur Grundlegung von Gesellschaftsanalyse und politischer Theorie 1842-1850' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Tübingen, 1977), pp. 224-25.

⁴⁶ Stein, 'Blicke auf den Socialismus und Communismus', pp. 39-40.

To make his point, Stein included a lengthy account of the ‘idea of personality’ throughout German intellectual history. This was also an attempt to defend his methodological approach to the subject of socialism, and to highlight once again the point made in his 1842 book: that all political phenomena needed to be understood first and foremost in their historical context. Stein argued that following the period of ‘Germanic freedom’ in Roman times, the era from Charlemagne to the end of the eighteenth century saw a restriction of liberties, specifically expressed in the superiority of landowners, which was accompanied by the system of estates and a state build of offices.⁴⁷ The rise of ‘self-consciousness’ in opposition to these conditions culminated in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant who together with Fichte and Friedrich Schelling challenged many existing elements of authority and gave rise to the ‘idea of freedom’ in Germany.

What all three philosophers lacked, however, was a practical dimension.⁴⁸ Stein wrote that following the rise of nationalism in Germany, it was after 1833, in the aftermath of renewed revolutionary upheaval in France, that Hegelian philosophy began to act as ‘the philosophy of absolute freedom’ and to dominate German intellectual life.⁴⁹ Stein explained how it assumed this function: ‘Of all [of Hegel’s] works, his philosophy of law was the least persuasive; instead it was the assurance to have in this conception [the absolute law of thought] an organic and self-determining guide through all questions of the age. It was the self-certitude of all knowledge that made an infinite step forwards.’⁵⁰ It was this philosophical revolution brought about by Hegel which had the most dramatic political consequences, translating into the rise of philosophical radicalism in Germany in the late 1830s.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 25.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 28-29.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 36: ‘Hegels Philosophie war damit die Philosophie der absoluten Freiheit.’

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 36: ‘Von allen seinen Werken hat seine Rechtsphilosophie am wenigsten Ueberzeugungen gestellt; sondern die Gewißheit, in dieser Auffassung [das absolute Gesetz des Denkens] eine organische und selbstbedingte Leiterin durch alle Fragen der Zeit zu haben. Die Selbstgewissheit alles Wissens war es, die einen unendlichen Schritt vorwärts that.’

A belief in dialectic and the conviction that imperfect conditions could be changed through action had, as Stein wrote, also inspired the growing political radicalism in Germany in the early 1840s, especially among the Left Hegelians. The emergence of an oppositional press in 1842-43 had been the logical outcome of the philosophical preoccupation with freedom. It also led to a consideration of the conceptual possibilities of communism and socialism – the process Hess had described in his essay on the history of socialism in Germany. Disagreeing with Hess's assessment, Stein wrote that this was a wholesome development that did not necessitate seditious consequences. It was the sudden news about Wilhelm Weitling in 1843 that generated the impression that communism was already present in the German Confederation, and, to Stein's regret, provoked repressive measures against the radical journals. The *Rheinische Zeitung* was accused of communist tendencies, despite the fact that it had never advocated the abolition of private property. As Stein wrote, it owed its fate to the fact that 'it represented in the field of journalism, the deed of Hegelian philosophy'.⁵¹ Its closure, Stein lamented, aborted a healthy philosophical development, and gave rise to the crude variant of communism such as the thought of Moses Hess.⁵²

Stein in this piece on socialism in Germany therefore began to elaborate his theory of a 'healthy' and proactive science of society, that drew on socialism and stood in opposition to the purely negating tendency of communism. Yet, Stein also extended his historical discussion, and highlighted the importance of seeing the recent phenomenon of socialism in historical perspective. That it was a great concern of Stein's to defend his historical approach against critics like Hess also emerged when Stein revisited the topic of German socialism in an essay of 1845. Reviewing two recent German publications on the subject of socialism (discussed in more detail below), he addressed the claim made by figures like Hess in their criticism of Stein's *Der Socialismus und Communismus* that 'the views and convictions of the people

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 47.

⁵² Ibid., p. 55.

should not only be seen as a field of historiography, but a force in the development of things'.⁵³ Stein countered that what had not yet been achieved was a 'historiography of society' (*Geschichte der Gesellschaft*), essentially a form of social history that paid attention to the individuals' experience of broader historical phenomena. Writing this type of history would indeed be revolution. Stein also defended his perspective on socialism by claiming that writing history was what truly allowed the understanding of a phenomenon.⁵⁴

The evolution of Stein's thinking on socialism in the 1840s was entwined with his wider intellectual development and his work as a lecturer in this period. In addition to his area of specialization, French legal history, Stein in the 1840s lectured on a broad range of subjects. His courses included German constitutional law, international law, the philosophy of law, 'state science' (*Enzyklopädie der Staatswissenschaften*), political science (*Politik*), and the history of political thought (*Geschichte der Staatstheorien*).⁵⁵ The manuscripts to two of his lecture courses survive, and they offer important insights into Stein's philosophical outlook at the time.⁵⁶ They show that Stein was by no means subversive in his lectures. Indeed, the vision of the state he put forward was fairly conservative: The state was a person, and its 'will' stood above everything. Yet, Stein in these lectures notably also explained why the history of political thought was important. While the state was largely an organic concept, Stein acknowledged that mechanistic elements also played a role. As he wrote: 'The state undeniably has elements of a machine because of its uniform and autonomous acts. It is further equally undeniably the manifestation

⁵³ Lorenz Stein, 'Socialismus und Communismus. 1) *Die Geschichte der Gesellschaft in ihren neueren Entwicklungen und Problemen*. Von Th. Mundt. 8. 435 S. Berlin, Simion 1844, 2) *Die Bewegung des Socialismus und Communismus*. Von Th. Oelckers. 8. 162 S. Leipzig, Fest. 1844', *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, 1845, I: 429-48 (p. 429): 'Auffassungen des Volkes und seine Ueberzeugungen nicht bloß für ein Gebiet der Historiographie, sondern für eine Macht in der Entwicklung der Dinge anzuerkennen.'

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 433.

⁵⁵ See Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 32.

⁵⁶ See Heinz Taschke, *Lorenz von Steins nachgelassene staatsrechtliche und rechtsphilosophische Vorlesungsmanuskripte: Zugleich ein Beitrag zu seiner Biographie und zu seinem Persönlichkeitsbegriff* (Heidelberg, 1985).

of a higher idea. It is the highest forces and receives its order through something other than the individual. In the state, also the highest life of the individual as well as of humanity is implemented.⁵⁷ As the state was always a mixture of diverse elements, a critical history of political thought was an important element of the study of politics. As Stein put it: ‘This is how we arrive at the idea of a history of state theories. This history must simultaneously be a critique’.⁵⁸ This resonated with his work on socialism. By locating socialism in historical context, Stein was trying to develop a critical perspective on it.

Stein’s history of political thought lectures, which have also been preserved, covered an impressive range of thinkers. His account began with an overview of Plato and Aristotle, followed by a discussion of Roman legal science. Stein then turned to Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Ambrosias and other medieval Christian thinkers, discussing especially their notion of equality. Stein addressed the sixteenth-century theorist Franciscus Hottomannus, Jean Bodin, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Albertus Magnus, Peter Lombard and Pierre Abélard. He proceeded to discuss Karl Göschel, Samuel von Pufendorf, Christian Thomasius, and Hugo Grotius. He also dedicated a lengthy discussion to Hobbes. Summing up, he wrote:

The character of the entire development from Hugo Grotius to Wolff lies in that all these philosophers conclude their idea of right with the state and therefore recognize the state as the absolutely highest instance of law. Therefore they are also decisively against recognizing international law in the sphere of the philosophy of law. While the idea of law should be valid for the state, there should be no law that is above the state.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Lorenz Stein, ‘Vorlesungsmanuskript “Allgemeines deutsches Staatsrecht”, 1843’, in Taschke, *Lorenz von Steins nachgelassene staatsrechtliche und rechtsphilosophische Vorlesungsmanuskripte*, pp. 48-85 (p. 83): ‘Der Staat hat unleugbar die Elemente einer Maschine in seiner gleichförmigen, durch sich selbst vollziehende Form der Tat. Er ist ferner ebenso ungleugbar die Erscheinung einer höheren Idee. Er ist die höchste Kraft und empfängt seine Ordnung durch etwas anderes als durch den Einzelnen. – Auch vollzieht sich im Staat das höchste Leben des Einzelnen wie der Menschheit.’

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 84: ‘So ergibt sich die Idee der Geschichte der Staatsrechtstheorie. Sie muß zugleich eine Kritik sein.’

⁵⁹ Lorenz Stein, ‘Vorlesungsmanuskript “Geschichte der Rechtsphilosophie”, 1846’, in Taschke, *Lorenz von Steins nachgelassene staatsrechtliche und rechtsphilosophische Vorlesungsmanuskripte*, pp. 86-220 (p. 188): ‘Der Charakter dieser ganzen Entwicklung von Hugo Grotius bis auf Wolff liegt

For Stein the history of political thought was therefore clearly the history of the emergence of a strong state.

Stein's comments on the 'German school' of political thought, thinkers such as Samuel von Pufendorf, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz, Christian Thomasius and Christian Wolff, are particularly interesting. Stein claimed that while the starting point of German political thought was, as in France and England, contract theory, Germany was ultimately destined 'to take up a higher position'.⁶⁰ Germany had absorbed the influences of other nations, and already gone through a 'contract theory phase'. This period had come to an end in the early nineteenth century, concluding with Kant and Fichte, when the truly German, idealist, conception of the state emerged. Summing up the development brought about by Kant, Stein wrote: 'The idea of a state of nature and contrast between *status naturalis* and *civilis* was replaced by the idea to mediate ethical life with the idea of right.'⁶¹ Stein compared Kant to Fichte and argued that their main difference lay in the conception of the contract. While for Fichte the state was created through a contract, in Kant's conception, individuals entered contracts voluntarily, and a state was thus created purely through their will. What followed from this was that the state 'consequently also does not have absolute rights over the individual, but can only eject him. So the state is dissolved into the individual and his autonomy.'⁶² Stein in these lectures also addressed Hegel, and notably pointed out that in contrast to Kant and Fichte, Hegel's

nun darin, daß alle diese Philosophen ihre Idee des Rechts mit dem Staate abschließen und daher den Staat als das absolut Höchste im Recht anerkennen. Daher denn auch der entschiedene Charakter kein Völkerrecht im Gebiet der Rechtsphilosophie anzuerkennen. Es soll freilich die Idee des Rechts für den Staat gelten, aber es soll kein Recht über dem Staate geben.'

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 138: 'Einen höheren Standpunkt einzunehmen'.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 169: 'An die Stelle der Idee des Naturzustandes und des Gegensatzes zwischen *status naturalis* und *civilis* trat nun der Gedanke, jene Idee der Sittlichkeit mit der Idee des Rechts zu vermitteln.'

⁶² Ibid., p. 179: 'So entsteht auch für Fichte der Staat durch Vertrag. Aber dieser Vertrag ist ein ganz anderer als der Kantische. Der Einzelne soll den Vertrag nicht eingehen, weil er das Gesetz der Vernunft ist, sondern nur, weil er ihn eingehen will. Seine Freiheit besteht daher auch nicht in Übereinstimmung mit dem Gesetz, sondern in seinem Willen. Der Staat ist daher nicht ein absolut in durch sich Bedingtes, sondern nur der Wille aller Einzelnen. Er hat daher auch kein absolutes Recht über den Einzelnen, sondern kann ihn nur ausstoßen. So löst sich der Staat in die Einzelnen auf und seine Selbständigkeit.'

philosophy had a ‘political history’. It had played a real role in the Prussian reforms of the early nineteenth century and consequently, as Stein wrote, ‘it thus happened that Hegel’s philosophy was between the years 1820-1830 read as the servile and state philosophy.’⁶³ While Stein did not forward any original ideas in these lectures, they nevertheless offer important insights into his political vision at the time.

Soon after he began lecturing at Kiel, Stein publicly called for the introduction of courses in *Staatswissenschaft* in Schleswig-Holstein. This academic discipline was important across the German Confederation, yet was not taught in Kiel at the time. Stein had drawn deeply on its academic language in his book on socialism, but as he admitted in the mid-1840s, it was not until after its publication that he actually began to study *Staatswissenschaft* in depth.⁶⁴ In an article, published in the liberal and patriotic local paper *Neue Kieler Blätter*, Stein made a distinctly nationalist argument for the need for a *Staatswissenschaft* curriculum at the university of Kiel. He recounted how Frederick II’s introduction of an efficient administration, supported by courses in Cameralism in universities which Frederick was also responsible for, had turned Prussia into a super-power. *Staatswissenschaft* was thus fundamental to Schleswig-Holstein’s potential to become an independent and powerful duchy.⁶⁵ The call for teaching in *Staatswissenschaft* was also connected to Stein’s methodological objections to the historical school of law. As Stein claimed, lawyers were wasting their time on the study of historical sources. Instead law should be taught in conjunction with a range of other administrative subjects to give future law civil servants – so far commonly trained in law alone – a more well-rounded education. As Stein put it, the choice was between producing ‘mechanische

⁶³ Ibid., p. 185: ‘So kam es, daß die Hegel’sche Philosophie zwischen den Jahren 1820-1830 als die servile und Staatsphilosophie ausgegeben wurde.’

⁶⁴ ‘3. Lorenz Stein an Robert von Mohl, 14 September 1845’, in Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus* (Munich, 1969), pp. 190-92 (p. 191).

⁶⁵ L. Stein, ‘Die Nothwendigkeit einer staatswissenschaftliche Vorbildung auf der Landeshochschule’, in Dr. Karl Lorenzten (ed.), *Neue Kieler Blätter* (Kiel, 1844), pp. 291-311 (p. 293).

Administrativbeamte' (mechanical civil servants) or 'lebendige Jurist[en]' (spirited jurists).⁶⁶

The background to this intervention was, besides the intellectual insight, also Stein's growing nationalism. Following his return to Kiel, he had become involved in Schleswig-Holstein's national movement, the duchy's distinct expression of *Vormärz* radicalism driven by the long-standing conflict with Denmark. Together with his colleagues from the university, for example the historians Georg Waitz and Johann Gustav Droysen, Stein attended political meeting and debates.⁶⁷ Shortly upon his return to Kiel Stein also began writing for the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, a South German paper to which he would notably remain connected for the rest of his life.⁶⁸ As before, a lack of finances – Stein did not yet have a full professorship, but was an hourly-paid *Privatdozent* – was the main motivation behind the journalistic activity, but Stein also used this as an opportunity to voice his opinion on current politics. Most of his articles for the *Allgemeine Zeitung* in this time related to Schleswig-Holstein and its burgeoning national movement.

A further motivation behind Stein's call for the creation of a university chair in *Staatswissenschaft* was a more self-centred one. Having worked as a *Privatdozent* for more than a year, Stein was looking to obtain a permanent position. In November 1844 he wrote to the Danish king with the plea to promote him to a full professorship. Once again he stressed his humble background and his reliance on public pay: 'Raised as an orphan, I have no family, no fortune, [and] only thanks to my king's mercy have I been able to exist and to pursue my academic career so far.'⁶⁹ Stein managed to secure a positive letter of recommendation from his colleagues in the law faculty, who described him as 'a very productive man,

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 298.

⁶⁷ Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 31-32.

⁶⁸ Stein's journalistic activity for the *Allgemeine Zeitung* has been examined by Bodo Richter in *Völkerrecht, Außenpolitik und internationale Verwaltung bei Lorenz von Stein* (Hamburg, 1973) which also contains a complete list of Stein's contributions.

⁶⁹ Cited in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 152: 'Als Waisenknabe erzogen, habe ich keine Familie, kein Vermögen, nur durch die Gnade meines Königs ist mir meine Existenz möglich geworden, und nur durch sie bin ich im Stande gewesen, bis dahin auf der wissenschaftlichen Bahn fortzuschreiten.'

equipped with a rare intellectual gift' and praised his academic work, not least *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*.⁷⁰

But Stein had enemies. The university curator Johann Friedrich Jensen spoke out against Stein and rejected his application, on the pretext that the university could not afford a new chair.⁷¹ Jensen's true motivations became clear when Stein re-applied a year later, when Jensen again did everything he could to undermine Stein's appointment. This time, he made clear that he was concerned about Stein's political outlook. In a letter to the university authorities he wrote that preference should be given to a candidate who had already proven his 'loyal disposition'. Stein, by contrast, 'had during his university years been a dedicated member of the party of movement among the students, and after graduation contributed to Ruge's *Hallische*, then *Deutsche Jahrbücher*.' While Jensen thought it likely that Stein had since become more 'moderate', he could not be sure of it, and thus vetoed Stein's appointment.⁷²

This was a huge disappointment for Stein who had not expected that his interest in radical ideas would come to haunt him in such a way. While he had already begun to distance himself from socialism following his return to Kiel in 1843, concentrating predominantly on his career as a legal scholar, he now became particularly cautious and published all his political writings anonymously. His efforts were rewarded and in spring 1846 Stein was appointed to a permanent chair, yet only

⁷⁰ 'Q 11 [support letter for Stein from colleagues in the Kiel law faculty, 12 December 1844]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 152-54 (p. 152): 'Mit seltenen Geistesgaben ausgestatteten, sehr produktiven Mann erkennt.'

⁷¹ 'Q 12 [Johann Friedrich Jensen to Königliche Schleswig-Holstein-Lauenburgische Kanzlei, 20 December 1844]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 154-55 (p. 155).

⁷² 'Q 14 [Johann Friedrich Jensen to Königliche Schleswig-Holstein-Lauenburgische Kanzlei, 28 November 1845]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 156: 'Sollte daher eine Professur für diese Disciplinen hier errichtet werden, so wäre es wünschenswerth wenn ein Docent sie bekleidet, dessen Gesinnungen bereits bewährt sind, wenn ein solcher zu erlangen seyn sollte. Ob nun diese von dem Supplicanten behauptet werden kann, vermag ich nicht mit Sicherheit anzugeben. Während seiner Studienzeit gehörte er der Bewegungspartei unter den Studirenden sehr entschieden an und er arbeitete nach seiner Promotion, mit an den von Ruge herausgegebenen Hallischen, dann deutschen Jahrbüchern. Dass er sich späterhin gemäßigten Ansichten zugewandt, ist mir zwar nicht unwahrscheinlich, es ist mir aber auch nicht bekannt geworden.'

after Jensen had made him write down the ‘maxims’ of his teaching, in other words to promise to stay out of politics.⁷³ Stein was appointed professor of ‘state science’ in April 1846, and, aged 30, finally acquired a degree of financial stability. Later that year, he married Dorothea Steger, the daughter of a Kiel merchant.⁷⁴

***Staatswissenschaft* and socialism in the 1840s**

The problems Stein faced in the course of his application for a professorship meant that it became increasingly difficult for him to keep up his interest in socialism. He was forced to distance himself more decisively than before from the radical Hegelians who had been the first to pick on the ideas from his book. Yet, Stein’s *Der Socialismus und Communismus* in the course of the 1840s also produced another result. As Stein had hoped, it inspired German ‘state scientists’ to start exploring socialism from an academic perspective. In the years after 1842, leading scholars of *Staatswissenschaft* followed Stein’s call and began to write on socialism. Like Stein, they recognized the need for the state to address social issues and saw a connection between recent social tensions and the long-standing tradition of state welfare in Germany. It was through conversation with these scholars that Stein could continue to explore the meaning and potential of socialism.

In 1843, Robert von Mohl, one of Germany’s leading state scientist who was teaching at Tübingen, published a review of Stein’s *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. Stein, who was only beginning to study the field of *Staatswissenschaft* properly, had a lot of admiration for the older colleague and must have been deeply honoured by the review. As we saw in the last chapter, Mohl had already developed an interest in social issues in the 1830s. In the review of Stein’s work, his main concern was to stress the great danger coming from the socialist and communist doctrines. He agreed

⁷³ As Schmidt writes, these ‘Maximen’ do not survive. See Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 35.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

with most of Stein's claims, making only a few minor, primarily stylistic, criticisms. Mohl, for example, said about Stein's book: 'The author constructs too much, and goes into too much detail on some topics; the language is Hegelian and dull [...] He also could have emphasized better the economic side of the question, without doubt one of the most significant aspects.'⁷⁵ Mohl further criticized the fact that Stein had not addressed English socialist thought – something Stein had consciously omitted as he believed socialism needed be studied in a national context and he had chosen to concentrate on France.⁷⁶

This disagreement was the point of departure for Mohl's own reflections on socialism. Unlike Stein, Mohl did not believe that socialism and communism were specifically French phenomena, and was willing to see a connection between the French, English, and also Spanish socialist movements.⁷⁷ What this meant, in Mohl's view, was that, taken together, the 'communist camp' was very large and constituted a real danger to Germany. As Mohl put it, 'If it came to an open battle between us and communism, the number of enemies would potentially be vast.'⁷⁸ Mohl predicted that the proletariat would soon take over political power in France and, given the manifold links between the two countries, this would affect Germany. Furthermore, Mohl emphasized that conditions in Germany were not too dissimilar from those in France. A middle class had there too been fighting for constitutional rights, and a large group of impoverished workers also existed.⁷⁹ The only difference between France and Germany was, in Mohl's view, that Germany was much more under the

⁷⁵ Robert von Mohl, 'Ueber Socialismus und Communismus', in *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1843, 11 and 12 January 1843 (p. 89): 'Es wird unserer Ansicht nach von dem Verfasser zu viel construiert, unnöthig weit in manchen Dingen ausgeholt; die Sprache ist hegelisch, schwerfällig und gesucht. Auch wären sonder Zweifel die volkswirtschaftliche Seite der Frage, sicher eine der bedeutendsten, besser hervorzuheben gewesen.'

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 89.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 82.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 82: 'Käme es also zu einem offenen Kampf zwischen dem Communismus und uns, so wäre möglicherweise die Masse der Gegner unermesslich.'

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 82.

influence of religion which provided a safeguard against more radical communist doctrine.

Given the recent proliferation of socialist writing in France, Mohl, like Stein, thus envisaged an imminent fight for the future of 'European civilization'.⁸⁰ In his review of Stein's book, he discussed some measures that could be taken to undermine this communist threat in Germany. The first option was to exile radicals. Yet, Mohl shared Stein's belief that the existence of class conflict was intrinsic to modern society, and thus concluded that this would not be a satisfactory long-term solution. The 'mechanism of society' would in due course produce a new radical proletarian class. The second option, political solutions, for example the extension of the franchise and constitutional rights, only benefitted the middle class; charity was futile; education did not improve the 'moral condition'. As Mohl argued, only one option therefore remained: that of responding to the demands of the proletariat by providing sufficient labour and good working conditions. While some, as Mohl wrote, doubted that it was possible to meet the demands and satisfy the working class, he believed that this was achievable, and concluded: 'We have to give up our national economies and replace them with an organisation of labour.'⁸¹ Mohl's statement showed that Louis Blanc's ideas of state-led labour organisation, which had also been central to Stein's argument, resonated more widely with other German state scientists.

Another prominent state scientist, Johannes Fallati, also reviewed Stein's work. At the time Mohl's colleague in Tübingen as professor of political history and statistics, Fallati had spent time in England in the 1830s to study the country's statistical system and had also picked up on the rising social tensions and socialist ideas there.⁸² His review of Stein, published in July 1843 in consecutive issues of the

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 82: 'Nichts ist daher weniger unmöglich als daß wir zu einem äußern oder einem innern Kampf zur Rettung der Civilisation gezwungen werden können.'

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 90: 'unsere Nationalökonomien müssen aufgegeben und durch eine Organisation der Arbeit ersetzt werden.'

⁸² On Fallati see Karl Klüpfel, 'Fallati, Johannes', in ADB (1877), p. 558 <<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118831208.html>> [accessed 28 October 2013].

Jahrbücher der Gegenwart, was not so much an independent discussion of the subject as a comprehensive summary of Stein's work. In total almost twenty pages long, the review focused on explaining core aspects of Stein's argument, in particular his understanding of the distinct role of the proletariat in modern times. Fallati stated that he overwhelmingly agreed with Stein's argument, and only pushed for a stronger consideration of the social struggles in earlier episodes in history, such the German Peasants' War, which he discussed at length.⁸³ Stein acknowledged Fallati's 'excellent review' in his 1844 essay on socialism in Germany, and credited him with having widened his understanding of the concept of the proletariat to include people from earlier periods in history and from non-industrial groups.⁸⁴

Mohl and Fallati would in 1844 be among the founding members of the *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, a new academic journals that was explicitly inspired by the rise of social forces which Stein had drawn attention to in his *Der Socialismus und Communismus*. Soon to be the leading publication in the field of state science, the journal's mission was – exactly as Stein had suggested – to broaden the traditional boundaries of the discipline of *Staatswissenschaft* and to also study social issues. In the introductory statement to the journal's first volume, the editors declared that their journal was intended to be 'not a newspaper and not a political journal'.⁸⁵ Their concern was not only to study the history of existing conditions, but also to grasp the current changes in the social field. They announced: 'We will address pauperism, the proletariat, the organisation of labour, association, movement of peoples.'⁸⁶

Over the coming years, the *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* indeed became an important platform for discussion of socialism. In 1845, Mohl

⁸³ Johannes Fallati, 'Review of *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*', in *Jahrbücher der Gegenwart*, July 1843, nos 1-12: pp. 1-2, 5-6, 9-10, 13-14, 17-18, 22-23, 26-27, 30-31, 34-36, 38-39, 43-44, 47-48.

⁸⁴ Stein, 'Blicke auf den Socialismus und Communismus in Deutschland', p. 41n1: 'vortreffliche Recension meiner Schrift.'

⁸⁵ 'Vorwort', *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 1 (1844), 3-6 (p. 4).

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 6: : 'Demgemäß werden z. B. Pauperismus, Proletariat, Organisation der Arbeit, Association, Völkerverkehr von uns scharf ins Auge gefasst werden.'

published in it a piece that engaged with socialist literature across the centuries. Unlike Stein, Mohl found it appropriate to link the recent socialist works to older utopian writing like Plato's *Republic*, Thomas More's *Utopia*, Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* and other utopias from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This tradition, Mohl wrote, had culminated in Étienne Cabet's *Voyage en Icarie* which he saw as the most recent work of this kind and a truly 'communist' utopia. Mohl denied that utopias had any direct use, and dismissed all of their positive proposals, such as the abolition of private property or their radical ideas regarding a new role for women.⁸⁷ However, he argued that utopias had an important indirect effect by drawing attention to the lot of the lowest order of society.⁸⁸ Utopian literature ultimately inspired socialist thought which had more realistic applications.⁸⁹ Mohl also claimed that utopian writings provided an important counterweight to the traditional philosophy of law, which tended to theorize existing shortcomings, rather than critique them. The original approach of utopian writing was eye-opening, showing that legal science, political economy and state science had reached their limits and could not adequately address recent social problems.⁹⁰ As Mohl wrote, this tradition of literature raised serious doubts 'whether the basic idea of our modern *Rechtsstaat*, the individual and isolating selfhood it promotes, really is the ultimate conclusion educated humanity has come to?'⁹¹

Despite some minor disagreements, Mohl and Stein shared a major goal, namely to challenge existing academic disciplines and to make the social a serious subject of scholarly study. Stein therefore soon sought contact with Mohl. He first wrote to him in September 1845, stating his deep admiration for his work, and

⁸⁷ Robert von Mohl, 'Die Staatsromane. Ein Beitrag zur Literaturgeschichte der Staatswissenschaft', *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 2 (1845), 24-74.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65: 'Ob der ganze Grundgedanke unseres modernen Rechtsstaates, die vereinzelte und vereinzelnde Selbstsucht, wirklich das letzte Wort ist, welches die gebildete Menschheit zu sagen weiß?'

thanking him for his review of his book.⁹² Stein admitted that he was relatively new to the field of *Staatswissenschaft*. Yet he discussed the possibility of publishing a piece in the *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* (which, as emerges from the letter, Fallati had already proposed to him). It would be the perfect outlet for his recent work, combining the older interest in socialism, with his recent turn to the serious study of ‘state science’.⁹³ Stein’s request was successful, and his piece ‘Der Begriff der Arbeit und die Principien des Arbeitslohnes in ihrem Verhältniß zum Socialismus und Communismus’ was published in the *Zeitschrift* in 1846.

Stein in his piece responded to several of the points Mohl had made in his essay on utopian literature, and also showed that he had already developed many of his ideas further and moved on from some claims he had made in his 1844 piece on socialism and communism in Germany. He for example further specified his ideas on the relationship between socialism and communism. What distinguished socialism (and made it the more sophisticated concept) from communism was that it described the distribution of goods in terms of labour, while communism did so in a purely abstract way. Stein proposed two stands of development. On the one hand, it was important to provide workers with education that would enable them of ‘higher’ labour. On the other hand, Stein argued that the aim should be to develop the mechanized production processes as far as possible, so that, as he put it, ‘nature took over natural labour from free man, so that he can dedicate time to himself and independent life.’⁹⁴ This Fourierist idea had so far not been as central in Stein’s work.

⁹² ‘3. Lorenz Stein an Robert von Mohl, 14 September 1845’, in Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus*, pp. 190-92 (p. 190).

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

⁹⁴ Lorenz Stein, ‘Der Begriff der Arbeit und die Principien des Arbeitslohnes in ihrem Verhältniß zum Socialismus und Communismus’, in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 3 (1846), 233-90 (p. 289): ‘Es muss auf der einen Seite dem Stande der Arbeiter eine Erziehung, geistige und körperliche, gegeben werden, die ihn persönlich zur höheren Arbeit befähigt; und auf der anderen Seite muss das Maschinenwesen mit aller Kraft zur höchsten Stufe der Vollendung gebracht werden, damit die Natur dem freien Menschen die natürliche Arbeit abnehme und ihn sich selber und seinem selbstständigen Leben überlasse.’

A year later, Johannes Fallati continued the discussion on socialism in the *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* with his piece ‘Zur Verständigung über Begriff und Wesen des Socialismus und des Communismus’, in which he responded to both Mohl’s and Stein’s articles. Fallati’s primary goal was also to elaborate on the distinction between socialism and communism. This was important, he claimed, as much of socialism’s bad reputation stemmed from its association with revolution and disorder which were linked to communist doctrine. The other purpose of the article was to stress that socialism and communism were not just phenomena of economic thought, but ‘the reproduction of general and principal directions of all social developments, that only manifest themselves in a particular form in the economic sphere.’⁹⁵ What followed was a rather confused discussion of different forms that the re-distribution of goods could take that concluded, following Stein and Mohl, with the call for the development of a ‘science of society’, or as Fallati put it, a philosophy of society or social philosophy.

By the mid-1840s, Stein had thus found a number of allies in his project to create an academic discourse on socialism. Its common features were the recognition of the limitations of the existing academic disciplines, and of the need to respond to workers’ grievances, rather than to suppress their movement. These authors followed Stein in recognizing the deeper significance of the occurrence of socialist ideas, which they contrasted with, in their view, crude communism, and agreed with him on the need for a ‘scientific’ approach to socialism. It was especially the statist ideas of Louis Blanc that resonated with the German scholars of *Staatswissenschaft* and made the exploration of socialism rather intuitive for them.

That there was a deep-seated link between contemporary socialist ideas and the older Cameralist tradition, which had produced the discipline of

⁹⁵ Johannes Fallati, ‘Zur Verständigung über Begriff und Wesen des Socialismus und Communismus’, in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 4, 2 (1847), 290-319 (pp. 291-92): ‘Es ist erstens: die Einsicht, dass Socialismus und Communismus nicht bloß dem ökonomischen Gebiet angehörige Erscheinungen oder gar bloß Auswüchse desselben, sondern die Reproduktion allgemeiner und wesentlicher Richtungen aller geselligen Entwicklung sind, die im ökonomischen Gebiete nur in eigenthümlicher Form auftreten.’

Staatswissenschaft, was also more widely recognized by the late 1840s. In 1847, Karl Biedermann, a state scientist from Leipzig, published his work *Vorlesungen über den Socialismus und sociale Fragen*, that offered a comprehensive overview of the socialist tradition and its meaning, in a way reminiscent of Stein's *Der Socialismus und Communismus*. Biedermann notably pointed out that there were two types of socialists: those who endorsed the use of the state, and those who rejected it as harmful to the socialist project.⁹⁶ Even more importantly, he recognized the relation of socialist ideas to *Staatswissenschaft* and the Cameralist tradition. As Biedermann wrote, 'the goal of socialism [...] is the wellbeing of all, warranted by the active, regulative, promotional intervention of society.'⁹⁷ It thereby departed from the constitutional ideal of politics:

Socialism thus has various points of contact with the system that is with us known as bureaucratic paternalism or centralisation and which is by the liberal tendency in politics abhorred as the enemy of personal freedom and the free development of peoples. Socialism touches on this tradition, partly because of its external form of centralisation and the hierarchical structuring of its society, and partly by virtue of their common conviction of the necessity for an active intervention of the state or of society in the social condition of individuals.⁹⁸

It was thus possible, Biedermann wrote, to explain the affinity of many socialists with this 'bureaucratic system'. It is worth pointing out, however, that beyond the general realization that socialist ideas should be addressed from an 'academic' perspective, writers like Mohl and Fallati did not yet make much theoretical or practical political headway in this regard in the 1840s.

⁹⁶ Karl Biedermann, *Vorlesungen über Socialismus und soziale Frage* (Leipzig, 1847), p. 223.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 232.

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 233-34: 'Mit diesem Systeme also, welches bei uns unter dem Namen des bureukratischen Bevormundungs- oder Zentralisationssystems bekannt ist und von den freien Richtungen in der Politik als Feind der persönlichen Freiheit und der freien Entwicklung der Völker perhorreszirt wird, mit diesem Systeme hat der Socialismus mancherlei Berührungspunkte, theils in der äußeren Form der Zentralisation und der hierarchischen Einrichtung seiner Gesellschaft, theils vermöge des Beiden gemeinschaftlichen Grundgedankens der Nothwendigkeit eines thätigen Eingreifens des Staates oder der Gesellschaft in die sozialen Zustände der Einzelnen.'

Stein and the emergence of radical socialism in Germany

The discussion of Lorenz Stein's 1842 book among the Left Hegelians had, as we saw, by the summer of 1843 led to the realization that Germany needed to produce a 'philosophy of the deed', its distinct contribution to radical thought and to socialism. Moses Hess's idea was picked up by many German radicals over the following year. In the summer of 1844, uprisings among weavers in Silesia suggested the existence of real class struggle on German soil and additionally heightened the German interest in socialism.⁹⁹ These events led to an explosion of radical socialist publications of various kinds in Germany, a tradition of writing that peaked around 1845. Notably, the authors of these books and journals, Germany's many new 'converts' to socialism, kept Stein and *Der Socialismus und Communismus* as an important reference point.¹⁰⁰ The vision of socialism they came to articulate, however, was articulated in distinct opposition to Stein's legalistic statist ideals. They saw the primary goal of socialism in *Vergesellschaftung*, a slow, grass-root process of creating a more organic society through a multitude of channels.¹⁰¹

The success of Stein's book on socialism quickly inspired many similar publications. In the years following 1842, several works were published in different parts of the German Confederation that copied Stein's argument without adding anything original, and were nevertheless widely read. One example was Heinrich Wilhelm Kaiser's *Die Persönlichkeit des Eigenthums in Bezug auf den Socialismus und Communismus im heutigen Frankreich* which also promoted the state as an agent that balanced out social inequalities. It credited Stein in its opening page.¹⁰² In 1844,

⁹⁹ See Christina von Hodenberg, *Aufstand der Weber: Die Revolte von 1844 und ihr Aufstieg zum Mythos* (Bonn, 1997), p. 138.

¹⁰⁰ And Stein would in turn comment on this tradition. As a guide to the discussion in this section, see the table in the appendix: 'German socialist publications from the 1840s', which is based on Stein's work.

¹⁰¹ This section reproduces some material discussed in my MPhil dissertation, Diana Siclovan, 'The Project of Vergesellschaftung: German Socialists 1843-1851' (unpublished MPhil dissertation, University of Cambridge 2010).

¹⁰² Heinrich Wilhelm Kaiser, *Die Persönlichkeit des Eigenthums in Bezug auf den Socialismus und Communismus im heutigen Frankreich* (Bremen, 1843), p. 1. Stein in his 1844 essay on socialism in Germany dismissed it as unambitious. See above.

Theodor Oelckers, a prolific writer from Leipzig, published *Die Bewegung des Socialismus und Communismus*, a book that also very closely resembled Stein's, and which the latter in a review denounced as blatant plagiarism.¹⁰³ Another work that essentially adopted Stein's arguments for a wider audience was Theodor Mundt's *Die Geschichte der Gesellschaft in ihren neueren Entwicklungen und Problemen*.¹⁰⁴ In his review of it in 1845 Stein included a lengthy discussion about the purposes and significance of the phenomenon of 'social history' in order to dismiss Mundt's work as amateurish (see discussion above). As Stein wrote, Mundt's book did not live up to what it promised to do, namely to provide a history of society. This was, however, not surprising given the difficulty of the subject. According to Stein, it was obvious 'that such a history of society cannot, as the saying goes, be pulled out of a hat'.¹⁰⁵

Although they did not offer any new insights, these works demonstrated that it had become lucrative to publish books in the vein of Stein's *Der Socialismus und Communismus*. Soon, however, complaints began to mount that no true alternative existed to Stein's account. To correct this became the goal of Karl Grün, one of the most important new German 'converts' to socialism. Already famous as a radical journalist, Grün developed an interest in socialism in the course of 1843. From spring 1844, he together with the radicalized doctor Otto Lüning prepared articles for what he intended to be his own socialist journal, the *Bielefelder Monatsschrift*, a project suppressed by the censorship authorities before the first issue could appear.¹⁰⁶ One of the pieces intended for the journal was Grün's own critical review of Stein's *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, eventually published from exile in Grün's *Neue Anekdoten* in 1845. Like Hess, Grün believed that Stein had not grasped the full meaning of socialism. In opposition to his statist ideas, Grün articulated a more

¹⁰³ See Lorenz Stein, 'Socialismus und Communismus', *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* (March, 1845), pp. 429-48 (pp. 444-45).

¹⁰⁴ Also reviewed by Stein in *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 441: 'daß eine solche Geschichte der Gesellschaft, wie man sagt, sich doch nicht aus dem Ärmel schütteln lässt.'

¹⁰⁶ Karl Grün, 'Programm der Redaktion [*Bielefelder Monatsschrift*, Erstes Heft]', in Grün (ed.), *Neue Anekdoten*, pp. 182-88.

‘humanistic’ understanding of socialism. Rather than being inextricably linked with the proletariat and pauperism, socialism, in Grün’s view, was only one manifestation of a wider demand for human emancipation. Adopting Feuerbach’s philosophical ideal, Grün argued that the true aspiration of socialism was a truly organic society in which man could live in accordance with his ‘species being’. The state could not be relied upon as an advocate of equality. It was the proletariat, not corrupted by property ownership that kept alive the ideal of true brotherhood.¹⁰⁷

Grün was expelled from Germany in autumn 1844 and embarked on a tour of Belgium and France where he studied the socialist literature and movements, with the goal to produce an account that would rival Stein’s *Der Socialismus und Communismus*. His *Die socialen Bewegungen in Frankreich und Belgien* was advertised in the radical newspaper *Trier’sche Zeitung* in the following terms: ‘Our knowledge of French socialism in Germany to date has been limited to the content of Lorenz Stein’s book, which has seen many attacks, without having been replaced by a better variant.’¹⁰⁸ Grün’s book consisted of letters to his wife that captured his impressions of the countries’ socialist movements, supplemented by longer analytical essays. Among other things, Grün recounted his meetings with Proudhon and with Louis Blanc during which the latter notably enquired after Stein.¹⁰⁹ Throughout the work, Grün stressed that, contrary to Stein’s claim, a state-based solution to the social question was inadequate as it led to the reign of crude materialism. Grün was particularly impressed by Proudhon’s philosophy, calling him ‘the French Feuerbach’, and attacked Stein for his criticism of Proudhon. As he wrote, ‘it indeed

¹⁰⁷ Karl Grün, ‘Der Sozialismus und Kommunismus des heutigen Frankreichs’, in Grün (ed.), *Neue Anekdoten*, pp. 260-82.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Manuela Köppe, ‘Biographische und werkanalytische Einleitung’, in Karl Grün, *Ausgewählte Schriften in zwei Bänden*, ed. by Manuela Köppe (Berlin, 2005), pp. 13-331 (p. 125): ‘Was wir in Deutschland bis jetzt vom französischen Sozialismus wussten, reduziert sich auf den Inhalt des Buches von L[orenz] von Stein, welches kritische Anfechtungen erlitten hat, ohne dass etwas Besseres an seine Stelle gesetzt worden wäre.’

¹⁰⁹ Cf. note 5 above. Karl Grün, *Die socialen Bewegungen in Frankreich und Belgien* (Darmstadt, 1845), pp. 315-16.

takes more than this overcooked Hegelian cabbage to follow this embodiment of logic.’¹¹⁰

Grün over the coming years emerged as one of the main theorists of a German humanistic vision of socialism. This vision gained particular momentum following the dramatic events in the province of Silesia in June 1844. Impoverished textile workers attacked factories and demanded money from their employers. The army had to intervene and several people were killed. The events led to the foundation of the *Verein für das Wohl der arbeitenden Klassen*, the first national organization dedicated to workers’ issues. The intended function of this association, which had branches in all parts of Germany, became the subject of heated debate among Germany’s new socialists.¹¹¹ While the government envisaged the *Vereine* as charity institutions that would provide ‘help from above’, radicals such as Moses Hess and Friedrich Engels argued that traditional charity was obsolete and that the *Vereine* should instead assume a wider, co-operative function, and serve as the starting point for a more comprehensive transformation of society. Rather than being imposed by the state, these institutions should arise out of the needs of the people.¹¹²

This ‘holistic’ notion of socialism became the central topic of the socialist journals that started to appear across the German states from the winter of 1844. Most of the journals lasted no longer than two years before they were closed down by the authorities, but around 1845 there was a number of publications in print at once. Hermann Püttmann edited the *Deutsches Bürgerbuch* and the *Rheinische*

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 411: ‘Es hört freilich etwas mehr als Hegel’scher abgekochter Kohl dazu, um diese inkarnirte Logik zu verfolgen.’

¹¹¹ See the numerous publications on the subject: Franz Stromeier, *Abhülfe der Arbeiternoth durch Organisation der Arbeit* (Belle-Vue/Constance, 1844); [Anon.], *Die sittliche Hebung der unteren Volksklassen* (Königsberg, 1845); Adolf Schmidt, *Die Zukunft der arbeitenden Classen und die Vereine für ihr Wohl: Eine Mahnung an die Zeitgenossen* (Berlin, 1845); [Anon.], *Offenes Sendschreiben an den Central-Verein für das Wohl der arbeitenden Classen* (Berlin, 1845); *Sendschreiben an den verehrlichen Handwerkerstand Deutschlands über den Pauperismus* (Leipzig, 1845); [Anon.], *Ursachen und Heilung der Arbeiternoth: Dem Berliner Ortverein gewidmet* (Berlin, 1845). Cf. appendix below.

¹¹² On these debates see Jonathan Sperber, *Rhineland radicals: The democratic movement and the revolution of 1848-1849* (Princeton, NJ, 1991), pp. 118-19.

Jahrbücher, which both appeared in 1845 and 1846. From January 1845, Otto Lüning published the socialist monthly *Das Westphälische Dampfboot*.¹¹³ In June 1845, Moses Hess founded the *Gesellschaftsspiegel* which lasted for twelve months. Typically, these journals published philosophical pieces on the meaning of socialism alongside reports on cases of real proletarian misery. They often also contained poetry and fiction on the subject of poverty and its consequences.¹¹⁴ This constituted a far departure from the legalistic terms in which Stein had presented his argument about socialism.

This wide mixture of approaches was intended to be part of the German socialists' message. In view of its manifold failings, they believed that solutions to the problems of modern society also had to be varied. The preface to the *Deutsches Bürgerbuch*, for example, stated as the journal's objective to collect evidence for the disastrous consequences of material inequality, as 'a thorough knowledge of the symptoms is indispensable to a successful cure'.¹¹⁵ Hess suggested that his journal would combine a 'portrayal of evil' with a 'presentation of remedies'. His *Gesellschaftsspiegel* addressed not only the poor, but set out to report on 'misery in all its shapes'.¹¹⁶

One concept above all captured the aspirations of German socialists in the mid-1840s: *Vergesellschaftung*, the project of a creating a more harmonious and cohesive society. As Karl Grün wrote at the end of 1844, thanks to the philosophy of socialism, 'we have regained the human [...] this human wants to lead a life worthy

¹¹³ Otto Lüning (ed.), *Das Westphälische Dampfboot: Eine Monatsschrift* (Bielefeld and Paderborn, 1845-48).

¹¹⁴ See Doris Köster-Bunselmeyer, *Literarischer Sozialismus: Texte und Theorien der deutschen Frühsozialisten 1843-1848* (Tübingen, 1981).

¹¹⁵ Hermann Püttmann, 'Vorwort', in Hermann Püttmann (ed.), *Deutsches Bürgerbuch* (2 vols, Darmstadt, 1845-46; repr. Glashütten, 1975), I (1845): iii-viii.

¹¹⁶ Moses Hess, 'An die Leser und Mitarbeiter des *Gesellschaftsspiegel*', *Der Gesellschaftsspiegel: Organ zur Vertretung der besitzlosen Volksklassen und zur Beleuchtung der gesellschaftlichen Zustände der Gegenwart* (2 vols, Elberfeld, 1845-46; repr. Glashütten, 1971), I (1845), unpaginated: 'einerseits die Uebel, denen abgeholfen werden soll, anderentheils die zur Abhülfe vorgeschlagenen oder bereits in Ausführung gebrachten Mittel publicieren'; 'Elend in allen seinen Gestalten'.

of his species being, a life of unification, of *Vergesellschaftung*.¹¹⁷ In this notion of *Vergesellschaftung* resonated strongly the rejection of Lorenz Stein's statism as it first had been voiced by Moses Hess in 1843. Instead of a mechanistic statist approach, German socialists, drawing on Feuerbach's ideas, sought to promote a holistic strategy for the solution of social problems.

The quest for '*Vergesellschaftung*' was connected to a rejection of traditional politics. In his 1845 essay '*Politik und Sozialismus*' Grün claimed:

A politician cannot be a socialist. He can only become one if he stops being a politician. The concept of a politician is a narrow, exclusive one... Once the concept of politics has been defined, all other actions revolve around it. The socialist by contrast [...] addresses the very questions the politician is incapable of solving.¹¹⁸

Around the same time, Otto Lüning published a piece also entitled '*Politik und Sozialismus*' in which he claimed that, in contrast to the time of the French Revolution, the new era was no longer concerned with 'nationalism and politics', but with 'humanity and socialism'.¹¹⁹

Until at least the end of 1845, this humanistic notion represented a broadly shared vision of socialism in Germany. Yet soon decisive disagreements began to emerge. In the mid-1840s Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels began to develop their ideas of historical materialism which they soon used to critique this humanist vision of German socialism. Marx had – like Stein – begun to study law in 1835, but soon changed to philosophy and left his native Rhineland for Berlin in 1838. In Berlin he met the radical Hegelians and became particularly close to Bruno Bauer. Upon finishing his doctoral thesis, Marx in 1841 returned to Cologne and took over editing the *Rheinische Zeitung* in summer 1842. This was when he met Moses Hess, who in

¹¹⁷ Karl Grün, 'Feuerbach und die Sozialisten', in Püttmann (ed.), *Deutsches Bürgerbuch*, I (1845): 49-75.

¹¹⁸ Karl Grün, 'Politik und Sozialismus', in Hermann Püttmann (ed.), *Rheinische Jahrbücher zur gesellschaftlichen Reform* (2 vols, Bellevue, 1845-46; repr. Leipzig, 1970; Glashütten, 1975), I (1845): 98-144 (p. 142).

¹¹⁹ Otto Lüning, 'Politik und Sozialismus', in Otto Lüning (ed.), *Dieses Buch gehört dem Volke* (Bielefeld, 1845), pp. 1-31.

autumn 1842 introduced him to socialist and communist ideas. Hess ran a socialist and communist reading group in Cologne which Marx began to frequent.¹²⁰ It is likely that Stein's book was one of the works they read together. As David Gregory writes regarding Marx's and Engels's first exposure to socialism: 'The critical period for both men was therefore October 1842 to December 1843. The single most important factor in Marx's conversion to socialism during these months was his increasing acquaintance with and understanding of French socialism.'¹²¹ Although Marx did not mention Stein in this period, it is very likely that his book had been a central source for his knowledge of French socialism.

What is more important than the much discussed, yet ultimately futile, question of whether or not Stein and Marx influenced each other, is to realize that in the mid-1840s Marx was by no means pre-destined to become the leading theorist of socialism.¹²² Both Marx and his later companion Friedrich Engels had, to begin with, been in the mainstream of Left Hegelian thought. This was also demonstrated by their attitude to Stein. In articles from May and June 1843, Friedrich Engels claimed that Germans falsely believed they understood socialism if they had simply 'swallowed the dull, miserable content of Stein's book'.¹²³ Like most contemporary radicals, Engels disagreed with Stein's statism, and contrasted his detached view of socialism with the real passion for radicalism among the English.

Marx remained critical of socialist ideas throughout 1843. His political outlook at the time was that of liberal opponent of Prussian paternalism. He spent the months following the closure of the *Rheinische Zeitung* in spring 1843 working on a critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Law*. In October 1843, he left for Paris where he intended to start with Arnold Ruge a new journal, the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*. The first and only issue of it appeared in early 1844 and it is there that

¹²⁰ On Marx's (and Engels's) encounter with socialism and communism see David Gregory, 'Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engels' Knowledge of French Socialism in 1842-43', *Historical Reflections*, 10, 1 (1983), 143-193 (pp. 162-63).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

¹²² On the debate surrounding the relationship between Marx and Stein see the introduction above.

¹²³ Frederick Engels, 'Letters from London', in MECW, III (1975): 379-91 (p. 388).

Marx first expressed approval for socialist ideas.¹²⁴ In his 'Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law', Marx suggested that Germany had to produce a superior kind of revolution than that experienced by France. It should not only raise Germany 'to the official level of the modern nations, but to the human heights, which are the near future of these nations'.¹²⁵ The proletariat would be the carrier of this progress. Marx's call for 'universal human emancipation' represented a typical German humanistic position which many new socialists embraced at the time.

Marx only began to develop a distinctive vision of socialism when he started to work together with Friedrich Engels in late 1844. They first met in Paris in August 1844, when Engels was en route back to Germany from England. The son of a Rhineland textile manufacturer, Engels had become radicalized during his military service in Berlin in 1841 where he became acquainted with the Left Hegelians. In early 1843 he left for Manchester to conduct business on his father's behalf. It was this visit that allowed him both to gain an insight into the destitute condition of the industrial workers in England, and to familiarize himself with English economic thought. Engels's experience in England by 1845 translated into the work *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England*, which merged Feuerbachian ideas of human liberation with a description of the horrors of industrial pauperism, producing the so-called 'catastrophic' narrative of the industrial revolution which later became a cornerstone of radical socialist thought.¹²⁶

Marx had begun to study political economy in the summer of 1844 when he made notes on Adam Smith, David Ricardo and Jean-Baptiste Say which were later known as the 'Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts'.¹²⁷ Engels further encouraged his interest in economics, and when they began to work together in

¹²⁴ Gregory, 'Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engels' knowledge of French socialism', p. 144.

¹²⁵ Karl Marx, 'Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction', in MECW, III (1975): 175-87 (p. 182).

¹²⁶ See Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Engels and the invention of the catastrophic conception of the Industrial Revolution', in Douglas Moggach (ed.), *The New Hegelians*, pp. 200-19.

¹²⁷ Karl Marx, 'Economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844', in MECW, III (1975): 229-346.

autumn that year, their main concern became to highlight the superiority of economic forces and to attack their German socialist and Left Hegelian contemporaries, who still had a deeply humanist vision, from this perspective. Marx and Engels's first joint work, *Die Heilige Familie*, was published in the beginning of 1845.¹²⁸ It was a critique of Marx's former mentor Bruno Bauer and his political ideas. Yet the work also for the first time articulated Marx and Engels's materialism, expressed in their emphasis on the centrality of labour. Most contemporary readers, however, missed these nuances and read it mainly as a work that embraced Feuerbach's ideas and used them for a critique of Bauer.¹²⁹

A few months later, Engels in his 'Fragment of Fourier's on trade' ridiculed the idea that German radicals believed they had created a superior kind of socialist theory following a reading of Stein's book.¹³⁰ As he mockingly remarked, 'Herr Stein's meagre extracts are quite sufficient to bring about this brilliant victory of German theory over the wretched efforts of foreigners.'¹³¹ Engels's strategy was thus to reverse the seeming achievement of Stein's *Der Communismus und Socialismus*, that of having provided German theorists with a way to appropriate socialist ideas for their purposes. As Engels made clear, the main problem with Stein was his distance from the 'real movement' of revolutionary communism. Stein had been to the Germans a 'dubious source' ('unsaubere Quelle').¹³²

The Left Hegelian movement had received a fatal blow with the publication of Max Stirner's *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* towards the end of 1844.¹³³ The work's radical egoistical vision was a critique of virtually all contemporary left-wing German movements, and most of all of Feuerbach's humanism. The absurdity and ignorance of Stirner's claims became the major topic of Marx and Engels's second

¹²⁸ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, 'The Holy Family, or Critique of critical criticism. Against Bruno Bauer and company', in MECW, IV (1975): 5-210.

¹²⁹ Jonathan Sperber, *Karl Marx: A nineteenth-century life* (New York, 2013), p. 162.

¹³⁰ Frederick Engels, 'A Fragment of Fourier's on trade', in MECW, IV (1975): 613-44 (p. 613).

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 614.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 642.

¹³³ See the English edition Max Stirner, *The ego and its own*, ed. by David Leopold (Cambridge, 1995).

joint work, on which they worked from the summer of 1845. By the beginning of 1846 they had produced a many hundred pages-long manuscripts, which however failed to find a publisher. This work, which only came out as a book after their deaths, would later be known as the *German Ideology*.¹³⁴ Alongside engaging in a lengthy polemic with Stirner and also critiquing Feuerbach, Marx and Engels spent many pages in the work attacking Hess, Grün and other contemporary socialist.

According to Marx and Engels, the writings of the German socialists consisted of nothing but ‘the translation of French ideas into the language of the German ideologists and this arbitrarily constructed relationship between communism and German ideology.’¹³⁵ The ‘true socialists’, as they mockingly called them, falsely tried to comprehend French and English socialist literature not as ‘the product of a real movement’, but as ‘purely theoretical writings’ preoccupied with defining a general ‘system’. Based on their initial misunderstanding of the foreign writings, the ‘true socialists’ set out to ‘clarify them by invoking the German ideology and notably that of Hegel and Feuerbach’.¹³⁶ The ‘true socialists’ ideas of the ‘universal love of mankind’ appealed to sentiment, rather than to the ‘German thinking mind’. This made them inherently anti-revolutionary, as their main audience was the ‘petty bourgeoisie with its philanthropic illusions’.¹³⁷ The concluding verdict Marx and Engels passed on the ‘true socialists’ was that the ‘hybrid sect’, which had been ‘bound to occur in a country as stagnant as Germany’, represented a real threat to their revolutionary agenda.¹³⁸

Marx and Engels in short blamed German socialists for their humanistic conception of socialism, that was critical of politics and reluctant to reduce socialism to economic concerns, and which they had developed in distinct opposition to Stein’s argument. The only part of the *German Ideology* that was published during his

¹³⁴ On the text’s important publication history see Terrell Carver, ‘The German Ideology never took place’, *History of Political Thought*, 31 (2010), 107-27.

¹³⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, ‘The German Ideology’, MECW, V (1975): 19-583 (p. 456).

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 456.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 457.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 457.

lifetime was Marx's deeply hostile review of Grün's *Soziale Bewegung in Frankreich und Belgien*, appearing in the *Westphälisches Dampfboot* in August 1847. The attack was preceded by a history of animosity with Grün that had originated in a minor spat in 1845, and that had also provided the background to Marx's famous polemic with Proudhon.¹³⁹ In his review of Grün's book, Marx complained that Grün's work was unoriginal, since it drew heavily on Moses Hess's ideas, and also relied overwhelmingly on the 'much despised' Lorenz Stein.¹⁴⁰ A section in the *German Ideology* on the 'Historiography of "true" socialism' also included a detailed comparison between Grün's and Stein's books, aiming to show how much Grün had copied Stein, including his errors. Agreeing with Engels's earlier verdict in the 'Fragment of Fourier', Stein's detached view of socialism was the primary problem. It had allowed German socialist to pick up radical ideas without grasping their true meaning. Yet Marx gave some credit to Stein when he wrote, 'Grün's fabrication is on a much lower level than the work by Stein, who at least tried to explain the connection between socialist literature and the real development of French society.'¹⁴¹

Marx and Engels's claim to have surpassed both Stein and the humanistic German socialists was mere wishful thinking. The sharp dividing lines which they drew between themselves and their contemporaries were only visible to them at the time. The majority of Germans continued to see socialism as a broader movement, that encompassed a variety of tendencies ranging from Stein's statist vision to the humanistic ideas of Grün and Hess. This is apparent from the socialist literature that continued to appear in the late 1840s. Heinrich Lintz's *Entwurf einer Geschichte der Rechtsphilosophie, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Socialismus und Communismus* (1846), for example, on the one hand strongly resembled Stein's work in its attempt

¹³⁹ Silberner, *Hess*, p. 251; on Proudhon's relationship with Marx and Grün see Pierre Haubtmann, *Proudhon, Marx et la pensée allemande* (Grenoble, 1981), p. 111.

¹⁴⁰ Karl Marx, 'Karl Grün: *Die Soziale Bewegung in Frankreich und Belgien* (Darmstadt, 1845) or the Historiography of True Socialism', in MECW, V (1975): 484-92 (p. 493).

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 492.

tried to locate socialist ideas in the history of political thought and to connect them to the philosophy of law. On the other hand, Lintz endorsed Karl Grün's writing on socialism, calling it 'the best account of socialist doctrine' and admitting that he 'followed his conception in many points.'¹⁴²

The notion that 'German socialism' was a rather broad tradition also emerges from a publication of 1848 that surveyed recent developments in German socialism, Theobald Bruno Bucher's *Die Bewegung des Socialismus und Humanismus unserer Tage*.¹⁴³ As useful literature on the subject of socialism, Bucher listed alongside Stein's *Socialismus und Communismus*, the surveys by Oelckers and by Grün, as well as Arnold Ruge's *Zwei Jahre in Paris* (1846).¹⁴⁴ He also recommended the 1847 book *Proletarier: Eine historische Denkschrift* by Heinrich Wilhelm Bensen, Biedermann's *Vorlesungen über Socialismus und sociale Fragen* and the second volume of Karl Hagen's *Fragen der Zeit* which was concerned with the history of the 'idea of the state' and in also addressed the topic of 'the proletariat and communism'.¹⁴⁵ Despite the efforts of Marx and Engels in their polemics to draw dividing lines between their economic vision of socialism and the ideas of Stein and the humanist German socialists, the majority of the reading public, at least for a few more years, continued to perceive of all these thinkers as part of a monolithic bloc.

¹⁴² Heinrich Lintz, *Entwurf einer Geschichte der Rechtsphilosophie mit besonderer Rücksicht auf den Socialismus und Communismus* (Gdansk, 1846), p. 78n1: 'Socialisten ist der allgemeine Name für alle die, welche eine neue sociale Ordnung schaffen wollen, Communisten sind sie, insofern sie dabei die Gütergemeinschaft lehren. – Die beste Darstellung der socialen Lehre ist die von Grün: die sociale Bewegung in Frankreich und Belgien. Ich bin seiner Auffassung in vielen Punkten gefolgt.'

¹⁴³ Theobald Bruno Bucher, *Die Bewegung des Socialismus und Humanismus unserer Tage: Mit besonderem Bezug auf Deutschland und die Literatur der letzten vier Jahre dasselbst. Repertorium der socialen Literatur* (Bautzen, 1848).

¹⁴⁴ Arnold Ruge, *Zwei Jahre in Paris: Studien und Erinnerungen* (2 vols, Leipzig, 1846; repr. Hildesheim, 1977).

¹⁴⁵ Karl Hagen, *Fragen der Zeit vom historischen Standpunkte betrachtet* (2 vols, Stuttgart, 1843-45).

The second edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* (1848)

The rise of a German discourse on socialism in the years after the publication of *Socialismus und Communismus* did obviously not leave Stein unaffected. All in all, he had not expected that his book would have such a powerful effect, inspiring several strands of discussions about socialism in Germany. Having developed further many of his ideas, Stein towards the end of 1846 began to make plans for an updated edition of the work, which appeared in late 1847, just on the eve of the outbreak of the revolutions of 1848. The second edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* was above all marked by its extended theoretical discussion of the nature and goals of socialism, departing from the primarily historical purpose of the original work.

The thought process behind the new edition is documented in letters Stein wrote to Robert von Mohl, who had become an important mentor for him. Stein wrote to Mohl in January 1847, asking for advice on a number of challenges he faced in rewriting the book.¹⁴⁶ First, Stein was not sure whether to discuss the concept of ‘society’ in a general and abstract way, or whether he should continue to concentrate on historical analysis. The second, connected, challenge was whether he would be able to address the entire history of the proletariat, or whether he should continue to concentrate on the developments in France. Turning to the German dimension, Stein claimed that the hardest part would be to take stock of all the German literature on socialism that had been published over the five past years.¹⁴⁷ Updating Mohl in July 1847, Stein complained that he was still finding it hard to balance a theoretical discussion of socialism with an account of its history in France.¹⁴⁸ Finally, in November 1847, Stein was able to send Mohl a copy of the completed manuscript. In the attached letter, he wrote that he still had doubts about this work, especially the sections where he discussed the relationship between society and the state, and in

¹⁴⁶ ‘Lorenz Stein to Robert von Mohl, 3 January 1847’, in Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus*, p. 193.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. pp. 194-95.

¹⁴⁸ ‘Lorenz Stein to Robert von Mohl, 16 July 1847’, in Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus*, p. 197-98.

particular the monarchy.¹⁴⁹ This was indeed the most innovative and controversial part of the new work.

In the preface to the new edition, Stein discussed the recent development of German socialism. He claimed that Germans had by and large grasped the deeper meaning of socialism. It was for this reason that they had appreciated his work: ‘for this reason [...] it [the German literature] has received our work in such a friendly way; for it suffices as the basis for further study.’¹⁵⁰ Stein also discussed some recent German works on socialism, such as Kaiser’s *Persönlichkeit des Eigentums*, Gries’s *Abbruch und Neubau* and Bensen’s *Geschichte des Proletariats*, yet concluded that none of them added substantially to what he had found in his 1842 book. The only figure who had brought a degree of innovation, Stein admitted, was Karl Grün. He wrote about Grün: ‘The only one who has truly brought some new elements is K. Grün. Yet those who know the conditions in Paris will soon admit that Grün has only got to know the literary manifestation of socialism, not its true life itself.’¹⁵¹ Stein thus echoed Marx’s criticism of Grün that the latter did not have a sufficient understanding of the material foundation of socialism.

In general, Stein believed that socialism had reached the end of its theoretical development. The future focus, he claimed in the beginning of the updated edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, could only be on implementing ideas in practice, and Stein expected that France would again pioneer this move. Stein therefore saw a detailed intellectual history of German socialism as futile:

For the same reason, we have given up the idea of tracing the German social and communist movement here. Everything that has emerged here in this respect, from Weitling to

¹⁴⁹ ‘Lorenz Stein to Robert von Mohl, 20 November 1847’, in Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus*, pp. 198-99.

¹⁵⁰ Lorenz Stein, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* (2nd ed, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1848), p. xi: ‘Sie [die deutsche Literatur] hat eben aus diesem Grunde [...] unsre Arbeit so freundlich entgegengenommen; denn als Grundlage für ein weiteres Studium mag sie wohl im Allgemeinen ausreichen.’

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. xii: ‘Der Einzige, der hier wirklich manches Neues beigebracht hat, ist K. Grün. Aber wer die Verhältnisse von Paris kennt, der wird bald zugestehen, dass Grün von dem Communismus nur seine literarische Erscheinung, nicht sein wirkliches Leben selbst kennen gelernt hat.’

Stirner, is nothing but quite a weak reflex of the French effort. It would be a very fruitless undertaking to study this imitation of the French among the German men of letters.¹⁵²

As Stein stressed once again, a more peaceful, detached and academic attitude, better suited the Germans. Their adaption of French socialism with its often violent implications was therefore flawed as it contradicted their distinctive national strengths. In continuation of the argument from the original edition, Stein thus continued to stress nationalism as the filter through which socialism ought to be transferred.

In contrast to the first edition, Stein was, in the new edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* ready to make his own – as he admitted, small and provisional – contribution to the theoretical project of socialism. The major addition to the first edition was the inclusion of a substantial theoretical discussion in the beginning of the work in which Stein outlined his theory of the ‘social movement’. His discussion again began with an account of the distinct role of the modern proletariat. Understanding its nature and condition was, as Stein made clear, one of the tasks of a ‘science of society’. As he wrote: ‘The science of society must teach us what the proletariat is, what it wants, what it will become.’¹⁵³ Stein then explained that modern labour was marked by a disproportion between production and consumption.¹⁵⁴ This led to conflict in society, because of an emerging gap between the official rights promised by the constitution and the, mostly economic, limitations that actually existed to the fulfilment of one’s personal goals.¹⁵⁵ Another task of the science of society was therefore to understand how exactly these inequalities came

¹⁵² Ibid., p. xiv: ‘Aus demselben Grunde haben wir den Gedanken aufgegeben, die socialistische und communistische Bewegung Deutschlands hier zu verfolgen. Alles, was hier in jenen Beziehungen erschienen ist, von Weitling an bis auf Stirner, ist nichts als ein ziemlich schwacher Reflex der französischen Bestrebung. Es ist ein sehr unfruchtbares Studium, diese Nachbeterei des Franzosenthums bei den deutschen Literaten zu verfolgen.’

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 13: ‘Die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft muss dafür uns lehren, was das Proletariat ist, was es will, was es sein wird.’

¹⁵⁴ See especially pp. 38-57 for Stein’s discussion of the nature of labour in industrial society.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

about, and to ultimately find a solution to them. The aim was to enable every human being of full personal development.¹⁵⁶

Stein established that because of this inherent conflict in industrial society, there was the need for an arbitrating power: the state. Stein had a deeply Hegelian conception of the relationship between state and society. He wrote: ‘The state stands above everything, above society as the highest and independent power; however, the development of each individual is its highest task.’¹⁵⁷ Stein observed that every struggle in society was a struggle for the possession of state power. Such conflicts were a constant phenomenon of human history and would remain unavoidable as long as a lower class existed that wanted to rise up from its condition. The question was whether a given state power had the ability to remain above these conflicts, that means to not become appropriated by one of the social groups. Stein wrote: ‘What matters in this struggle is whether the state power is formed in such a way that it can retain its unique life above the contesting elements, or whether its constitution and its history make it impossible for it to avoid reversing to one of the contesting elements.’¹⁵⁸ Be it an association of the state with the higher classes, or a taking control of state power by the lower order – both cases were undesirable because they undermined the stability of the state.

Stein proceeded to explain why a monarchy was particularly suited to created social stability. The virtue of a monarchy was that it united neutral, arbitrating, and absolute state power in a single person. As a result, Stein believed, it was particularly suited to arbitrate in conflicts between different classes of society.¹⁵⁹ To make his point, Stein explained that the people’s opposition to a monarchy could only occur whenever the monarchy associated itself with the higher class. Opposition to the

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 29: ‘Der Staat steht über allen, über der Gesellschaft als höchste und selbstständige Gewalt; dennoch ist die Entwicklung jedes Einzelnen seine höchste Aufgabe.’

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 59: ‘Es kommt nämlich bei ihm [dem Kampf] darauf an, ob die Staatsgewalt so gebildet ist, dass sie sich über den streitenden Elementen mit ihrem eigenthümlichen Leben erhalten kann, oder ob ihre Verfassung und Geschichte es ihr unmöglich macht, sich des Heimfalls an eins der streitenden Elemente zu entziehen.’

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 62.

monarchy as such was in theory impossible. As Stein put it, ‘a revolution is only possible where a monarchy has misconceived its task in such a way; every revolution is only directed against the affiliation of absolute royal power with the interests of one particular part of the population; there are no revolutions against the monarchy as such.’¹⁶⁰ This was a prophetic statement on the eve of the revolutions of 1848.

Stein thus argued that as long as social conflict was not eradicated, monarchies were bound to prevail. He made clear that what he had in mind was not an absolute monarchy. Popular assemblies with workers’ representatives might indeed be part of the system he envisaged, but only once a stable central monarchical power was in place. A republic, by contrast, would remain a utopia as long as class differences prevailed (and this was, in Stein’s scheme, unlikely to happen any time in the near future). As he wrote, ‘until then, the belief in the excellence of republic will only come out of social fiction, and people will be the more likely to believe it to be possible, the harder it is to implement in reality.’¹⁶¹

Finally, Stein returned to Germany, and argued that it was a case in point. The persistence of monarchical states in Germany, which had remained largely untouched by the social movement, demonstrated the stabilizing power of monarchical systems.¹⁶² It was thus also particularly suited to embody a new type of ‘social’ monarchical power. Stein’s observations on the recent changes in political culture are worth citing in full:

The times are long over when the task of state art was the Machiavellian affirmation of absolute sovereign rule; yet also the epoch was buried with the last century when politics spoke of the balance of powers in the state. The subject of constitutional doctrine now has become a different one; it should be the teaching of the relationship of state power to

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 64: ‘Nur da ist eine Revolution möglich, wo das Königthum auf diese Weise sein Aufgabe erkennt; jede Revolution geht nur gegen die Verschmelzung der königlichen Machtvollkommenheit mit den Interessen eines besonderen Theils des Volkes; es giebt keine Revolution gegen das Königthum selber.’

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 68: ‘Bis dahin aber wird der Glaube an die Trefflichkeit der Republiken stets nur aus dem Romane der Gesellschaft hervorgehen, dem sich der Einzelne um so lieber als möglich denkt, je schwerer die Wirklichkeit ihn vollziehen kann.’

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 61.

society, as even the short-sighted will admit, that gradually the old maxim that the state dominates society is being reversed, and society is coming to dominate the state.¹⁶³

The ensuing questions were how one could determine what the general interest consisted of, and by which means it could be achieved.¹⁶⁴ *Staatswissenschaft*, notably its sub-branch *Regierungswissenschaft* had the tools to answer these questions.¹⁶⁵

Stein's second edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* presented a more detailed explanation of the social dynamic which he believed was inherent to industrial society, together with a proposed solution: a monarchy dedicated to social equality. This concept of a 'social monarchy' (not actually a term Stein used in this text) would become the concept that Stein would be famous for in later years. The second edition was therefore innovative in two major ways. First, Stein was much more willing to put forward a theory – that of the mechanism of the 'social dynamic' – than in the first edition, which had been marked by its detached look on socialism from a historical perspective. Second, Stein in the second edition singled out a monarchical system as the only way to undermine social tensions, thus taking up a distinctly conservative position. It is evident that Stein had at least in part been pushed towards these conclusions by the reactions to his first book, notably those of the Left Hegelians. As Hess had observed, following the explosive reviews of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, Stein had been concerned to reduce the number of his enemies. By embracing the monarchy, Stein was distancing himself from the Left Hegelians and aligning himself more closely with the German Cameralist tradition which he had begun to study in more depth in the 1840s.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 71: 'Die Zeit ist lange vorbei, wo die Aufgabe der Staatskunst die machiavellische Befestigung der absoluten Fürstenherrschaft war; aber auch die Zeit ist mit dem vorigen Jahrhundert zu Grabe getragen, in der die Politik von dem Gleichgewichte der Gewalten im Staate sprach. Der Gegenstand der Verfassungslehre ist jetzt ein anderer geworden; sie soll die Lehre von dem Verhältniss der Staatsgewalt zur Gesellschaft sein, denn auch der Kurzsichtige wird zugestehen, daß allmählich sich der alte Grundsatz, dass der Staat die Gesellschaft beherrscht, in dem entgegengesetzten zu verkehren beginnt, nach welchem die Gesellschaft den Staat beherrschen will.'

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 71.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 71.

The second edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* was furthermore significant from a historiographical and bibliographical perspective. In an appendix, Stein listed all existing works of French and German socialist literature, with brief comments – a comprehensive and useful overview of the tradition that had developed in the aftermath of the publication of his book in 1842.¹⁶⁶ One section was concerned with the work on Wilhelm Weitling and the Swiss workers' communities; another covered the literature on the debate over the role of the workers' clubs, which broke out in the months after the Silesian weavers' uprising. Stein mentioned, without substantial comment, Engels's *Die Lage der arbeitenden Classe in England* and Marx's *Misère de la philosophie*, the work from 1846 in which Marx had attacked Proudhon and thereby distanced himself even more decisively from German socialists like Grün who were admirers of Proudhon.¹⁶⁷

Stein also commented in some length on Hess, whom he dismissed for the fact that he 'stands on the purely Hegelian position, and replaces the lack of clear and practical thought with a sharp, often untrue, always exaggerated critique of both social conditions and all other opinions but his own'. Hess was for Stein the primary 'representative of abstract communism, the sense of which few will understand and nobody will be able to put to use'.¹⁶⁸ Max Stirner's *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum* (1844) was, according to Stein lopsided and frivolous. Stein mentioned as the 'most radical' of German socialist literature the *Einundzwanzig Bogen*, the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, the *Rheinische Jahrbücher*, the *Deutsches Bürgerbuch* and the *Gesellschaftsspiegel*. To conclude, he mentioned 'scientific socialism', of which he himself, Robert Mohl and Johannes Fallati (with their recent articles in the

¹⁶⁶ The attached appendix 'German socialist publications from the 1840s' is based on this overview in Stein's 1848 work.

¹⁶⁷ Karl Marx, 'The poverty of philosophy. Answer to the philosophy of poverty by M. Proudhon', MECW, VI (1976): 105-212.

¹⁶⁸ Stein, *Der Socialismus und Communismus* (1848), p. 589: '[Er] steht auf dem rein Hegelschen Standpunkte, und ersetzt den Mangel an klaren und praktischen Gedanken durch eine scharfe, oft unwahre, immer übertriebene Kritik der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse und aller anderen Auffassungen als der seinigen. Er ist der Vertreter des abstracten Communismus, dessen Sinn Wenige verstehen werden und Niemand benutzen kann.'

Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft) were the main representatives.

Although it was obviously a biased assessment, this was a valuable snapshot of the German socialist scene on the eve of the revolution of 1848.

Conclusion: The *Communist Manifesto* and the ‘death’ of German socialism

In the period from the autumn of 1842 to the beginning of 1848, socialism became a subject of broad public interest in Germany. Countless publications appeared on the subject, presenting varying radical visions. While the academics around Stein defended a ‘scientific’ approach to socialism, there was also an increasingly radical strand of thinkers who envisaged grass-root cultural change towards a more organic society. In some cases, they also called for revolution. This contrasted with Stein’s approach who, on the eve of the revolutions of 1848, in the new edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, made an argument for the persistence of monarchical power. Two competing visions of ‘German socialism’ were thus articulated, both with strong roots in the German intellectual tradition: a statist one, represented by Stein and other ‘state scientists’, and a humanist one, voiced by Hess, Grün and the other Left Hegelians who were opposed to paternalism. In the years leading up to 1848 German socialism was thus an eclectic phenomenon that combined different elements of the German intellectual tradition.

That this diverse nature of German socialism was later obscured had in large measure to do with a set of events that took their course in the second half of 1847, the institutional developments instigated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Feeling increasingly threatened by the multitude of German exiles who were preoccupied with socialism, such as the members of the Paris-based League of the Just, Marx and Engels from 1846 onwards attempted to form a ‘party’, and to assume political leadership over the socialist movement. In spring 1846, Marx set up the Communist Correspondence Committee. A year later, he and Engels joined it with the League of the Just and in summer 1847 held the founding congress of the Communist League in

London. At its second meeting in November that year, an official document was commissioned for the organization: the *Communist Manifesto*, published in February 1848.

In this text – only known to insiders at the time, but in later decades considered the definitive statement of socialist and communist theory – Marx and Engels drew the ultimate dividing lines between what they thought were acceptable and unacceptable socialist movements. They dismissed the ‘true socialists’ as a variety of ‘reactionary socialism’ that had been superseded by an advanced vision of communist revolution.¹⁶⁹ That this was an arbitrary move that served nothing but the legitimization of political power is demonstrated by the fact that Moses Hess had until late 1847 been a close collaborator of Marx and Engels’s, a member of the League, and in fact the author of an earlier version of the *Communist Manifesto*. He was consciously pushed aside in late 1847 by Engels who disliked him on personal grounds.¹⁷⁰ Marx and Engels thus owed their rise to fame more to successful political tactics than to a profound philosophical innovation. Future generations, however, were not aware of this background of personal conflict, and took the message of the *Communist Manifesto* at face value.

Aside from obscuring this genealogy of German socialism, the rise to fame of the *Manifesto* also had a further effect. In its closing lines, Marx and Engels urged the ‘working men of all countries’ to join forces. In popular political discourse, socialism and communism grew to be perceived as inherently internationalist movements. This notion of socialism as a movement detached from national context obscured the significance and complexity of the debate about the distinctly German contribution to socialist thought that had erupted in the years after the publication of Lorenz Stein’s book in 1842 and that was a central feature of German intellectual life throughout the 1840s. The original success of Stein’s book had stemmed from its

¹⁶⁹ See section III. 1. c. ‘German or “True” socialism’ in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, ‘Manifesto of the Communist Party’, in MECW, VI (1976): 477-519 (p. 510).

¹⁷⁰ See Siclován, ‘The project of “*Vergesellschaftung*”’, pp. 47-48.

ability to make a distinctly nationalist argument about socialism. While Marx and Engels proceeded to build their International Workingmen's Association in London exile, nationalist issues, as the next two chapters will highlight, remained deeply entwined with socialism in Germany for several decades.

CHAPTER 3

From *Verfassung* to *Verwaltung*: Lorenz Stein and the European revolutions of 1848

In the spring of 1848, a wave of revolutionary upheaval swept across Europe. French revolutionaries deposed King Louis Philippe and proclaimed the Second Republic. Inspired by the events in France, uprisings took place in Vienna, in the Italian states and throughout the German Confederation. Prussians confronted King Frederick William IV with demands for a constitution for a united Germany. A Constituent National Assembly met in Frankfurt in May. In March, the long-standing conflict between the northern German duchies of Schleswig and Holstein and the Kingdom of Denmark had culminated in war. Stein was at the centre of revolutionary events in Schleswig-Holstein and, for a short time, in France. The experience of 1848 had a profound impact on his political thought, in particular his notion of the purpose of socialism.

It is a commonplace that the enthusiasm generated by the outbreak of revolutions in the spring of 1848 within a few months gave way to disappointment. In most European countries, reactionary forces had regained control by the end of the year. The future emperor Louis Napoléon won the French presidential election in December. The Frankfurt Assembly proved to be powerless. The German revolution was over when revolutionary risings in the southern states were suppressed in May 1849. As a result, many of the leading actors and thinkers of the revolution, Karl Marx, Karl Grün and Arnold Ruge among them, were forced into exile. To many of the protagonists of 1848, the failure of the revolution was as much a philosophical as a political disappointment. The events of 1848 had been widely regarded as a chance to translate the philosophical ideas of the first half of the nineteenth century –

liberalism, constitutionalism and socialism – into reality.¹ The swift defeat of the revolutionary project seemed to discredit these ideas.

This chapter argues that this experience contrasted sharply with Lorenz Stein's reaction to the revolution. For him, the years after 1848 represented one of the most intellectually productive periods of his life. Although he eventually also ended up in exile, Stein was, in contrast to his contemporaries, remarkably optimistic in the years after the revolution. Owing to his uniquely perceptive analysis of the revolutions in France and in Germany, Stein came to believe that the experience of 1848 had set Europe on the right path. As he argued in his book, *Geschichte der Sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich* (1850), 1848 brought a major shift in progressive political thinking, from a focus on constitution (*Verfassung*), the buzzword of radical politics since the French Revolution, to administration (*Verwaltung*), more practical measures connected directly to the needs of the proletariat, which had its roots in the tradition of *Staatswissenschaft*. According to Stein, after 1848 a focus on administration would prevent radical demands from getting lost in philosophical abstraction.

Stein's role in 1848

At the beginning of 1848, Stein, who had just published the new edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*, was still absorbed in his work as professor at the University of Kiel. A few months later, he found himself at the heart of revolutionary turmoil, and for the first time in his life became actively involved in politics. Stein had developed an interest in nationalism and the independence movement of his native Schleswig-Holstein during his university years. As we saw in the last chapter, he became more closely engaged in the nationalist movement following his return to Kiel in 1843, when he began writing on

¹ See Lewis Namier's famous thesis that 1848 was a 'revolution of the intellectuals'. Lewis Namier, *1848: The revolution of the intellectuals* (1946; Oxford, 1992).

Schleswig-Holstein's escalating political struggle with Denmark for the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. When nationalist sentiments across Germany came to a head following the outbreak of revolution in spring 1848, Stein remained dedicated to the Schleswig-Holstein conflict, rather than getting involved in the wider German revolutionary movement.

The background to the war between Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark in 1848 was complicated. The Kingdom of Denmark had since the twelfth century tried to expand its claims over north German territories, including Holstein which, unlike ethnically Danish Schleswig, had an overwhelmingly German population and was a member of the German Confederation.² The rise of nationalist sentiments in the 1840s coincided with a looming succession crisis in the Danish monarchy. It looked as if the future king would die without a male heir, and while the Kingdom of Denmark allowed succession through the female line, the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein operated under the Salic law and only recognized male heirs. Accordingly, the German Augustenburg dynasty was poised to inherit the duchies, which would have separated them from Denmark. In 1846 King Christian VII therefore issued an 'open letter' in which he declared that Danish inheritance law applied to the duchies and re-affirmed Danish claims to Schleswig. Lorenz Stein was among the nine professors from the University of Kiel who jointly authored a rejection of these claims.³

On 20 January 1848, just on the eve of the outbreak of revolutions in Paris and Berlin, the Danish king Christian VIII died. Upon accession, his son, Frederick VII, attempted to pre-empt future conflict over the succession by announcing his plan to publish a national constitution through which Schleswig would be formally integrated into the Danish kingdom. This was followed, on 21 March, by an

² See Stein's account of this history in anon. [Lorenz Stein], 'Schleswig-Holstein bis zur Erhebung im Jahre 1848', *Die Gegenwart: Eine encyklopädische Darstellung der neuesten Zeitgeschichte für alle Stände*, 2 (1849), 404-28.

³ Werner Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein: Ein Beitrag zur Biographie, zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins und zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Eckernförde, 1956), p. 35.

annexation of Schleswig. In response, the German minority in the south of Schleswig formed a revolutionary provisional government, led by Wilhelm Beseler.⁴ The university in Kiel was closed, and from March to August 1848 Lorenz Stein dedicated all his efforts to this political struggle.

Stein's first venture into politics was a profound failure. In March 1848 Stein attended a joint assembly of the estates of the two duchies, which formulated goals for their political future.⁵ Stein's behaviour there was marked by a striking lack of tact and political skill. As one account has it, Stein, who was taking part in the meetings of the left, was sent as an envoy to the members of the right. His task was to invite the members of the right for negotiations on the formation of a provisional government.⁶ Contrary to the instructions he had received, Stein indicated that there were already firm candidates for this government. In reaction, the conservatives declined to cooperate. Karl Samwer, another member of the left's assembly and in fact a relative of Stein's, was so outraged about this missed opportunity that he, further provoked by a sarcastic remark of Stein's, pulled a dagger and threatened Stein.⁷ Following the incident Stein was attacked in the press as a poor political leader, which destroyed any chance he might have had of securing a seat in the Frankfurt Parliament, something he had hoped to achieve.⁸ As a result, Stein was also unsuccessful in his attempt to gain a seat in Schleswig-Holstein's constituent assembly for which elections took place in autumn 1848.

Stein's only political achievement in 1848 was as a member of the *Deutscher Verein*, an institution committed to achieving German national unity. Together with many others, Stein considered the Schleswig-Holstein conflict of 1848 strategically significant for plans for a united Germany. As he pointed out in one of his essays on Schleswig-Holstein, the confrontation with Denmark over the duchies was the first

⁴ See Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The rise and downfall of Prussia 1600-1947* (London, 2006), pp. 492-93.

⁵ See Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 40.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁸ See Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 51.

occasion on which Germany could demonstrate its national strength.⁹ Schleswig-Holstein's location by the sea was crucial, as it made it central to Germany's effort to obtain a fleet and to become a sea power, an issue that became central to the unification efforts of 1848. Stein felt particularly strongly about this and joined a committee concerned with the fleet in the *Deutscher Verein*, while also stressing the significance of naval force in his journalistic writings in 1848.¹⁰

Besides national unity, the other issue at stake in Germany in 1848 was whether the future German state should be a republic or a constitutional monarchy. Many voices, even on the left, believed that Germany was not ready for republicanism, and should for be content with a constitution and an extended franchise.¹¹ Robert von Mohl, Stein's much admired mentor, for example, wrote a pamphlet that he intended for distribution among workers in which he explained the disadvantages of a republic.¹² Stein in the beginning of 1848 in his journalistic writings also cautioned against the insistence on a republican constitution for Germany. He claimed that Germany's goals, above all national unity, were achievable under a monarchy.¹³ Stein emphasized that it was important to be pragmatic.¹⁴ What was more important than the form of state was that all noble privileges and other class distinction in politics were abolished. And it was necessary

⁹ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], 'Das Recht und die Bedeutung der Staatserbfolge in Schleswig-Holstein: Zweiter Artikel', *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1847), II: 20-71 (p. 24).

¹⁰ L. S. [Lorenz Stein], 'Der Anfang unserer Flotte', *Kieler Correspondenzblatt*, 11 April 1848, pp. 191-92.

¹¹ See Dieter Langewiesche, 'Republik, konstitutionelle Monarchie und "soziale Frage": Grundprobleme der deutschen Revolution von 1848/9', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 230 (1980), 529-47; Douglas Moggach, 'New goals and new ways: Republicanism and socialism in 1848/9', in Douglas Moggach (ed.), *The social question and the democratic revolution: Marx and the legacy of 1848* (Ottawa, 2000), pp. 49-69.

¹² The unpublished manuscript is discussed and reprinted in Erich Angermann, 'Republikanismus, amerikanisches Vorbild und soziale Frage 1848', *Die Welt als Geschichte*, 21 (1961), 185-93.

¹³ L.S. [Lorenz Stein], 'Zwei Wahrzeichen der Zeit', *Kieler Correspondenz-Blatt*, 18 April 1848, pp. 207-09 (p. 208).

¹⁴ Lorenz Stein, 'Die deutsche Reichsverfassung', *Kieler Correspondenzblatt*, 16 May 1848, pp. 251-53 (p. 253).

to get the right people into power.¹⁵ As far as German politics were concerned, Stein clearly considered national unity to be the primary goal.

Crucially, through his involvement in the politics of Schleswig-Holstein, Stein got the opportunity to travel to Paris in the summer of the revolutionary year. Stein had links to Parisian political circles from his stay there in the early 1840s, and was therefore entrusted by the provisional government of Schleswig-Holstein to try and win France's support for their revolutionary cause. This was a hopeless mission. First, the timing was inappropriate. Stein arrived in Paris at the end of June 1848, just days after thousands of workers, disappointed with the course of the revolution so far, had taken to the streets and were beaten down by the revolutionary government. More than 10,000 people were killed during the bloody 'June days'. When Stein arrived in Paris, the French were in deep shock, uncertainly about the future of their revolution. The second factor that complicated Stein's mission in Paris was that he was not there in any official diplomatic function. This made French politicians extremely unlikely to pay him any attention. His only achievement during his stay in France was the publication of a brochure, *La Question du Schleswig-Holstein*, which he distributed among members of the French chamber. The pamphlet described the history of Schleswig-Holstein and highlighted its strong determination in the fight for a constitution and independence from Denmark. By pointing out that the Danish regime was one of the most absolutist in Europe, Stein hoped to evoke French republican sympathies. As he wrote, 'it is France that signalled the arrival of liberty [...] we have been following its example.'¹⁶ Unfortunately for Stein there were, however, no reactions to the brochure.

¹⁵ L.S. [Lorenz Stein], 'Die Wahl zum Deutschen Reichstage in Frankfurt', *Kieler Correspondenzblatt*, 25 April 1848, pp. 215-17; 26 April 1848, p. 219 (p. 217).

¹⁶ Lorenz Stein, *La Question du Schleswig-Holstein* (Paris, 1848), p. 45: 'C'est la France qui a donné le signal de la liberté [...] Nous avons suivi son exemple.' There is a modern edition in German translation: Lorenz von Stein, *Die Schleswig-Holstein-Frage. La Question du Schleswig-Holstein. Paris 1848* [*Quellen zur Verwaltungsgeschichte*, 3], intro. by Albert von Mutius and Georg-Christoph von Unruh (Kiel, 1986).

Although Stein achieved virtually nothing on behalf of Schleswig-Holstein in Paris, his time there was crucial for his own intellectual development. To be immersed in French society at such a vital moment in its history proved central to the evolution of his ideas on socialism and class conflict. Stein's correspondences from this month reveal that he was captivated by the events in France and that he saw in them the seed of momentous conceptual development.¹⁷ Writing to Johann Gustav Droysen, Schleswig-Holstein's deputy to the Frankfurt National Assembly, on 10 July 1848, Stein presented his interpretation of the course of the revolution in France so far: 'The short version of the story is that in February the social republic was cunning enough to let the bourgeois republic push over the throne. The latter only realized that after the issues had been decided.'¹⁸ Stein predicted that if the right to work was cut from the constitution, another revolt would break out. In addition, there was the danger that if Adolphe Thiers got elected he would use a foreign war to distract from internal insurrection. This would be a danger for Germany. Stein's main hope was that this would not happen for another few months, so that Germany would have time to prepare. In a letter to an unknown recipient from 14 July Stein commented further on the situation in France:

The struggle between the purely democratic and the socialist republic is not getting more violent, but indeed is becoming more pronounced [...] As it seems to me, the right's measures against this tendency are being far too harsh, so that in not all too long it will have pushed the mass of discontented workers to unite with the left in the Chamber, and then, one has to assume, a new revolution will break out.¹⁹

¹⁷ See 'Q 18 [Lorenz Stein to Wilhelm Beseler, 4 July 1848]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 159; 'Q 20 [Lorenz Stein to Johann Gustav Droysen, 10 July 1848]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 163; 'Q 21 [Lorenz Stein to unknown recipient, 14 July 1848]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 166; 'Q 23a [Lorenz Stein to Johann Gustav Droysen, 8 August 1848]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 170.

¹⁸ 'Q 20 [Lorenz Stein to Johann Gustav Droysen, 10 July 1848]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 163: 'Die kurze Geschichte ist die. Im Februar hat die sociale Republik die Schlaueheit gehabt, durch die bürgerliche den Thron umstoßen zu lassen, und die letztere hat das erst gemerkt nachdem die Sache entschieden war.'

¹⁹ 'Q 21 [Lorenz Stein to unknown recipient, 14 July 1848]', in Schmidt, p. 166: 'Der Kampf zwischen der rein demokratischen und der socialistischen Republik wird nicht eben starker, aber doch deutlicher [...] Die Recht ist, wie es mir scheint, viel zu hart in ihren Maaßregeln gegen diese

Stein also argued that a military dictatorship was likely in France if the right person to take charge was found. These initial reflections on French politics in July 1848 were an important foundation for Stein's later analysis of 1848. While in Paris, Stein read as many political publications as he could get hold of, and returned to Kiel with a large collection of French newspapers. These formed the basis of his later publications on the subject.²⁰

Given his lack of success in Paris, Stein asked to return to Kiel after one month, a request that was given particularly urgency because Stein's wife was expecting their first child (a son, Alwin Lorenz Jakob, was born on 31 July).²¹ Back in Kiel, Stein was so disappointed with the course of the revolutionary events that he decided to abandon politics and to concentrate on his academic work again. In the beginning of August 1848 he wrote in a letter: 'I have made my peace, and will now sit down quietly and, as far as possible, continue working on my literary works.'²²

Schleswig-Holstein's situation had quickly deteriorated since spring. Following an easy defeat of the Danes, international pressure rose over the summer and eventually forced Prussia to withdraw its troops. An armistice with Denmark, the treaty of Malmö, was signed on 26 August. The decision was taken by Prussian authorities without consulting the parliament in Frankfurt, which demonstrated the powerlessness of the institution.²³ The conflict with Denmark, however, dragged on until 1851 and Stein was ultimately also able to again take an active part in it. In 1850 he won a seat in the local assembly during a by-election as a 'candidate of the left', a post he could occupy for only a few months.²⁴ In January 1851 Prussia and

Tendenz, sie wird in nicht gar zu langer Zeit die Masse der unzufriedenen Arbeiter mit der Linken der Kammer vereinigt haben, und dann darf man annehmen, daß eine neue Revolution ausbricht.'

²⁰ This collection has been preserved in his *Nachlass*. See Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek, Kiel, *Nachlass Lorenz von Stein*, II. 11.2: Collection of French newspapers, May to August 1848.

²¹ Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 57.

²² 'Q 23a [Lorenz Stein to Johann Gustav Droysen, 8 August 1848]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 170: 'Ich habe mit mir abgeschlossen, und werde mich jetzt ruhig hinsetzen und so weit möglich fortarbeiten in meinen literarischen Arbeiten.'

²³ Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, p. 493.

²⁴ Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 60.

Austria demanded Schleswig-Holstein's surrender to Denmark. As a member of the assembly, Stein had to vote on whether it should accept this command. This put him in a major dilemma; by voting in favour, Stein disappointed many of his colleagues on the left who felt he betrayed Schleswig-Holstein.²⁵

Stein had made this decision because he chose to put the national cause above local interest. Despite his attachment to his native duchy and his commitment to Schleswig-Holstein's cause, Stein could not give up on the ideal he had held since an early age: that of Prussia as a model progressive nation. When his two political commitments came into tension, Stein chose the one that also represented his philosophical ideal.

Stein on the meaning of 1848 in France

The course and significance of the February revolution in France occupied the minds of many great thinkers. Above all, contemporary observers were puzzled by how a year that had begun with the overthrow of monarchical power had ended with the electoral victory of Louis Bonaparte. From the outset, 1848 had also promised to bring the victory of socialist elements. The easy defeat of the revolution consequently raised serious questions about the future of the socialist movement. One later canonical work on the subject was Karl Marx's *The Class Struggle in France*, in which he dissected the class dynamics of the revolutionary years.²⁶ Another famous explanation of the course of 1848 in France, that was also sensitive to social force, was contained in the posthumously published *Recollections* of Alexis de Tocqueville, who had himself been involved in France's political life during the revolution.²⁷ Yet neither Marx's nor Tocqueville's book was published in the

²⁵ Ibid., p. 62.

²⁶ Karl Marx, 'The class struggle in France 1848 to 1850', in MECW, X (1978): 45-145.

²⁷ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Recollections: The French Revolution of 1848*, ed. by J. P. Mayer and A. P. Kerr; introduction by Fernand Braudel (1970; New Brunswick, NJ, 2008). See also the study by the sociologist Heinz Steinert, *Die Revolution und ihre Theorien: Frankreich 1848: Marx, v. Stein, Tocqueville im aktuellen Vergleich* (Opladen, 1975), that argues that these three famous interpretations of the 1848 revolution are relatively similar in their reading of the events, and only

immediate post-revolutionary contexts.²⁸ Lorenz Stein, by contrast, had by the beginning of 1850 produced a book-length study that was exclusively concerned with the way 1848 had transformed socialist thought.²⁹ It is here that Stein presented his argument about the transition from constitutionalism to administration, and a theory of the origins and meaning of social democracy.

Stein's interpretation of the meaning of 1848 built heavily on his earlier writing on socialism in France. This is apparent from his earliest comments on the revolution. In spring 1848, just as he was also becoming involved in the political struggle, Stein was working on two pieces on socialism for a new periodical, *Die Gegenwart: Eine encyklopädische Darstellung der neusten Zeitgeschichte für alle Stände*.³⁰ Reflecting on the most recent chapter in France's revolutionary history, Stein in one of these essays claimed that the significance of the February Revolution lay in the fact that the proletariat had for the first time in history gained access to political power. In his earlier work, Stein had described the different sects of the socialist movement. The dominant tendency in the first half of 1848, he wrote, was that of the *réformistes*, those contributing to the journal *L'Atelier* which represented, simply put, 'the educated ones among the workers', who had the potential to implement the socialist ideas developed over the previous decades in the new

differ in their overarching theory of class dynamics. See also Felix Gilbert, 'From political to social history: Lorenz von Stein and the revolution of 1848', in Felix Gilbert, *History: Choice and commitment* (Cambridge, MA, 1977), pp. 411-22 which makes the argument that 1848 made Stein turn towards social history, away from his earlier, deeply Hegelian, 'idealist' approach to history.

²⁸ Marx's *Class Struggle in France* was a series of articles published in Marx's exile paper *Neue Rheinische Zeitung Revue* in the first half of 1850. It was first published as a book by Friedrich Engels in 1895. See Karl Marx, *Die Klassenkämpfe in Frankreich, 1848 bis 1850*, ed. by Friedrich Engels (Berlin, 1895).

²⁹ L. Stein, *Geschichte der socialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage* (3 vols, Leipzig, 1850); I: *Der Begriff der Gesellschaft und die sociale Geschichte der französischen Revolution bis zum Jahre 1830*; II: *Die industrielle Gesellschaft. Der Socialismus und Communismus Frankreichs von 1830 bis 1848*; III: *Das Königthum, die Republik und die Souveränität der französischen Gesellschaft seit der Februarrevolution 1848*.

³⁰ This journal was essentially an encyclopaedia that covered topics of current interest. It was intended as an updated version of the *Conversationslexikon*, which had been published by the Brockhaus publishing house in Leipzig in the 1830s.

revolutionary situation.³¹ At the time of writing, Stein was still optimistic about this movement's prospects. Yet the June Days fell between the composition and publication of the piece. In the published version, a lengthy footnote was appended that modified Stein's conclusions in light of these dramatic events. With the hindsight of the experience of June 1848, Stein regarded the project of the national workshops as overambitious.³² They had been bound to fail because they attacked the principle of private property.³³ Yet nevertheless, the main aim, Stein wrote, would remain to expand the political rights of the proletariat. In his *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, he had made the case that class conflict came down to the competition for control over political power. He therefore remained convinced that it could only be resolved on the political level.³⁴

Almost immediately upon his return to Kiel in August 1848, Stein then published a curious work: an 'appendix' to the second edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* which had come out earlier in 1848 and, following the events of February and their aftermath, required updating. The new publication consisted of translations of the documents Stein had collected in Paris in July 1848: excerpts from the press, circulars published by the leaders of the revolution, speeches given in the Palais de Luxembourg, minutes of meetings, the official police reports on the events of May and June 1848, initial plans for the Banque d'échange, Proudhon's draft financial plan presented in the national assembly and Thiers's response to it, Considerant's writing on the right to work, and the constitutional draft of June 1848.³⁵ An introductory essay furthermore sketched Stein's interpretation of the revolution so far. In it he argued that the recent events

³¹ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], 'Der Socialismus und Communismus in Frankreich', in *Die Gegenwart: Eine encyklopädische Darstellung der neusten Zeitgeschichte für alle Stände*, 1 (1848), 299-326 (p. 323): 'die Masse der Gebildeten unter den Arbeitern'.

³² Ibid., p. 326.

³³ Ibid., p. 326: 'Das Experiment bedrohte also den individuellen Besitz, stellte somit die Rechte der Persönlichkeit und die Grundlagen aller unserer Lebensverhältnisse in Frage.'

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 326-27.

³⁵ *Die socialistischen und communistischen Bewegungen seit der dritten französischen Revolution: Anhang zu Stein's Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* (Leipzig and Vienna, 1848).

illustrated the major claim of his 1842 book, that the time of political movements was over, and future revolutions would exclusively be of a social nature. Stein wrote, ‘the events have proved the content of this statement.’³⁶ As what happened in France in 1848 so closely matched what Stein had prefigured in his earlier work, he developed his interpretation of the revolution remarkably quickly. The forty-page essay from August already contained most of the ideas that would frame the discussion in *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich*.

Between August 1848 and late autumn 1849 Stein worked on what came to be one of his most significant works, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich*. Superficially it resembled an expanded edition of his two earlier studies on socialism. Yet conceptually, it was on a higher level, as Stein emphasized. Describing the book in a letter to Robert von Mohl in December 1849, Stein stated: ‘My work on socialism and communism requires a new edition [...] All events have reaffirmed the fact, which I was dimly aware of earlier, that one needs to know the concept and nature of society.’³⁷ While the first edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* from 1842 was a historical work that refused to make any contribution to socialist theory, Stein had in the second edition extended his theoretical analysis. Now, in 1850, he was prepared to put forward a work the very focus of which was theoretic. Although it was still titled a ‘History’, Stein’s new book was, as he made clear, concerned with understanding the ‘social’ as an abstract concept.

³⁶ L. Stein, ‘Briefe über Frankreich’, in *Die socialistischen und communistischen Bewegungen seit der dritten französischen Revolution: Anhang zu Stein’s Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* (Leipzig and Vienna, 1848), pp. 3-40 (p. 16): ‘Die Ereignisse haben den Inhalt dieses Satzes klar gemacht.’

³⁷ ‘7. Lorenz Stein an Robert v. Mohl, 1 December 1849’, in Manfred Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus im Niedergang: Studien zu Lorenz Stein und Hegel* (Munich, 1969), pp. 200-02 (p. 200): ‘Meine Schrift, über den Sozialismus und Kommunismus [...] fordert eine neue Auflage. Es war mir nicht möglich, das Werk mit mehr oder weniger Abweichungen in seiner frühern Form dem Verleger wieder zu übergeben. Alle Ereignisse haben mir den Satz bestätigt [...] daß man Begriff und Natur der Gesellschaft kennen müsse, um nicht bloß die ganze Bedeutung von Sozialismus und Kommunismus, sondern die ganze neue Bewegung verstehen zu können.’

The book's broader argument was in part conveyed through its structure. In its entirety it was entitled *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage* (History of the social movement in France from 1789 to the present day) but the work's three volumes had important subtitles. The first was called *Der Begriff der Gesellschaft und die sociale Geschichte der französischen Revolution bis zum Jahre 1830* (The concept of society and the social history of the French Revolution up to 1830). The second volume was entitled *Die industrielle Gesellschaft: Der Socialismus und Communismus Frankreichs von 1830 bis 1848* (Industrial society: Socialism and communism in France from 1830 to 1848). The third book had the title *Das Königthum, die Republik und die Souveränität der französischen Gesellschaft seit der Februarrevolution 1848* (The monarchy, the republic and the sovereignty of French society since the February Revolution 1848). While the historical discussion in the first two volumes built largely on the material from his earlier books, the third volume was exclusively concerned with the developments in France since February 1848.

Despite the new theoretical focus of the book, historical analysis still played a major role, and constituted one of the central virtues of Stein's book. Like in his earlier work on socialism in France, Stein introduced specific ideas about the relationship between history and theory, namely a deeply Hegelian notion of reality and historical progress. France was, as Stein wrote, also in the developments of 1848 ahead of other nations. By studying its history, one was able to deduce general laws, in this case the 'social law' underlying all modern European history.³⁸ The outbreak of a violent class struggle in 1848 had been inevitable, yet it had not been bound to happen in France. As he wrote:

It was inevitably that the political revolutions of 1789 and 1830 occurred, it was inevitable that social ideas occurred, it was inevitable that social democracy threw its first pitch with the revolution of 1848. It was not inevitable that this all happened exactly in these years and under these

³⁸ Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*, I: cxxxvii.

circumstances. But it was inevitable that it happened.

France's history is the great proof of the science of society.³⁹

There was one significant, if seemingly minor, difference between this statement and Stein's justification of his study of France in the book from 1842. In 1842, he had merely suggested that France was ahead in its historical development, and that Germans had an interest in knowing about the French social developments so they had the opportunity to prepare for their arrival in their own country. In the 1850 book by contrast, historical interpretation served to understand a more general 'social law'.

Dialectical modes of explanation were also central to the argument of the book in another way. Throughout his narrative of the events of 1848 Stein commented on the timeliness and untimeliness of events. He pointed out that it was a mistake to ignore the nature of the conditions of an age and warned that historical actions that were taken prematurely were bound to fail. This was what had happened in France on several occasions in 1848, especially in the case of the national workshops. As Stein argued, they were set up before crucial conceptual development around the idea of socialism had taken place and had therefore been bound to fail.

As with the book as a whole, Stein's argument about the meaning of the 1848 revolution was in part voiced through the structure of the third volume of *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*. Before beginning his discussion of the events of 1848, Stein in *Das Königthum, die Republik und die Souveränität der französischen Gesellschaft seit der Februarrevolution 1848* presented his 'theory of monarchy' ('Lehre vom Königthum') in which he described the theoretical conditions for the survival of a monarchy in a society dominated by social conflict. In the second part of the book, Stein discussed his 'theory of the republic' ('Lehre von der Republik'), drawing the distinction between a 'republic of industrial property owners' ('Republik des

³⁹ Ibid., p. cxxxix: 'Es war nothwendig, daß die politischen Revolutionen von 1789 und 1830 kamen, es war nothwendig, daß die socialen Ideen auftraten, es war nothwendig, daß die sociale Demokratie ihren ersten Wurf mit der Revolution von 1848 that. Es war nicht nothwendig, daß dies Alles gerade in diesen Jahren, nicht nothwendig, daß es gerade unter diesen Umständen geschah; aber es war nothwendig, daß es geschah. Frankreichs Geschichte ist der große Beweis für die Lehre von der Gesellschaft.'

industriellen Besitzes') and a 'republic of industrial non-owners' ('Republik des industriellen Nichtbesitzes'). This important distinction went back to the idea from his 1848 book that industrial society was dominated by the competition between classes for the control of state power. At a given moment, a republic could take one of two different forms. It could either be dominated by the interest of the property-owning class. Or, alternatively, it could be a republic of the 'non-owners'. For Stein, the story of the February revolution in France was the story of the class war between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, manifesting itself more precisely in their struggle over the form of the republic. This fight, Stein argued, shaped the course of events throughout 1848, both before and after the June events. To prove this, Stein in the third part of the book offered a detailed narrative of the events of 1848 in France.

As Stein argued, the French monarchy received a fatal blow in February 1848. Not only did the regime of Louis Philippe fall, but the monarchy as a whole lost its credibility, so that from spring there was no danger of a monarchical regime returning to power. This was because the French monarchy had too often disappointed its people. As a general rule, the people's trust in state authority built on 'the conviction that it will ultimately use the means of the state in the spirit of the state idea, for the development of all elements of freedom.'⁴⁰ A good monarch could live up to this expectation, but Louis Philippe had failed on that front. Through his violent behaviour, for example the heavy use of force during the battles of February 1848, Louis Philippe managed to destroy not only the trust in his own person, but in the monarchy as an institution.⁴¹

Following the fall of the monarchy and the proletariat's rise to a position of increased importance, France became, as Stein wrote, an ideal ground to observe the so-called 'sovereignty of society', a highly dangerous phenomenon. Once the arbitrating state power (in this case, the French monarchy) was removed, the

⁴⁰ Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*, III: 131: 'die Überzeugung, daß sie am letzte Ende die Mittel des Staates im Geiste der Staatsidee, zur Entwicklung aller Elemente der Freiheit verwenden werde'.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 132: 'So war die Revolution des Februar vollendet. Sie schloss ab mit der Königlosigkeit.'

conflicts between the classes that existed in modern society could play themselves out freely. Stein believed that ‘popular sovereignty’ was an illogical and foolish concept. The people in a society that was dominated by class conflict could not be sovereign because sovereignty had to be indivisible. Yet, this type of society was inherently divided by the class conflict in the midst of it. What came into power after February 1848 was therefore not ‘the people’, but the conflicts that ruled society. This explained the recurring tensions and upheavals in the first half of 1848.⁴²

According to Stein, a republican form of state was instituted after February 1848 for lack of an alternative, rather than because it was genuinely the best solution. In theory, there had been three possible options for France after the fall of Louis Philippe. A new dynasty could have been instituted. This was not possible, Stein argued, because the monarchy as an institution had lost credibility. As a second option, a socialist dictatorship could have come into power. This did not happen because France at the time lacked a suitable leader figure who could have taken charge. Only one option remained: that of proclaiming France a republic. Because it came into existence in such an accidental way, the new republic was not taken seriously by the French. Stein wrote: ‘You will remember, how after the king’s flight and in the first days of the *gouvernement provisoire* the quiet citizens of Paris, half in astonishment and half-jokingly, greeted each other as republicans, not realizing that under the given circumstance the republic was not so much the only right, as the only possible solution.’⁴³

Delving deeper into his theory of the modern state, Stein explained that republicanism as a theory had an important psychological function. The modern state built on the notion that every citizen had an individual connection to political authority.⁴⁴ Therefore, a republic with a representative system was the ideal form of

⁴² Ibid., pp. 228-30.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 226-27: ‘Sie [werden] sich erinnern, wie nach der Flucht des Königs und in der ersten Zeit des *gouvernement provisoire* die ruhigen Bürger von Paris sich halb erstaunten, halb lachend als Republikaner begrüßten, nicht begreifend, dass unter jenen Verhältnissen die Republik nicht so sehr das einzig Richtige, als das einzig Mögliche war.’

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 134.

state and in the absence of such a vision, society could not function. As Stein wrote, 'only ideals generate enthusiasm. And the sole ideal of the state is the republic.'⁴⁵ But this did not mean that a republic was also the best form of state in real life. In modern society, Stein argued, the inequalities created by property ownership undermined the republican promise of liberty. Stein, for example, agreed with Rousseau's verdict that democracy was only suitable for gods. He also expressed sympathy for the views of Proudhon, who had come to reject all forms of state because of the hypocrisy he saw in the constitutional promise of liberty given the existence of private property.⁴⁶

Because it operated under the delusion of the existence of 'popular sovereignty', the provisional government instituted in France after the February revolution was doomed from the start. Stein emphasized that it was by no means a socialist government. The party in control was that of Alphonse de Lamartine and of *Le National* which stood for the endorsement of radical democracy.⁴⁷ This 'pure democracy' saw the introduction of universal suffrage as its greatest goal and hoped to get away with these limited measures, without addressing what, in Stein's view, was at the heart of the revolution: the problems created by the tensions between the proletariat and the property-owning classes. The main failure of Lamartine was, as Stein wrote, that he 'never saw himself capable of being an administrator.'⁴⁸ This meant that he did not, as Stein argued, understand what the social conflict was about. He did not grasp that it could only be resolved through a focus on an improved administration of resources, rather than the granting of constitutional rights.⁴⁹

By equating good socialist government with a well-designed administrative system, Stein was once again drawing on the German vision of Cameralist rule. Yet, this recourse to an old tradition did not stop him from coming up with a highly

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 136: 'Begeisterung gibt es nur für Ideale. Das staatliche Ideal aber ist allein die Republik.'

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 152-53.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 233-34.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 236: 'Er hat niemals geglaubt, verwalten zu können'.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 239.

original interpretation of the 1848 events in France. The concept of administration was central to Stein's explanation of the course of the revolutionary year. A better administrative system, he argued, was the main goal of the 'proletarian republic', the counter-movement to 'pure democracy'. The national workshops, founded at the end of February 1848 represented a first step in this direction. Yet, their fate illustrated Stein's notion of untimely actions. As they were set up prematurely, they were destined to end in failure. The establishment of the Luxembourg commission in March created the impression that the workers had gained control over state power, but the national workshops soon began to face substantial problems, because they were run by the republican provisional government that had no real understanding of the social dynamic and of socialism. The workshops were thus only 'socialist' in appearance, and did not get to the heart of the problem.⁵⁰

Yet, thanks to the fate of the national workshop, an important intellectual process was set in motion. It was associated, as Stein argued, with the ideas of Louis Blanc. In 1848, Blanc was the head of the provisional government's Luxembourg commission that was in charge of workers' issues. Blanc had in the late 1830s first argued that the 'organisation of labour' was the principal socialist goal. In 1848 this idea was in some sense translated into reality through the national workshops. Despite their ultimate failure, they were, according to Stein, responsible for an important conceptual development. The experience of the workshops led the workers to develop the idea that they should aim to take charge of political power directly, rather than rely on the republican authorities to look after their interests. A number of factors contributed to this politicization of the working class. First, the first-hand experience of democratic principles in the management of the workshops made the working class confident that it could handle the mechanisms of modern politics. Second, the experience of a republican government turning against its own people

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 266.

during the June Days reinforced the idea that the proletariat had to become independent of the other classes.

This shift, according to Stein, allowed the development of a more concrete definition of the concept of administration in 1848. Stein argued that when the working class realized it had to become involved in politics directly, it also made the decision to do things differently: should it be given the chance to control political decision making, the proletariat would not waste its time on a continuation of constitutional debates, which had proven futile. It would instead concentrate its energy on issues that were really close to its heart, notably the provision of sufficient work and good labour conditions. In short, the proletariat would focus on *Staatsverwaltung*, the administration of the state's resources.⁵¹

The confrontations of June themselves were for Stein not worthy of any detailed discussion. The bloody street battles only represented the most blatant manifestation of the deep-seated conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat that had dominated the French revolution of 1848 from the beginning. In fact, Stein did not even discuss them in *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*. His only comments on June 1848 were contained in the lengthy footnote that was appended to the article in *Die Gegenwart* where Stein had claimed that the national workshops had been bound to fail because they attacked the principle of private property.⁵² The situation escalated when the proletariat reacted to the closure with violence. As Stein had written then, 'it took up arms in order to not only conquer political power, but also to seize [...] the world of material goods, in order to establish the so-called social democratic republic.'⁵³

While Louis Blanc stood for the most important conceptual development of the first half of 1848, the turn to 'administration' among the workers, another

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 280.

⁵² [Stein], 'Der Socialismus und Communismus in Frankreich', p. 326.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 326: '[es] griff [...] zu den Waffen, um sich nicht nur die Staatsgewalt, sondern auch die Welt der materiellen Güter durch einen Kampf auf Leben und Tod zu erobern, um die sogenannte sociale demokratische Republik herzustellen.'

socialist thinker, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, represented the changes of socialism in the second half of the revolutionary year. As Stein argued, after the June events, socialism in France for the first time became the subject of abstract constitutional debate, rather than being the mere ideology of a street movement.⁵⁴ This went hand in hand with another development. For a long time, the socialist movement had consisted of a number of separate schools and sects which were often divided amongst them. As Stein argued it was therefore a positive development that some of the socialist sects went under in the first half of the revolutionary year. This opened the way for socialism to re-emerge as a unified movement, which would ultimately enable it to form a proper alliance with ‘pure democracy’.⁵⁵

Proudhon was central to this development, partly because he before 1848 did not have a fully developed socialist theory. When discussing him in his 1842 *Der Socialismus und Communismus*, Stein lamented that he was a mere critic, and expressed hope that he would provide a more positive proposal in his future work.⁵⁶ Indeed, as Stein saw it, 1848 brought Proudhon the opportunity to develop a socialist theory in direct response to the events of the revolutionary year. Proudhon became the spokesman for the idea of an ‘organisation of credit’, that built on Blanc’s notion of ‘organisation of labour’ but had as its aim to create capital for the workers which would enable them to acquire property. Although Stein saw many problems with Proudhon’s critique of private property, he believed that Proudhon’s significance lay in the fact that he had begun such a critique at all. Proudhon was in 1848 one of the few public figures who were brave enough to state the priority of social issues over constitutional and political debate.⁵⁷

The constitutional debates that took place from August 1848 were marked by the conflict between the two types of republicanism, one dominated by the interest of

⁵⁴ Stein, *Geschichte der socialen Bewegung*, III: 346, 358.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 355.

⁵⁶ L. Stein, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* (Leipzig, 1842), p. 329.

⁵⁷ Stein, *Geschichte der socialen Bewegung*, III: 380.

the property-owning class, and the other by that of the proletariat.⁵⁸ Attempts were made to balance the social and the republican elements in the new constitution, but without success. The constitutional draft of 29 August ended up including two contradictory elements. One article envisaged a right to work, while another was based on a model of ‘freedom of labour and industry’ in which the state would only give help to those unable to work.⁵⁹ During the debates of September 1848, the right to work was dropped while the article about ‘freedom of labour and industry’ was retained. The new constitution that was adopted on 4 November thus favoured the interests of the bourgeoisie. This move, Stein wrote, ‘marked the beginning of a new age’.⁶⁰

Now followed the most ingenious part of Stein’s argument. As he wrote, the autumn of 1848 saw the rise of the reaction, as the monarchical forces and the representatives of ultramontaniam merged with the conservative movement which defended the interest of the property owners.⁶¹ The emergence of this reactionary alliance was for Stein, however, the most significant development of 1848 because it set in motion an important development. In the face of this powerful ‘industrial reaction’ the movement of ‘pure democracy’ felt seriously under threat for the first time since February 1848. This led it to seek links with the party of the proletariat. According to Stein, that way the first proper alliance of socialism and democracy was forged in the first half of 1849. It was occasioned by the victory of Louis Bonaparte in the presidential election of 10 December 1848, a development Stein had already predicted at the beginning of July 1848.⁶²

Napoleon’s victory confirmed many of the insights Stein had already reached about the dynamic between class issues and politics in his writings before 1848. On the one hand, Stein blamed the disparity between Paris and the countryside for

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 398.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 401.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 409: ‘Beginnt eine ganz neue Zeit’.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 410.

⁶² See ‘Q 19 [Lorenz Stein to Wilhelm Beseler, 13 July 1848]’, in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 161-63 (p. 163).

Napoleon's success. The citizens in the countryside were not aware of the existence of a class conflict and did not realize the consequences of voting for Napoleon who was an ally of the property-owning class.⁶³ The other reason for Louis Napoleon's success was, according to Stein, a growing desire for political stability. For months, the French republic had been divided by party conflicts which citizens were becoming weary of. Bonaparte's appeal stemmed from the fact that he stood above party politics and represented strong state power. Bonaparte's election symbolized, as Stein wrote 'the elevation of the state above the rule of parties', a process that made a lot of sense to Stein, who had recognized the significance of an arbitrating state power in his earlier work.⁶⁴

Once Louis Napoleon was in office it was a logical step for him to try and additionally strengthen his personal power. As Stein explained:

From the beginning of his presidency Louis Napoleon seemed to believe that the overwhelming majority that had stood up for him essentially obligated him to permanently tie state power to his person. This thought, which he was obsessed by, affected the position he took towards the elements of society [...] If he wanted to count on an imperial career, he had to throw himself in the arms of the industrial reaction, in order to secure permanent power from it.⁶⁵

To Stein, Bonaparte's imperial ambitions were thus apparent from the beginning. As the safest way for him to secure his power beyond the presidential term was to position himself as the representative of the industrial bourgeoisie, from the first half of 1849 political power in France was again connected to property-ownership.⁶⁶

⁶³ Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*, III: 417.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 418: 'Die Erhebung des Staats über die Herrschaft der Parteien'.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 421: 'Gleich vom Anfange seiner Präsidentschaft an scheint Louis Napoleon geglaubt zu haben, daß ihm mit der ungeheuren Majorität, die für ihn aufgetreten war, gewissermaßen die Pflicht auferlegt worden sei, die Staatsgewalt dauernd an seine Person zu fesseln. Dieser Gedanke, der ihn fortwährend beherrschte, bedingte durchaus die Stellung, die er zu den Elementen der Gesellschaft einnahm [...] Wollte er auf eine kaiserliche Laufbahn rechnen, so mußte er sich deshalb unbedingt der industriellen Reaktion in die Arme werfen, um von ihr die dauernde Gewalt zu erlangen.'

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 420.

What mattered most from Stein's perspective was that this originally disappointing move, Bonaparte's betrayal of the proletariat, turned things around, and set France on the path for a promising future. Owing to Louis Napoleon's alliance with the bourgeoisie, it was left to the non-property owning classes to defend the democratic principle. Consequently, socialism and democracy joined forces. As Stein wrote, 'From this time, "fusion" became the buzzword on both parts.'⁶⁷ This is how a true social democracy came about, one that was in tune with the historical context: 'A previously often thrown-around word now became the description of a fact that would determine the future.'⁶⁸ Unlike earlier in the revolutionary year, this social democratic movement was not a superficially enforced abstract principle, but the result of real need and changed historical conditions. 'This "social democracy"', Stein wrote, 'is not a theory, not a creed, but a fact of history.'⁶⁹

Consequently, the nature of radical politics was fundamentally transformed. The events of 1848 had, at least on this conceptual level, led to real change. For the first time in history, socialist goals became an issue of real politics. As Stein put it: 'It is certain that from now on there will neither be pure democracy, nor pure socialism; and thereby the focus of political life and activity has been shifted, and moved from the constitutional question to the administrative question.'⁷⁰ This was for Stein the most momentous result of the revolutionary events of 1848. The move from constitutionalism, which had proven of limited use, to a focus on administration had taken place and thereby a truly new political age had begun.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 421: 'Seit dieser Zeit ward die "Fusion" das Lösungswort beider Theile'.

⁶⁸ Ibid.: 'So ward aus einem früher oft gehörten Worte jetzt die Bezeichnung einer für die Zukunft entscheidenden Thatsache.'

⁶⁹ Ibid.: 'Diese "soziale Demokratie" ist [...] nicht eine Theorie, nicht ein Glaubensbekenntnis, sondern sie ist eine historische Thatsache.'

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 422: 'Gewiss ist es, dass es von jetzt an weder eine reine Demokratie, noch einen reinen Socialismus mehr geben wird; und damit ist denn endlich der Schwerpunkt des Staatenlebens und der Staatsthätigkeit verrückt, und aus der Verfassungsfrage in die Verwaltungsfrage hinübergetragen.'

Socialism after 1848

What would this new political age look like? What would the future task of socialism consist of following the momentous events in France? From the start of his preoccupation with the meaning of the revolution, Stein's goal was to draw conclusions about the future direction of socialist theory. This significantly marked him off from most other socialist theorists. Most of them were deeply disappointed by the course of 1848-49. In response, some of them tried to modify their theories. Marx and Engels, for instance, after 1848 put increasing emphasis on class homogeneity. When reporting from Paris in the first half of 1850, Engels explained that the delay of a second revolution was due to the fact that the Socialist Party in France 'consists not only of the working men, but it includes, now, the great mass of the shopkeeping class too, a class whose socialism is indeed a great deal tamer than that of the proletarians.'⁷¹ Other former leading socialists altogether abandoned their project as a result of the failure of 1848. Moses Hess wrote in 1852: 'the reaction has put us one-time socialist writers into, at least temporary, retirement.'⁷²

Stein, however, after 1848 immediately set to work to define the next tasks of the socialist project. In early 1849, he published the essay 'Ideen zur Geschichte der Arbeit' which contained first hints regarding how Stein envisaged the future development of socialist theory. It mainly argued that the principal task would be to better understand the nature of labour in modern society. To make his case, Stein once again drew on the tools of historical genealogy, arguing that history demonstrated labour's close connection to liberty.⁷³ If carried out without coercion, labour could be a vehicle for personal fulfilment, freedom and emancipation. In the Middle Ages, the rise of freedom in cities, where wage labour was available,

⁷¹ Friedrich Engels, 'Letters from France', in MECW, X (1978): 17-40 (p. 30).

⁷² 'Moses Hess to Jacob Moleschott, 18 December 1852', in Moses Hess, *Briefwechsel*, ed. by Edmund Silberner ('s-Gravenhage, 1959), pp. 290-92 (p. 290): 'Die Reaktion [hat] uns ehemalige sozialistische Schriftsteller in Ruhestand versetzt, oder zur Ruhe gebracht hat.'

⁷³ L.S. [Lorenz Stein], 'Ideen zur Geschichte der Arbeit', *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1849), I: 354-79 (p. 355).

illustrated this connection.⁷⁴ In the beginning of the nineteenth century, it emerged that the competition between capital and labour presented an obstacle to labour fulfilling its liberating function. This was the problem socialist and communist thought addressed.

The experience of 1848 was central to the argument Stein put forward. As he wrote, in 1848 attention had first turned to the state and the idea of state-organized labour.⁷⁵ While this was in itself a laudable development, Stein rejected a particular manifestation of this idea, that of a so-called ‘red republic’, a central concept among radicals in France and in Germany in 1848.⁷⁶ Moses Hess, for example, explored the idea in his *Der Rote Katechismus* from 1849, where he suggested that in a future ‘red republic’ the proletariat would be in charge of politics and the organization of labour and businesses, that way putting an end to their exploitation by the bourgeoisie.⁷⁷ While this had many analogies to Stein’s vision of socialist *Verwaltung*, the implication of the idea of a ‘red republic’ was that republicanism was a necessary step in overcoming the tension between the state and society – an idea that was, on Stein’s terms, inherently contradictory. He wrote:

The red republic [...] is not a form of state, it is neither a republic, nor a monarchy, nor the despotic reign of an individual; it is indifferent towards every form of state as such, because it does not originate from politics, but emerges from society [...] it represents labour possessing and restricting state power, and using the authority of the state against capital.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 371: ‘der erste Versuch einer Arbeits- und Arbeiterverfassung’.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 377.

⁷⁶ See Wolfgang Mager, ‘Republik’, in Reinhart Koselleck et al. (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (8 vols, Stuttgart, 1972-97), V (1984): 549–651 (pp. 629-30).

⁷⁷ Moses Hess, ‘Roter Katechismus für das deutsche Volk’, in Moses Hess, *Philosophische und sozialistische Schriften 1837-1850: eine Auswahl*, ed. by Auguste Cornu and Wolfgang Mönke (Berlin, 1961), pp. 445-57 (pp. 448, 453).

⁷⁸ Stein, ‘Ideen zur Geschichte der Arbeit’, p. 378: ‘Die rothe Republik [...] ist keine Staatsform, sie ist weder Republik, noch Königthum, noch Despotie eines Einzelnen; sie ist gleichgültig gegen jede Form als solche, denn sie ist nicht in der Staatskunst entstanden, sondern sie ist aus der Gesellschaft hervorgegangen [...] sie ist die die Staatsgewalt umschänkt besitzende Arbeit, welche die Kraft des Staates gegen das Kapital wendet.’

Stein thus rejected the vision of a red republic because its essential goal, the right to work, could be achieved by peaceful means – as opposed to the violent measures promoted by the spokesmen of the red republic.⁷⁹ Stein envisaged a peaceful, academic examination of economic questions to be a central component of the future preoccupation with the social question. One particular field that should be addressed, was ‘whether a direct raise of wages and thereby a higher income is possible and useful, or whether and in what way it is better to distribute the company profit among pure labour.’⁸⁰

Further hints about how Stein envisaged the future of socialism were contained at different stages of his discussion in *Geschichte der Socialen Bewegung in Frankreich*. Having described the most recent events in France, Napoleon Bonaparte’s rise to power, his alliance with the bourgeoisie, and the rise of a social democratic alliance in reaction to these developments, Stein towards the end of the third volume also reflected on France’s contemporary situation and its political future. Writing in late 1849, he stated: ‘The reaction, which holds state power through Louis Napoleon, wants the ultimate battle with social democracy and the handing of the franchise question before Napoleon’s exit.’⁸¹ The future, Stein predicted, would therefore be marked by the fight of the newly emerged social democracy against its opponents, the industrial reaction.⁸² Stein saw the victory of social democracy over the reaction as the only way of creating a more harmonious social order. He wrote: ‘If the industrial reaction wins, the result will be the definitive rule of capital and the legal subjugation of labour. If social democracy wins, it will be the beginning – perhaps indeed only after very bloody times – of the

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 378.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 378: ‘Ob eine direkte Erhöhung des Lohnes und damit ein größerer Ertrag möglich und nützlich ist, oder ob und in welcher Weise eine Vertheilung der reinen Arbeit am Unternehmungsgewinn das Bessere ist.’

⁸¹ Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*, III: 434: ‘Die Reaktion, welche durch Louis Napoleon die Staatsgewalt in Händen hat, will den äußeren Kampf mit der socialen Demokratie und die Erledigung der Wahlrechtsfrage, ehe Napoleon abgeht.’

⁸² Ibid., pp. 422-23: ‘Der Kampf aber, der jetzt erst beginnt, ist künftig kein einfacher Kampf zwischen Arbeit und Kapital, sondern es ist ein Kampf der socialen Demokratie mit der industriellen Reaktion.’

social order of mutual benefit ('Gesellschaftsordnung des gegenseitigen Interesses').⁸³

What exactly Stein's vision of a 'social order of mutual benefit' consisted of had been briefly described earlier in the book. Towards the end of his theoretical discussion of the different forms of modern republicanism, Stein suggested that this was a form of state in which the different interests between the classes were balanced out. Having resigned himself to the fact that political freedom would always remain connected to property-ownership, all Stein hoped for was that an administrative equilibrium could be achieved that would create living conditions with which the lower classes could be satisfied. To create such a condition was of paramount and urgent importance, as it was European civilization itself which was at stake. As Stein put it:

If Europe has a future, it relies solely on the ability of its people to recognize this principle: if they do not have the ability to do so, if labour and property will continue to be in conflict, then Europe in all its glory will have reached its peak in the present industrial society, and will inexorably dissolve, and fall back into barbarianism. No democratic principle, no type of political freedom, no strong monarchy, no republic can protect it against that. If pure democracy can and wants to permanently and completely separate the constitution from property, and property-owners in the same way want to separate the non-property owner from the administration, old Europe is lost.⁸⁴

⁸³ Ibid., p. 424: 'Wenn die industrielle Reaktion siegt, so wird eine definitive Herrschaft des Kapitals und eine auch rechtliche Unterwerfung der Arbeit daraus hervorgehen; siegt die sociale Demokratie, so beginnt – vielleicht freilich erst nach sehr blutigen Zeiten – die Gesellschaftsordnung des gegenseitigen Interesses.'

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 221: 'Wenn daher Europa noch eine Zukunft hat, so beruht sie einzig und allein auf der Fähigkeit seiner Völker, jenes Prinzip anzuerkennen; haben sie diese Fähigkeit nicht, wollen Arbeit und Besitz noch länger im Gegensatze bleiben, so wird Europa mit all seiner Herrlichkeit jetzt in der industriellen Gesellschaft seinen Höhepunkt erreicht haben, und unaufhaltsam sich auflösend, in die Barbarei zurückfallen. Dagegen wird kein demokratischer Prinzip, keine politische Freiheit, kein starkes Königthum, keine Republik schützen. Wenn die reine Demokratie für immer die Verfassung absolut vom Besitze, und wenn der Besitz die Verwaltung für immer absolute vom Nichtbesitze trennen will und kann, so ist das alte Europa verloren.'

The victory of social democracy was, as Stein saw it in late 1849, thus the only safeguard against a very grim vision of the future.

To explain the specific function of the social democratic movement, Stein in *Geschichte der Socialen Bewegung* argued that it could be understood as the third, and highest, stage of development of the ‘social idea of equality’.⁸⁵ The first stage was communism, a crude notion of absolute equality that was impossible to implement in reality. The second form was socialism which did not advocate absolute equality, but merely demanded that labour should give everyone the ability to acquire wealth. Socialist thought centred on the idea that labour should dominate over capital, which is why it was flawed. Socialism was ultimately unfeasible because it demanded labour to stand above capital, rather than envisaging a system for their peaceful coexistence. Socialist ideas were therefore bound to provoke opposition from the property-owners who were disadvantaged by them. This is why socialism was not the final stage in the development of the social idea. As Stein argued, this higher stage was only reached once social ideas formed a union with the state.

The union of socialist ideas and the state could take different shapes. In its most basic form, Stein explained, it consisted of call for an ‘organization of labour’ which meant that that the state had to become an entrepreneur and compete with other capital-owners. A related option was the organisation of credit. The state would provide loans without charging an interest, allowing every citizen access to capital (loans would be granted ‘to everyone in accordance with their ability to work’).⁸⁶ The flaw in this model was that it required the state to generate money. As this money would be taken from those with capital, this group in society would be disadvantaged. Both the organisation of labour and the organisation of credit thus demanded that the state use its power for the advantage of one of the classes in society.

⁸⁵ Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*, I: cvii.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. cxv: ‘[Jedem] in Verhältniß zu seiner Arbeitsfähigkeit’

The aim of the proletariat therefore became to acquire political power directly, which it could then use to improve its condition. This was the point where, as Stein wrote, social ideas met with democratic ones. This movement went beyond the aims of democracy, as it also addressed the administrative side of government. As Stein put it, ‘the principle of social democracy means in the field of the constitution the general right to vote, and in the field of the administration the abolition of the working class’s social dependence. In a social democracy the constitution is therefore the democratic element, and the administration the social element.’⁸⁷ The idea of the full use of the administrative apparatus of the state for the achievement of social harmony was the most important addition which social democracy had brought to politics.

The main question that remained to be addressed was how one would get both classes to agree to such a political system. As Stein stressed, the point of social democracy was to create a harmonious social order and to balance out opposing class interests. It could therefore not be imposed through revolution, but had to be brought about through a slow process of reform. Central to this would be the property-owning class’s realization that such a balancing of class interests was in its interest and that what the proletariat aimed for was not the complete abolition of classes, but measures for its more harmonious coexistence.⁸⁸ As Stein made clear, true social reform could only happen if the upper classes equally recognized it as their highest aim.⁸⁹

Stein saw a close connection between his academic project and the progression towards a new social order. The major way of getting closer to social democracy and a ‘social order of mutual benefit’, he believed, was to work on the ‘science of society’. The task was to ‘answer’ the social question, which Stein broke

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. cxvii: ‘Das Princip der socialen Demokratie ist demnach das allgemeine Stimmrecht für die Verfassung, die Aufhebung der gesellschaftlichen Abhängigkeit in der arbeitenden Klasse für die Verwaltung. In der socialen Demokratie ist die Constitution daher das demokratische, die Administration das sociale Element.’

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. cxxvii.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. cxxx.

down into three parts: the first was the nature of society and the laws of its ‘movement’; the second field was the history of society; the third concerned ‘the ultimate aim of its development or its solution’. As he made clear, his 1850 book addressed the first two tasks. Stein did not dare turn to the third, especially as he envisaged it to be a lengthy undertaking, to be accomplished over several generations. As he wrote:

I have not touched upon the third question; it was my task to show the way to its only proper understanding, but the present work does not go further than that. I am fully convinced that the solution of the social question, which we now face, will not be accomplished by one man, let alone by one book. I cannot deem those to be wise who think otherwise.⁹⁰

Stein presented a tentative timeline for the realization of these new goals of socialism. It would take years alone, he claimed, for the European public to grasp the momentous changes that had occurred as a result of the revolution of 1848, notably the emergence of ‘social democracy’. All he therefore hoped to do in his lifetime was to ‘plough the soil on which the next generation would sow the seeds’.⁹¹

Yet the first step that needed to be taken was clear to Stein: more work had to be done on the ‘science of society’, the academic analysis of social processes in recent history. This was, as Stein had already claimed in his first book in 1842, a distinctly German task. Stein’s discussion of the theoretical implications of 1848 in *Geschichte der Socialen Bewegung* concluded with a short reflection on ‘Germany and France’. There he claimed that while his native country had so far contributed little to the ‘social field’, the recent developments presented a chance for Germany to ‘catch up’ and to make a significant addition to ‘Europe’s social future’.⁹² After

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. vii: ‘Ich habe endlich die dritte Frage nicht berührt; es war meine Sache, den Weg zu ihrem einzig richtigen Verständniß zu bahnen; weiter geht diese Arbeit nicht. Ich bin innig überzeugt, daß die Lösung der socialen Frage, die jetzt vorliegt, nicht durch Einen Menschen, viel weniger durch Ein Buch gegeben wird. Ich kann diejenigen nicht für weise halten, die dies meinen.’

⁹¹ Ibid., p. viii: ‘Wir, die wir jetzt als Lebende arbeiten, haben nur den Boden zu bereiten, auf dem eine kommende Zeit mit glücklicher Hand den Saamen streuen wird.’

⁹² Ibid., p. cxxxii.

1848, the French were in danger of remaining on the level of social theory, while Germany could turn its efforts to what was really needed – a more practice-oriented science of society. As Stein wrote: ‘There is truly no second way, not only to begin a German era in this field, but to generally reach a solution for this [social] question.’⁹³ The discussion of the role of Germany therefore formed the second component to Stein’s interpretation of the intellectual impact of 1848. It was by putting together his insights into 1848 in France with reflections on Germany’s experience of the revolution that Stein managed to identify the way in which 1848 had really transformed socialist thought.

1848 and Germany

A widely drawn conclusion after 1848 was that it was above all France, and its intellectual tradition, that were to blame for the failure of revolutions across Europe. After all, France had set a revolutionary example in 1789 and in 1830, and has also been the place of origin of many of the social ideas that were first tried out in real politics in 1848. The Russian intellectual Alexander Herzen formulated most succinctly what was a widely-led belief in the early years of the 1850s: that the failure of the revolutions could be blamed on the idealism of their leaders. Abstract ideas had made them overambitious and detached from reality.⁹⁴ Nothing retrospectively made the aspirations of 1848 appear more farcical and naive than Louis Bonaparte’s *coup d’état* of December 1851. As Marx wrote in his *Eighteenth Brumaire*, the events of 1851 were an utterly ridiculous attempt to restage the revolutionary experience of the late eighteenth century.⁹⁵ From that time at the latest, France no longer offered a convincing example for political progress.

⁹³ Ibid., p. cxxxiii: ‘Denn wahrlich, es gibt keinen zweiten Weg, nicht blos um eine eigene deutsche Epoche in dieser Frage zu beginnen, sondern auch um zu einer wirklichen Lösung jener Frage zu gelangen.’

⁹⁴ Alexander Herzen, *From the other shore; and, The Russian people and socialism*, trans. by Moura Budberg and Richard Wollheim, introduction by Isaiah Berlin (Oxford, 1979).

⁹⁵ Karl Marx, ‘The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte’, in MECW, XI (1979): 99-197 (p. 103).

For those left-wing intellectuals who did not entirely abandon their preoccupation with politics after 1849, the question of the future radical leadership of Europe consequently posed itself. One powerful idea that became prevalent after 1848 was that Russia would become the new source of progressive thought. In *Vom anderen Ufer* (1850), Herzen suggested that fresh impetus might in the post-1848 era come from Russia, which in its village commune had preserved a form of innate communism. This idea was widely discussed in the early 1850s. German reviews explicitly praised Herzen's book because it was seen to offer an alternative to French socialism.⁹⁶ One figure who bought heavily into this turn to Russia was the former Left Hegelian theorist Bruno Bauer. As Moggach writes, after 1849, Bauer 'succumbed to the pessimism of the 1850s, holding that Europe was exhausted and incapable of creative self-renewal. Rebirth, he now held, will come from Russia'.⁹⁷ Bauer published the two works *Rußland und das Germanenthum* (1853) and *Deutschland und das Russenthum* (1854) in which he explored Russia's potential to bring spiritual renewal to Europe, yet in this time also increasingly turned to a chauvinistic nationalism, and propagated anti-Semitic ideas.⁹⁸

Lorenz Stein agreed that France had to pass on intellectual leadership to another country after 1848, but he dismissed Russia as a suitable candidate. He commented on Russia in an essay of 1850. Stein argued that one should not mistake Russia's perceived national strength and its growing importance to European politics for a sign of political progressivism.⁹⁹ On the contrary, Russia's ability to command influence in Europe rested on its backward social and political structure. It seemed more stable because Russia did not have a 'social movement', which accounted for

⁹⁶ See Eberhard Reissner, *Alexander Herzen in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1963), p. 24.

⁹⁷ Douglas Moggach, *The philosophy and politics of Bruno Bauer* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 179.

⁹⁸ Bruno Bauer, *Rußland und das Germanenthum* (Charlottenburg, 1853); *Deutschland und das Russenthum* (Charlottenburg, 1854).

⁹⁹ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], 'Ein Blick auf Rußland', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1850), IV: 63-88. See also Joist Grolle, 'Lorenz von Stein und Rußland', in Peter Classen and Peter Scheibert (eds), *Festschrift Percy Ernst Schramm zu seinem siebzigsten Geburtstag von Schülern und Freunden zugeeignet* (2 vols, Wiesbaden, 1964), II: 167-79.

the political instability in other European countries in recent times.¹⁰⁰ The social movement was suppressed in Russia by its autocratic regime. An added reason why Russia appeared ‘strong’ was because it had an ally in the reactionary forces in every European country.¹⁰¹ Yet, this was ultimately a moribund system. It was the contrast with Russia that, as Stein wrote, demonstrated that the revolutions of 1848 had not been an outright failure. Their most important development had been the bourgeoisie’s triumph over the other elements of old feudal society.¹⁰²

Another power that needed to be considered was England – one of the few European nations that did not experience revolutionary upheaval in 1848. Stein wrote on England in the second issue of *Die Gegenwart* in 1849. He argued that the country was too distinct in its development to serve as political example to other European nations. Central to understanding the role of socialism in England, Stein argued, was that it had a particularly long history of class conflict. According to his schematic account, up to the Stuart era, the land-owners were the ruling class in England. After the Glorious Revolution, two political parties emerged: the Tories, who represented landed interest, and the Whigs, the representative of the new moneyed interest. Ever since, the history of England had been dominated by these two parties.¹⁰³ The rise of a working class in England was therefore a particularly interesting phenomenon. Chartism was, as Stein wrote, ‘no theory, no revolutionary doctrine, not the catchphrase of a political party’. Instead it was a phenomenon that represented the basic ‘emergence of the proletariat as an independent class in English society’.¹⁰⁴ The publication of the People’s Charter of 1835 therefore already represented the fulfilment of English socialist goals.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Stein, ‘Ein Blick auf Rußland’, p. 74.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 75.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁰³ [Lorenz Stein], ‘Die sociale Bewegung und der Socialismus in England’, *Die Gegenwart: Eine encyklopädische Darstellung der neusten Zeitgeschichte für alle Stände*, 2 (1849), 464-87 (p. 466).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 469: ‘keine Theorie, keine revolutionäre Wühlerei, kein Stichwort einer Partei’;

‘Entstehung des Arbeiterstandes selbst als einer selbstständigen Classe der englischen Gesellschaft’.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 469.

Stein was also critical of those who after 1848 decided to abandon Europe and to emigrate to America, a popular decision among former revolutionaries and radical thinkers. This move was often equated with giving up on Europe's philosophical tradition and political ideals. The German revolutionary Hermann Kriege, for example, wrote from American exile to Arnold Ruge, who was also considering emigration in the early 1850s: 'I can understand that you are fed up with Europe and no longer want to rave about futile martyrdom. To use this time of defeat, to lay the foundation for a new activity in the new world is the best you can do.'¹⁰⁶ Stein rejected such a move, as well as the general pessimism and the notion that Europe was moribund, in an essay on America from the early 1850s. He praised European, and especially German vitality and progress over the last thirty years, and highlighted the disadvantages of living in America – the lack of tradition and commitment, and the priority of business which led to exploitation. He also explicitly commented on America's aversion to state intervention, another major reason why he believed it had no future.¹⁰⁷

For Stein, it was obvious that France's successor as Europe's intellectual leader would be Germany. It would be the future source of innovative socialist thought because the developments of 1848-49 had created the perfect ground on which it could live out its intellectual and political strengths. As he had already predicted in 1842, Germany's contribution to socialism would be a 'science of society'. Like his analysis of the social movement in France, Stein's argument about Germany's destiny originated many years before 1848. As his nationalism had further intensified as a result of the revolution, Stein's comments on the meaning of 1848 were from the start infused with the desire to highlight their relevance to

¹⁰⁶ See '290. [Hermann Kriege to Arnold Ruge]', in Arnold Ruge, *Briefwechsel und Tagebuchblätter aus den Jahren 1825-1880*, ed. by Paul Nerrlich (2 vols, Berlin, 1886), II 1848-1880: 109-12 (pp. 109-10): 'Daß du Europe satt hast und nicht für ein nutzloses Märtyrerthum schwärmst, finde ich sehr begreiflich und vernünftig. Dass du die Zeit der Niederlage benützen willst, eine neue Wirksamkeit in der neuen Welt zu begründen, ist jedenfalls das Beste, was du thun kannst.'

¹⁰⁷ Lorenz Stein, 'Die Auswanderung nach Nordamerika [Review of Theodor Olshausen, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*]', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1854), IV: 99-115 (p. 103).

Germany's cause. The essay on the February Revolution Stein wrote in August 1848 already referred to Germany's mission to supersede France. As he stated there, it was obvious that 'from the moment Germany becomes united, it will have to fulfil an immense task in European politics.'¹⁰⁸

Having completed his analysis of 1848 in France in *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*, Germany increasingly became the subject of Stein's academic and journalistic work in the early 1850s. Before he could make his argument for Germany's superiority, Stein had to explain why 1848 in Germany had resulted in failure. While Friedrich Engels and other socialists blamed missing class cohesion, Stein immediately pointed to another cause.¹⁰⁹ He argued that it was Germany's lack of national unity that had made it impossible to make political progress in 1848. In his 1850 history of the revolution in France, he briefly also addressed the 1848 dynamic in Germany:

The national movement which wanted Germany's unity regarded the existing social movement as subordinate and used a good part of its energy to get rid of it. The social movement in part misjudged and in part despised the political movement and separated from it. Thereby both were heavily damaged; this action contains the true core of the history of the Frankfurt parliament. The national political movement was because of its animosity towards the social first weakened by the reaction, then driven apart and then dissolved. This is the history of this curious time.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Stein, 'Briefe über Frankreich', p. 4: 'von dem Augenblicke, wo Deutschland als Einheit auftritt, hat es eine unermessliche Aufgabe in der europäischen Politik zu erfüllen.'

¹⁰⁹ See Friedrich Engels, 'Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany', in MECW, XI (1979): 3-96.

¹¹⁰ Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*, I: cxxxvi: 'Die national Richtung, welche Deutschlands Einheit will, hat die vorhandene sociale Bewegung als das untergeordnete betrachtet, und einen Theil ihrer besten Kraft verbraucht, um sich ihrer zu entwehren. Die sociale Richtung hat die politische zum Theil verachtet, zum Theil verkannt, und sich von ihr getrennt. Dadurch sind beide in ihrer besten Kraft gebrochen; und in diesem Verhalten liegt der wahre Kern der Geschichte des deutschen Vorparlaments in Frankfurt. Denn die nationale, politische Richtung ist von der Reaction gerade durch ihre Abneigung gegen die sociale erst recht geschwächt, dann zersplittert und dann überwunden. Das ist die Geschichte jener merkwürdigen Zeit.'

Stein's conclusion was that Germany had to concentrate on a political revolution, the achievement of national unity. Only then would it be able to address the social question.

Stein reflected in more detail on Germany's experience of 1848 in an essay on the Erfurt parliament in early 1850.¹¹¹ He there claimed that a crucial issue in Germany in 1848 was that the land-owners there had, unlike in France, preserved a large degree of power until the revolution. Also unlike in France, the capital owners were in Germany alongside the proletariat excluded from political power. The defeat of the feudal powers in Germany represented the initial victory of 1848. Yet the French course of events, notably June 1848, inspired a premature movement in Germany. The workers sought an alliance with the democratic movement and made increasingly radical political demands. This backfired when the capital owners, so far also excluded from political power, began to fear that should the workers get what they wanted, capital would no longer reign over labour.¹¹² In reaction, the feudal powers gained the impression that the capital owners were not so much concerned with their fight against them anymore, and launched another offensive against them. This explained the events of 1849. Because the union between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was lost, the Frankfurt Assembly and its constitutional draft also failed.

This background, Stein argued, was crucial to understanding the dilemma of the Erfurt union parliament in early 1850, a short lived experiment that has become a rather obscure episode of German history. Following the dissolution of the Frankfurt parliament in the first half of 1849, Joseph Maria von Radowitz, a close advisor to the Prussian king, began planning a new parliament for a united Germany. His name became associated with the 'union project', which resulted in a parliament in Erfurt in March and April 1850. This 'forgotten parliament' attempted to square the circle

¹¹¹ L.S. [Lorenz Stein], 'Die Bedeutung der Wahl oder Nichtwahl zum Reichstag in Frankfurt', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift* (1850), I: 344-367.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 360.

by both introducing a constitution for a *kleindeutscher* German state that excluded Austria, and maintaining the support of the conservative forces, which were strongly represented in the Habsburg monarchy.¹¹³ Stein predictably interpreted the dilemma of the union project in terms of class interest. As he claimed, the problem was that by electing representatives to the Erfurt assembly, one was by implication giving approval to the *oktroyierte Verfassung*, the farcical constitution imposed by the monarch. It was the bourgeoisie that faced the biggest dilemma. By accepting the constitution, it risked passing power to the reaction; by not taking part in the elections, it risked further radicalisation.¹¹⁴ Stein thus highlighted how unresolved social issues undermined state building in Germany. In the end, the constitution was accepted, but the Union project failed soon after because Austria's south German allies withdrew their support.

While Stein continued to believe that national unity was Germany's most important goal, he in the early 1850s began to distance himself from Prussia – and to side with Austria. The growing mistrust of Prussia was in many ways surprising, as it had long been Stein's model state, and he had drawn extensively on its intellectual and political tradition in his theoretical writings. It was Prussia's betrayal of Schleswig-Holstein in early 1851 that left Stein with no choice. Following the failure to create a united Germany in 1848 and the re-establishment of the German Confederation in 1850, relations between Austria and Prussia began to deteriorate in the early 1850s. In several articles for the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, Stein commented on the political situation at the time and advocated a solution in which Austria would take a leading role in a united Germany. This, he believed, would hasten the

¹¹³ Gunter Mai, 'Erfurter Union und Erfurter Unionsparlament 1850', in Gunther Mai (ed.), *Die Erfurter Union und das Erfurter Unionsparlament 1850* (Cologne, Weimar, Wien, 2000), pp. 9-52 (especially p. 13).

¹¹⁴ Stein, 'Die Bedeutung der Wahl oder Nichtwahl zum Reichstag in Frankfurt', p. 364.

unification process – a thought that seemed deeply bizarre to many of his contemporaries.¹¹⁵

Stein for example supported Austria's incentive to join the *Zollverein*, an issue that came up for debate in 1852. In an article for the *Allgemeine Zeitung* on this topic Stein commented on Prussia's 'decline' since 1848:

Prussia has lost a great deal in its position towards Germany since 1848. That is conceded. But it is important to specify that [...] before 1848, Prussia [...] was regarded as the natural bearer of progress, of the development of the ideas that move Germany. Its power thus lay in what it was believed to be capable of [...] The main manifestation of this role was the offer of the German imperial crown. How miraculously short ago this was, and how far this proposal lies from the present! [...] Only one thing has been left to Prussia.¹¹⁶

This 'one thing' was the project of an economic union, the *Zollverein*. Stein could not conceal that he considered this his last hope and that he was disappointed with the political developments of the previous years, and Prussia's behaviour in particular.

The growing disillusionment with Prussia also explained the line Stein took in his essay 'Zur preußischen Verfassungsfrage' from early 1852. Stein in this piece denied that the constitution adopted in Prussia at the beginning of 1850 was a proper constitution and supported his argument with a theoretical discussion of constitutionalism. A 'true' constitution, he wrote, was present when 'the entire people is permeated by the feeling that the state with its administration and its law is the highest expression of its life, and where therefore a contrast between the organs

¹¹⁵ See Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, pp. 51-52. Stein anonymously published a series of seven articles on this topic, entitled 'Die Lage des Deutschen Bundes und seine Zukunft', in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* in autumn 1851.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, p. 56: 'Preußen hat in seiner Stellung zu Deutschland ungemein viel verloren seit 1848. Das ist zugegeben. Es kommt aber darauf an dieß genauer zu charakterisieren [...] Preußen [...] ward vor 1848 als der natürliche Träger des Fortschrittes, der Entwicklung der Ideen betrachtet welche Deutschland bewegen. Seine Macht bestand daher in dem Glauben an das wozu man es fähig hielt [...] Der Hauptausdruck für diese Stellung war der Antrag der deutschen Kaiserkrone. Wunderbar, wie kurz es her ist seit diesem Antrag, und wie weit er doch von der Gegenwart entfernt liegt! [...] Allein Eins war Preußen geblieben.'

of the state and of the people appears as a moral impossibility for the people's spirit.¹¹⁷ This was not the case in Prussia. As Stein wrote, its problem was a lack of clear geographical borders. Moreover, it lacked a historical precedent for a constitution. The Prussian state was created by the nobles rather than arising out of the joint labour of an entire people.¹¹⁸ However, this was counterbalanced by Prussia's relative economic sophistication, which, in Stein's view, made a constitution more necessary. This was because there was an increased need to balance out different interests in society, and this could best be achieved through popular representative institutions.¹¹⁹

Stein then introduced a twist to his argument. He first observed that at present, government (*Regierung*) – in contrast to *Verfassung* – was central in the Prussian state.¹²⁰ Executive power in Prussia had the ability to achieve the fundamental things that kept a state together: to balance out diverging interests among the population, and to preserve social order. Yet despite the absence of both the ability to have a constitution, and also the lack of a need for it (given the exceptional capabilities of the executive), Stein observed that there was a strong desire for popular representation in Prussia.¹²¹ He interpreted this as an expression of the longing for a united Germany: 'This desire for a parliament in Prussian is essentially only a particular desire for a *German* parliament, and the contradictions which show itself in Prussia disappear as soon as one regards the Prussian constitution as serious and important preparation for a German joint

¹¹⁷ Lorenz Stein, 'Zur preußischen Verfassungsfrage', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1852), I: 1-37; reprinted as Lorenz Stein, *Zur preußischen Verfassungsfrage. Reprint*, ed. by Norbert Simon, with an afterword by Carl Schmitt (Berlin, 1940) and in Ernst Forsthoff (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein: Gesellschaft – Staat – Recht* (Frankfurt am Main, 1972), pp. 115-46 (p. 117): 'Eine wahre Verfassung ist diejenige, wo die Gesamtheit des Volkes von dem Gefühl durchdrungen ist, daß der Staat mit seiner Verwaltung und seinem Recht als Ausdruck seines höchsten Lebens dasteht, und wo daher ein Gegensatz zwischen den Staats- und Volksorganen als eine, für den Volksgeist moralische Unmöglichkeit erscheint.'

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 124: 'Dieser Staat ist *nicht* gebildet durch die Arbeit eines Volkes, sondern durch die Arbeit seiner Fürsten [...] Die Volksvertretung ist kein historisches Element des preußischen Staats.'

¹¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 126-27.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 134.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 141.

representation.¹²² The debate about the Prussian constitution was thus, as Stein concluded, a focal point for the realization of the need for a united Germany.

One of the main reasons Stein was so vehemently making his case for unification was that, based on his study of socialism, he believed that a united Germany held the key to the future of socialist theory. He brought together all his reflections on the experience of 1848 in the 1852 essay 'Der Socialismus in Deutschland'. There he explained why the experience of 1848 had inaugurated a 'German phase' in the history of socialism. Stein began by recalling the spread of French socialist ideas in Germany in the early 1840s. It was with the publication of his book in 1842 that they became more widely known and better understood. After that, a number of different movements developed: Swiss communism around Wilhelm Weitling, 'Rhineland' communism that included Marx, Hess and Grün, east German communism in Saxony and Prussia, the journalistic (*publicistisch-soziale*) movement in Berlin, and the academic movement of socialism (*wissenschaftlich-soziale Richtung*) which included Robert von Mohl, Johannes Fallati and Stein himself.¹²³

Stein wrote that all these movements were at their core concerned with the same cause, which led to the realization that there was a common social problem in Germany. The nationalist movement had developed in parallel to the gradually emerging social movement in Germany, but their paths had not crossed before the outbreak of revolution. As Stein wrote, 'the national assembly came together and began making laws; from these laws it expected a state to emerge, instead of letting

¹²² Ibid., p. 143: 'Jenes Bedürfnis nach einer Volksvertretung in Preußen ist im Grunde nur eine bestimmte Form des Bedürfnisses nach einer *deutschen* Volksvertretung, und die Widersprüche, die sich in Preußen zeigen, verschwinden, sobald man die preußische Verfassung als eine große und ernste Vorarbeit für eine Gesamtvertretung Deutschlands betrachtet.'

¹²³ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], 'Der Socialismus in Deutschland', *Die Gegenwart: Eine encyclopädische Darstellung der neusten Zeitgeschichte für alle Stände*, 7 (1852), 517-63; repr. in Lorenz Stein, *Schriften zum Sozialismus, 1848, 1852, 1854*, ed. by Eckart Pankoke (Darmstadt, 1974), pp. 16-62 (p. 48).

laws emerge out of a state.’¹²⁴ This was the primary cause of failure in 1848 in Germany. The reason the proposed constitution failed was that it ‘presupposed a social order which the German people did not possess.’¹²⁵

The disappointing course of the revolution in Germany, however, had positive consequences. As Stein argued, after 1848, Germans began to distance themselves from the different socialist doctrines. As in France, this departure from the multitude of socialist schools allowed the core idea of socialism to appear more clearly. Stein wrote:

The systems disappeared, and instead the social question entered practical life [...] With a few exceptions, the actual socialist and communist literature vanished. The communist tendency threw itself into political activism, which gave the left its social connotations [...] The journalistic tendency melted into the middle party [...] the movement of religious socialism completely joined the extreme right.¹²⁶

This meant that, as in France, socialist ideas in Germany became firmly entwined with political movements in the course of 1848-49. As he wrote: ‘As it seems to us, it is completely impossible to separate in the time since 1848 the social movement from the political, and to speak of an actual socialism and communism in Germany.’¹²⁷

The departure from ‘doctrinaire’ socialism was a cathartic experience for Germany. Once the revolutionary turmoil was over Germans could concentrate on

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 56: ‘Die Nationalversammlung trat zusammen und begann Gesetze zu machen; aus diesen Gesetzen sollte dann “das Reich” hervorgehen, statt dass aus dem Reiche die Gesetze hätten hervorgehen sollen.’

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 57: ‘Eine gesellschaftliche Ordnung voraussetze, die das deutsche Volk nicht besaß.’

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 58: ‘Die Systeme verschwanden, und an ihre Stelle trat der Übergang der gesellschaftlichen Frage in das praktische Leben [...] Die eigentlich socialistische und communistische Literatur verschwand mit wenigen Ausnahmen gänzlich. Die vorwiegend communistische Auffassung stürzte sich in die rein politische Agitation, und gab der Linken jene sociale Färbung, die zwar kein eigentliches System hatte, aber mit Recht Vielen eben darum nur desto gefährlicher schien. Die publicistische Richtung verschmolz mit der Mittelpartei [...] Die kirchliche Richtung endlich stellte sich ganz auf die Seite der äußersten Rechten.’

¹²⁷ Ibid., pp. 58-59: ‘Es ist, wie es uns scheinen will, vollkommen unmöglich, für die ganze Zeit seit 1848 die sociale Bewegung von der politischen zu trennen, von einem eigentlichen Socialismus und Communismus in Deutschland zu sprechen.’

looking for their own solution to the social question. Stein wrote: ‘The consequence was a growing aversion since the end of the year 1850 against everything with the name socialism and communism [...] The doctrines of the socialists and communists lost their followers, their literature its readers.’¹²⁸ According to Stein, this departure from socialist doctrines was proof of German intellectual superiority. German intellectuals realized their own strengths and embraced the departure from French ideas. With this new confidence, they were ready to embark upon creating their ‘science of society’. For Germany, the main conceptual consequence of 1848 was that it allowed it to emancipate itself from the French example. As Stein put it, ‘this is the point in the social movement when the true German character emerges.’¹²⁹

Stein in his 1852 essay also briefly addressed the future shape of the ‘science of society’. The specific questions it would pursue had been outlined by the developments in France. They would, on the one hand, concern the possibility of creating an equal role for labour alongside capital. On the other hand, they would address ways of restructuring the state in line with this ambition.¹³⁰ Stein attested that since 1850 there had already been a rising academic interest in these questions in Germany. He mentioned as examples Ernst Vieland’s work *Sociale Geschichte der Revolution in Östreich* (1850), Adolf Widmann’s *Die Gesetze der socialen Bewegung* (1851) and *Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft* (1851) by Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl.¹³¹ Not least, Stein counted his own *Geschichte der Socialen Bewegung in Frankreich* as a contribution to this project, although he was, only two years after its publication, already beginning to see its limitations. He claimed that it had been a transitional work that only pointed towards the future of the ‘science of society’. Nevertheless it marked a significant step forward compared to French ideas. Stein

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 59: ‘Auf diese Weise ergab sich seit dem Ende des Jahres 1850 im Großen und Ganzen eine steigenden Abneigung gegen Alles, was Socialismus und Communismus hieß [...] Die Lehren der Socialisten und Communisten fanden kein Ohr mehr, ihre Literatur keine Leser.’

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 59: ‘hier ist der Punkt, wo in der socialen Bewegung der eigentlich deutsche Charakter auftritt.’

¹³⁰ Ibid., pp. 59-60.

¹³¹ These works will be discussed in the next chapter.

declared: 'Socialism and communism in their old sense have become only isolated phenomena of an infinitely bigger question, and we can hope that they will be from now on replaced by a specific German science of society.'¹³² All the recent works on social science demonstrated an important transition – one Stein already anticipated in 1842: 'What began as [the proliferation of] French socialism in Germany, has gradually acquired a German shape.'¹³³ This was for Stein the most significant consequences of the revolutions of 1848.

Conclusion: The personal consequences of the revolution

In the years between 1848 and 1852, Lorenz Stein produced a detailed and sophisticated analysis of the course of the revolutions in France and Germany, as well as their deeper conceptual meaning. As Stein saw it, the events in France had led to a firm union of socialist ideas and politics. This involved heightened attention to the meaning and importance of state administration, which had emerged as a more promising channel for the realization of socialist aims, replacing the failed project of constitutional reform. This French development had important consequences for Germany. The focus on administration and the transformation of socialism into a unified abstract concept suited the German national temperament and intellectual tradition. At the same time, the rise of nationalism in Germany and its witnessing of French failure gave Germany the confidence to follow through on its mission and embrace its own variety of socialism, that of a 'science of society'. This academic project, Stein argued, would benefit the whole of Europe as it would lead to the creation of a more harmonious relationship between the classes, ultimately bringing about a so-called 'social order of mutual benefit'. 1848 had thus, in Stein's interpretation, on the one hand passed intellectual leadership in relation to the social

¹³² Ibid., p. 61: 'Der Socialismus und Communismus im bisherigen Sinnes des Wortes sind zu bloßen Einzelercheinungen an einer unendlich viel größern Frage geworden, und wir dürfen hoffen, daß and ihre Stelle von jetzt an eine eigenthümlich deutsche Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft treten wird.'

¹³³ Ibid., p. 62: 'Es hat nun hier das, was als französischer Socialismus in Deutschland begonnen, allmählich eine deutsche Gestalt gewonnen.'

question from France to Germany, and on the other hand, changed the level of the discussion about the ‘social’ in a broader sense, connecting it with a reform of the state’s administrative apparatus.

Although compelling on their own terms, Stein’s theories were not well received by all of his contemporaries. His 1850 book saw mixed reviews. Mohl commented on it: ‘It is a forced revision of a very good first [work]; ingenious but wrong.’¹³⁴ A review in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* praised Stein’s ‘extraordinary dialectical sharpness’ and acknowledge the importance of the subject, while predicting that it would not be understood by many because of its ‘overly systematic shape’.¹³⁵ The work’s combination of historical narrative and abstract theorizing, a limitation Stein acknowledged himself, was what the author of the review, Ludwig Hausser, saw as its main flaw: ‘the discussion has too many elements of abstract dialectics for a historical subject’.¹³⁶ However, Stein’s description of the history of 1848 was considered a success. Hausser wrote that the book contained the best analysis of Louis Blanc he had seen to date.¹³⁷

Perhaps even more importantly, the experience of 1848 allowed Stein to tread new paths for his own future research. In 1849 he already knew that his present work would be mere preparation for an ultimately independent project of a ‘science of society’.¹³⁸ While Stein had already outlined the need for it in his book in 1842, the events of 1848-49, in his view, gave ultimate proof for the necessity and urgency of such a project. One of the reasons Stein was in the early 1850s, in contrast to most of his contemporaries, optimistic about the future was because he expected he would

¹³⁴ Quoted in Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus im Niedergang*, p. 200n58: ‘Es ist eine forcierte Überarbeitung seines sehr guten ersten: geistreich aber falsch.’

¹³⁵ Ludwig Hausser, ‘Review of L. Stein, *Geschichte der socialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage*’, *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 and 30 August 1851; reprinted in Ludwig Hausser, *Gesammelte Schriften* (4 vols, Berlin, 1869-70), II (1870): *Zur Geschichtsliteratur*, 454-67 (pp. 454-55): ‘ungemeine dialektische Schärfe’; ‘allzu systematischen Form’.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 455: ‘die Entwicklung hat für einen geschichtlichen Stoff viel zu viel abstract Dialectisches, für eine historische Darstellung zu viel eigentlich Scholastisches’.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 467.

¹³⁸ ‘7. Lorenz Stein an Robert v. Mohl, 1 December 1849’, in Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus im Niedergang*, pp. 200-02 (p. 201).

dedicate the next epoch in his life to finally creating this ground-breaking ‘science of society’. At the time, Stein did not yet know that he would have to embark upon this project in a radically new institutional setting.

In the summer of 1852, Stein’s involvement in Schleswig-Holstein’s political struggle came to haunt him. In early 1851, the Danes regained control over Schleswig-Holstein, and began a purge of former radicals. In April 1851, an article in the Danish paper *Flensburger Zeitung* suggested that it was untenable to let former participants of the independence movement like Stein teach at the university, and, as the author put it, prepare the youth for royal service.¹³⁹ There is evidence that Stein together with two colleagues travelled to Copenhagen in summer 1851 in order to try and intervene in what was increasingly looking like a radical government purge.¹⁴⁰ This mission was not successful, and from spring 1852, many of Stein’s friends and colleagues began to leave Holstein as the Danes implemented their policy. Stein at first tried to resist, or perhaps ignore, what was happening. Yet, in early June, the decision was made to dismiss eight professors from the University of Kiel, Stein among them. The others were theology professor Anton Pelt, the political economist Johann Christian Ravit, the mathematician Heinrich Ferdinand Scherk, the philosophers Heinrich Moritz Chalybäus and Gregor Wilhelm Nitzsch, professor of pathology Claus Christian Meyn, and the oriental scholar Justus Olshausen.¹⁴¹ All of them had been supporters of the independence movement from Denmark.

It is perhaps somewhat ironic that Olshausen, who in 1852 suffered the same fate as Stein, had in the summer of 1848 been responsible for assessing Stein’s suitability for a full professorship, and had in this capacity commented on Stein’s involvement in Schleswig-Holstein’s independence movement. He wrote that while Stein’s recent actions might make him appear like ‘a man of less firm character’, he retained his confidence in him as a ‘man of order’. Stein had, Olshausen wrote, ‘in

¹³⁹ See Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 63.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

times of greatest upheaval made some theoretical concessions [...] which, if he examined them in calmer times, he would probably no less disapprove of than other friends of order.¹⁴² Yet Stein's love of order did not save him from losing his job in 1852, which represented both a practical and an intellectual disaster. For the next three years, Stein was unemployed and faced serious financial difficulties. His academic project, the 'science of society' also had to be postponed, and ultimately modified. The next chapter explores this transformation.

¹⁴² 'Q 24 [report by Justus Olshausen regarding Stein's application for a full professorship], in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 170-71(p. 171): 'Ein Mann von minder festem Charakter'; 'in den Zeiten der grössten Aufregung theoretische Concessionen gemacht [...], die wahrscheinlich bei einer Prüfung in ruhigeren Zeiten er selbst nicht minder deavouieren würde, als andere Freunde der Ordnung'.

CHAPTER 4

Lorenz Stein and the transformation of socialist thought in the *Nachmärz*, 1851-1861

The Danish re-conquest of Schleswig-Holstein and the purge of nationalist activists seemed to provide the obvious background to Lorenz Stein's dismissal from his professorship in June 1852. Yet, at least on paper, there was another cause for his removal. The Danish officials described Stein as a 'member of the latest local assembly on the extreme left, [and] author of a book about communism and socialism according to the French pattern'.¹ It was thus not only Stein's involvement in Schleswig-Holstein's revolutionary politics in 1848 that came to haunt him, but also his popular books on socialism from the early 1840s. In the beginning of the 1850s, Stein was branded as not only a dangerous nationalist, but also a radical socialist – a move that had decisive consequences for his life and career.

That the Danish authorities chose to stigmatize Stein in such a way was surprising and also unfair for a number of reasons. Stein had never been an active advocate of socialist ideas. As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, the goal of his *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* had been to help contain the spread of socialist ideas, not to encourage it. Stein had also since the mid-1840s been keenly aware of the dangers of an association with socialist thought, and had combined his academic interest in the subject with a range of precautionary measure, publishing most of his journalistic pieces anonymously in order not to endanger his appointment to a permanent university position. What made the Danish move against Stein even more absurd was that he had in 1843 presented a copy of *Der Socialismus*

¹ Quoted in Werner Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein: Ein Beitrag zur Biographie, zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins und zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Eckernförde, 1956), p. 64: 'Mitglied der letzten Landesversammlung auf der äußeren Linken, Verfasser eines Buches über Kommunismus und Sozialismus nach französischem Muster.'

und Communismus to the Danish king's father and had received nothing but praise for it at the time.²

Being in official terms dismissed for his radicalism was a great shock to Stein, and one of the worst possible fates he could imagine. First of all, it presented a significant logistical problem. For the following three years, Stein was unemployed and struggled to support himself and his family with his journalistic work. His desperation in the face of unemployment is captured in a letter of October 1852 to Georg von Cotta: 'I cannot conceal that the situation in which circumstances have put me is indeed a very difficult one.'³ Finding a new university post proved to be a great challenge. Soon after his dismissal, Stein was considered for a professorship in Würzburg.⁴ Yet the appointment fell through at the last minute, because, as his friend Gustav Kolb explained to Stein, the king of Bavaria had intervened on the 'warning that you were a democrat'.⁵ As another contact, Friedrich Dahlmann, told Stein, his prospects in the – Prussian-ruled – Rhineland and in Baden were equally bleak, given, as Stein admitted, 'I myself know best how little my views are in harmony with the current system in Prussia.'⁶

The sense of helplessness which marked Stein's life in this period was also expressed in a curious book he published in 1852, *Die wirthschaftliche Erziehung und Lebensaufgabe der Hausfrau*, an instruction manual for women on economical household management. At one point in the work Stein wrote: 'What can we control in this world? Is it the big events? Is it the accidents of individual life, which

² Ibid., p. 64.

³ 'Q 27 [Lorenz Stein to Georg von Cotta, 18 October 1852]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 174: '[Ich] kann [...] es durchaus nicht verhehlen, daß die Lage in welche mich die Umstände versetzt haben, eine peinliche ist.'

⁴ See Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 66.

⁵ 'Gustav Kolb to Lorenz Stein, 4 December 1852', cited in Dirk Blasius, *Lorenz von Stein: Deutsche Gelehrtenpolitik in der Habsburger Monarchie*, (Kiel, 2007), p. 48: 'Warnung Sie seyen Democrat'.

⁶ Stein reported about Dahlmann's response in a letter to Mohl, see 'Nr. 8 [Lorenz Stein to Robert von Mohl, 12 July 1852], in Roman Schnur (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft. Studien über Lorenz von Stein* (Berlin, 1978), pp. 555-57 (pp. 556-57): 'Da ich selbst am besten wissen werde, wie wenig meine Ansichten mit dem gegenwärtigen System in Preußen harmonierte.'

alternate between giving to us and taking from us what we desire and love?’⁷ This certainly also described Stein’s desperation and the work had probably been inspired by his family’s own financial difficulties in this time.

The failure to find new employment also dealt a serious blow to Stein’s intellectual confidence. Following the events of 1852, Stein could never again associate himself with radical socialism even in the vaguest manner. This made it uncertain whether he could go forward with the project he had been so enthusiastic about in the immediate aftermath of 1848, that of creating a ‘science of society’. Many interpretations of Stein’s life thus conclude that, following this dramatic experience of the early 1850s, he abandoned his interest in socialism and radical thought. As Carsten Quesel for example states: ‘Stein’s examination of socialism, communism and the social movement essentially already ends in the early 1850s. Neither the First International, nor the Paris Commune, nor the development of German social democracy in this time led him to write more works on the ‘history of the social movement’; neither of the theories of Marx or Lassalle, Proudhon or Bakunin challenged him to a critique.’⁸

⁷ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], *Die wirthschaftliche Erziehung und Lebensaufgabe der Hausfrau* (2nd edn, Leipzig, 1853), p. 11: ‘Worüber haben wir eigentlich Gewalt in der Welt? Sind es die großen Ereignisse? Sind es die Zufälle des Einzel Lebens, die uns bald nehmen, bald geben, was wir wünschen und lieben?’. The book in meticulous detail described the household tasks of women. According to Stein, good household management benefitted the national economy. He also argued that while the economic role of women was distinct from that of men, it was equal in importance. Because of this relatively progressive view, the anonymous publication was long believed to have been written by a woman. Stein was only revealed as its author when he returned to the topic in later years, and published similar works under his own name. See Lorenz von Stein, *Die Frau auf dem Gebiet der Nationalökonomie: Nach einem Vortrage in der Lesehalle der deutschen Studenten in Wien* (Stuttgart, 1875); *Die Frau auf dem socialen Gebiete* (Stuttgart, 1880); *Die Frau, ihre Bildung und Lebensaufgabe* (3rd edn, Berlin and Dresden, 1890). On the significance and reception of Stein’s writings on women see Gunda Barth-Scalmani, ‘Die Thematisierung der Haus-/Frauenarbeit bei Lorenz von Stein’, in Brigitte Mazohl-Wallnig (ed.), *Bürgerliche Frauenkultur im 19. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, Cologne and Weimar, 1995), pp. 81-121 (especially pp. 87-88).

⁸ See for example Carsten Quesel, *Lorenz von Stein und die Entstehung der Gesellschaftswissenschaft in Deutschland* (Wiesbaden, 1989), p. 43: ‘Im Wesentlichen ist Steins Auseinandersetzung mit Sozialismus, Kommunismus und sozialer Bewegung zu Beginn der 50er Jahre abgeschlossen. Weder durch die Erste Internationale, noch die Pariser Kommune, noch auch die in diese Zeit fallende Entstehung der deutschen Sozialdemokratie sieht er sich veranlaßt, weitere Arbeiten über die „Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung“ zu verfassen; weder durch die Theorien von Marx oder Lassalle, von Proudhon oder Bakunin sieht er sich im weiteren zu intensiver Kritik herausgefordert.’

This chapter corrects this highly misleading interpretation and argues that we have to recognize the transformed shape of socialist thought that developed both in Stein's work, and in his broader political context, during the *Nachmärz* – the decade after 1848 in which European intellectuals and politicians came to terms with the failure of the revolution. By 1855, Stein had found a new university post – in arch-conservative Austria of all places – and within years become a widely respected intellectual authority. In his writings from the 1850s, he articulated a position relating to social change that was compatible with the spirit of the age. Rather than being a 'decade of reaction', the 1850s saw major reforms in governments across Europe which allowed many deeply 'socialist' elements to enter mainstream politics. A new type of 'socialism' was born that did not dare call itself by that name – a development that highly suited Stein.

Stein and Austria

On 22 March 1855, the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I appointed Stein professor of political economy at the University of Vienna. This marked the beginning of a lecturing career that lasted until Stein's retirement in 1885. From 1856 Stein gave lectures on 'state science' (*Staatswissenschaft*) and 'financial science' (*Finanzwissenschaft*), and later also on 'administrative science' (*Verwaltungslehre*), while continuing to publish prolifically.⁹ In 1868 he was recognized by the Emperor for his academic work with a knighthood, becoming Knight Lorenz von Stein. As Stein's biographer sums up the effect of the move to Vienna: 'Thirty-five years in Vienna turned Stein from an expelled, moneyless political suspect into a European celebrity, into Professor Lorenz Jacob Ritter von Stein who could look back on a vast academic oeuvre and a worldwide net of contacts.'¹⁰

⁹ Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, p. 19.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 69: '35 Jahre Wiener Tätigkeit haben aus dem heimatvertriebenen, mittellosen, politisch verdächtigen Lorenz Jacob Stein eine europäische Berühmtheit, den auf ein ungemein reiches wissenschaftliches Werk zurückblickenden und über weltweite Beziehungen verfügenden Professor Lorenz Jacob Ritter von Stein gemacht.'

The circumstances of Stein's appointment to the chair in Vienna are important. Why did conservative Austria offer refuge to someone dismissed from his previous post for his political radicalism? Stein had been writing for the *Allgemeine Zeitung* since the early 1840s, a paper that was distinctly pro-Austrian and had most of its readership there.¹¹ This is how he developed contacts in the Habsburg Monarchy. Stein had expressed an interest in moving to Austria as early as 1850, when he first became disillusioned with Prussia's politics. In August 1850, he wrote to Gustav Höfken, a member of the Austrian trade ministry, and said that he was interested in moving to Austria as he had come to regard it as the more progressive country.¹² Höfken passed on Stein's message to Karl Ludwig von Bruck, then finance minister and a very influential figure in Austria.¹³ In his response to Stein, Höfken reported: '[Bruck] thinks that we could very well use competent men here, and requested you to formulate your wish, your intentions more concretely. If you are interested in a professorship in Austria, I would be happy to talk to the education minister Count Thun about it.'¹⁴ Updating Stein in November that year, Höfken wrote that Thun had also been favourable to the suggestion, yet advised him that it might be some time before a suitable position would become available.¹⁵ An opportunity arose in 1854, when the professor of political economy died of cholera. Stein was, on behalf of his activity for the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, already in Vienna at the time, and put forward an application immediately.¹⁶

¹¹ Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, p. 17.

¹² 'Stein to Gustav Höfken, 5 August 1850', cited in Giles Pope, 'The political ideas of Lorenz Stein and their influence on Rudolf Gneist and Gustav Schmoller' (unpublished DPhil dissertation, University of Oxford, 1985), pp. 197-201.

¹³ On Stein's relationship to Bruck see Wilhelm Brauneder, 'Lorenz von Steins Wirken in Wien', in Albert von Mutius (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein: Akademischer Festakt zum 100. Todestag* (Heidelberg, 1992), pp. 19-28 (p. 24). Stein dedicated his 1858 book *System der Volkswirtschaftslehre* to Bruck.

¹⁴ 'Höfken to Stein, 12 August', quoted in Herbert Uhl, 'Lorenz von Stein und Karl Marx: zur Grundlegung von Gesellschaftsanalyse und politischer Theorie 1842-1850' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Tübingen, 1977), pp. 225-26: '[Bruck] meint, man könne tüchtige Männer hier sehr gut gebrauchen. Sie möchten doch einmal Ihren Wunsch, Ihre Absicht näher formulieren. Falls Sie eine Professur in Österreich wünschen, werde ich gerne mit dem Cultusminister Grafen Thun darüber sprechen.'

¹⁵ 'Höfken to Stein, 13 November 1850', cited in Uhl, 'Lorenz von Stein und Karl Marx', p. 226n4.

¹⁶ Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, p. 61.

In his application letter, essentially a short autobiography, Stein attempted to clarify the nature of his past political involvement. He explained that the motivation for writing *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* had been to explore the nature of the 'social' in a purely academic way.¹⁷ Regarding his role in Schleswig-Holstein's nationalist movement, Stein claimed that the situation had presented a major dilemma for him. His insights as a lawyer forced him to oppose the, in his view unlawful, Danish occupation, although he would have otherwise preferred to obey the authorities. He hoped that the Austrian Emperor would not interpret his behaviour as a character flaw, forgive what had been the result of 'an unfortunate series of events', and give him an opportunity to continue his academic work.¹⁸ Stein was not the first-choice candidate for the position. Wilhelm Roscher, a celebrated economist from Leipzig, was approached in the first instance. When he turned down the offer, Stein was appointed.

A number of factors made the Austrian authorities willing to give Stein a chance. One major context for Stein's appointment were the educational reforms on which Leo Thun-Hohenstein embarked in the aftermath of the revolution of 1848. Thun-Hohenstein, minister for religion and education since 1849, aimed, among other measures, to make the Austrian university system more similar to Germany, that is, more research-oriented and more independent of the state.¹⁹ He hired Prussian advisors and actively sought to attract German academics to university chairs in Austria.²⁰ Already in 1850, Heinrich Ahrens, a former revolutionary and member of the Frankfurt assembly, had been appointed to a professorship in Graz.²¹ In addition to Höfken, it was one of Thun's advisors, the historian Constantin von Höfler whom Stein was close to, who drew the minister's attention to Stein and encouraged him to

¹⁷ 'Lebenslauf Lorenz von Steins Eingereicht bei seiner Bewerbung um eine Professur in Wien', in Dirk Blasius and Eckart Pankoke (ed.), *Lorenz von Stein. Geschichts- und gesellschaftswissenschaftliche Perspektiven* (Darmstadt, 1977), pp. 181-89 (p. 184).

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 187: 'eine unglückliche Verkettung von Umständen'.

¹⁹ See Hans Lentze, *Die Universitätsreform des Ministers Graf Leo Thun-Hohenstein* (Vienna, 1962).

²⁰ See R. Knoll and H. Kohlenberger, *Gesellschaftstheorien: Ihre Entwicklungsgeschichte als Krisenmanagement in Österreich 1850-1938* (Vienna, 1994), p. 49.

²¹ Braunereder, 'Lorenz von Steins Wirken in Wien', p. 25.

hire him – despite his religious orientation: Stein was a Protestant, and usually only Catholic candidates were considered.²² In a personal note from November 1854, von Höfler recommended Stein to Thun. He wrote: ‘Stein spent a week here and gave the impression of being tremendously engaged with Austria, calm, considerate, and an academically extremely competent man who has an extraordinary teaching talent and extended knowledge [...] He also possesses great journalistic skills, which will equally benefit Austria.’²³ Thun was won over by Höfler’s plea, and in early 1855 recommended Stein to the Emperor. Thun’s assessment of Stein also survives: ‘There can be no doubt about Stein’s excellent academic aptitude. In his academic field, he recommends himself because of the decisiveness with which he honours the weight of real conditions in contrast to empty abstraction, as well as in particular because of his correct appraisal of the great significance and stability of property.’²⁴

Besides Stein’s academic credentials, wider politic considerations were an important background to his appointment. Given his personal experience and the views he had expressed in his political writings since the early 1850s, the Austrian authorities could be sure of Stein’s anti-Prussian attitude, and his loyalty to Austria. Austrian politics also suited Stein on a deeper intellectual level. In his writings on socialism after 1848, he had stressed that abstract constitutionalism did not allow for meaningful political progress, and what mattered instead was a progressive administrative system. This is exactly what characterized Austrian politics in the period after 1848. Although the constitution of 1848 was revoked and Austria was from 1852 ruled as a neo-absolutist state, figures like Bruck and Thun instigated a

²² Pope in ‘Political ideas’, p. 205, writes that, having left Kiel in autumn 1854, Stein and his family stayed with Hoefler in Prague before heading to Vienna.

²³ Cited in Lentze, *Universitätsreform*, p. 266: ‘Stein hielt sich über eine Woche hier auf und erweckte den Eindruck eines für Österreich Lehrgabe eingenommenen, ruhigen, besonnenen, wissenschaftlich äußerst tüchtigen Mannes von nicht gewöhnlicher Lehrgabe und ausgebreiteten Kenntnissen [...] Er besitzt auch eine große publicistische Gewandtheit, welche Österreich gleichfalls zu Gute kommen wird.’

²⁴ Quoted in Knoll and Kohlenberger, *Gesellschaftstheorien*, p. 50: ‘Steins hervorragende wissenschaftliche Befähigung unterliegt keinem Zweifel. In seiner wissenschaftlichen Richtung ist die Entschiedenheit, mit welcher er das Gewicht der tatsächlichen Verhältnisse im Gegensatz zur hohlen Abstraktion würdigt, sowie insbesondere seine richtige Würdigung der großen politischen Bedeutung des Grundbesitzes und der Stabilität desselben sehr empfehlenswert.’

range of important reforms in the 1850s that in many ways surpassed countries with a liberal constitution. As one historian put it, in this period Austria's 'government praxis was progressive despite the absence of constitutional protection'.²⁵

One way in which Austria's progressive political character manifested itself was through its openness towards former radicals. One of its most prominent political figures in the 1850s was Alexander Bach, minister of the interior from 1849 to 1859, who had a distinctive radical past. Bach had served as minister of justice in the revolutionary years of 1848-49, and was a well-known advocate of liberal rights, earning him the nickname 'minister of the barricades'. After the revolution, Bach abandoned his more radical convictions in order to embrace a pragmatic politics, introducing greater economic freedom, emancipating the peasants, and most importantly, restructuring Austria's state administration.²⁶ Besides Bach, other figures in Austrian politics, for example the Krauss brothers (one of whom was minister of justice) and the director of the National Bank, Joseph Pipitz, also had a background in radical politics.²⁷ Both in its political and academic spheres Austria was thus prepared to include former 'radicals' like Stein. The year after Stein arrived in Vienna, the historian Theodor Sickel, an active member in democratic circles in Berlin during the revolution of 1848, was also appointed to a chair at the university. What Austrian authorities seemed to value above all was competence and expertise, irrespective of past of political allegiances. Austria thus provided Stein with the perfect environment in which to smooth over his past and to concentrate, once again, on his scholarship. It allowed him to become, as Christopher Clark has put, one of the numerous 'men of 1848' who, following the defeat of the revolution 'passed into the structures of authority'.²⁸

²⁵ Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, p. 53.

²⁶ See Eva Macho, *Alexander Freiherr von Bach: Stationen einer umstrittenen Karriere* (Frankfurt am Main, 2009), pp. 13-14.

²⁷ See R. J. W. Evans, 'From confederation to compromise: The Austrian experiment, 1849-1867', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 87 (1994), 135-67 (pp. 147-48).

²⁸ Chris Clark, 'After 1848: The European revolution in government', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 22 (2012), 171-97 (p. 194).

Within years of starting his lectureship, Stein had become a member of the Viennese elite, and did not shy away from demonstrating his commitment to his new home country. When the Crimean War in 1856 went badly for Austria and it was significantly compromised in its international standing, Stein, in two short books he published on the topic, nevertheless praised its achievement.²⁹ As Blasius comments, ‘only few voices defended the inconclusive war policy of Count Buol’.³⁰ Stein’s arguments were ‘more than the glowingly presented patriotism of a new Austrian citizen’, and he really tried to find ingenious arguments in support of Austria’s politics.³¹ Especially after he abandoned hope of returning to Germany in the late 1860s (after he had briefly considered applying for a chair in Berlin – see next chapter), Stein became deeply involved in public life in Austria, in 1874 standing as a candidate in the country’s first parliamentary elections.³² From 1855 onwards, Austria thus shaped Stein’s life, and also his political thought.

²⁹ See L. Stein, *Die Grundlage und Aufgabe des künftigen Friedens* (Vienna, 1856); *Oesterreich und der Frieden* (Vienna, 1856).

³⁰ Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, p. 71: ‘Nur wenige Stimmen verteidigten die ergebnislose Kriegspolitik des Grafen Buol.’

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73: ‘Stein’s Ausführungen sind mehr als der glühende vorgetragene Patriotismus eines österreichischen Neubürgers.’

³² Brauneder, ‘Lorenz von Steins Wirken in Wien’, p. 27.



Figure 4.1. Photograph of Lorenz Stein, middle-aged.

Dirk Blasius, *Deutsche Gelehrtenpolitik in der Habsburger Monarchie* (Kiel, 2007), p. 97; original in Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Wien, Bildarchiv.

Politics and socialism in the 1850s

Although particularly striking in the Habsburg Empire, Austria's combination of the rule of an absolute monarchical regime with progressive practical politics was symptomatic of a wider shift in European political culture in the aftermath of 1848. This transformation was a crucial context for Stein's trajectory in the post-revolutionary decade. His intellectual development was in a remarkable way intertwined with the wider cultural and political changes in this period. Despite their

reputation for conservatism and reaction, 1850s politics in fact contained many innovative elements.³³ The conservative regimes that returned to power in the *Nachmärz* were concerned to prevent the outbreak of another revolution and were therefore willing to make concessions. These often extended to social policy and that way, many socialist elements entered mainstream politics – without necessarily bearing that name. This new political environment was favourable to figures like Stein: thorough and competent, deeply committed to politics and issues of social equality, yet cautious to associate themselves with polarizing political labels. The reason why Stein could continue to be a ‘socialist’ in the 1850s was that socialist politics became much more subtle.

Despite the setback he suffered as a result of his dismissal, Stein quickly regained confidence in the early 1850s because he could observe many of the predictions he had made regarding the future of socialism become reality. By the time a second edition of his *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung* was published in 1855, post-revolutionary governments had already begun to change along strikingly Steinian lines.³⁴ Stein had, for example, made the point that the experience of 1848 had cemented the union between socialism and politics, and predicted that in the future socialist politics would increasingly be realized via administrative channels. In the early 1850s, states indeed began to show more willingness than ever before to invest in socially beneficial measures such as the expansion of infrastructure and education. While this was driven by the desire to stimulate economic growth, and the indeed reactionary notion that higher levels of material welfare would make social unrest less likely, the wider cultural shift these policies brought about was nonetheless remarkable. As one historian puts it, in this period for the first time in

³³ This has been highlighted by recent scholarship. See Clark, ‘After 1848’ for the best articulation of this argument and a European overview. More specifically on the Austrian case: Evans, ‘From confederation to compromise’. See also Anna Ross, ‘Post-revolutionary politics in Prussia 1848-1858’ (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2013).

³⁴ Professor L. Stein, *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich von 1789 bis auf unsere Tage* (2nd edn, 3 vols, Leipzig, 1855).

history, 'the state was seen to give, not simply to take'.³⁵ This fitted Stein's prediction that states were bound to become more responsive towards social needs.

Because the new developments matched his existing social theory, Stein was, unlike many of his contemporaries, able to recognize the significance of this shift in political culture. The phenomenon of 'Bonapartism', most strikingly incorporated by Louis Napoleon in France following his *coup d'état* in 1851, at the time puzzled many figures on the left.³⁶ It saw a strong state, headed by a popular leader, implementing its reactionary policies with democratic support. As Karl Marx commented in his *Eighteenth Brumaire*, it was paradoxical that all revolutions since 1789 had 'perfected this machine instead of breaking it'.³⁷ Stein addressed this topic (indirectly) in his essay 'Demokratie und Aristokratie' in 1854. In Stein's scheme, a Bonapartist style of politics was a typical perversion of democracy. Having always been sceptical of democracy and popular sovereignty, Stein had already predicted in 1848 that Bonaparte's presidency would descend into dictatorial rule, and was not at all surprised by the events of the early 1850s.

As he explained in this essay, democracy and aristocracy were not static political labels, but were better understood as two different principles of social organisation: 'The principle of democracy is that of movement, that of aristocracy that of preservation; the former gains new elements, the latter orders what has already been gained.'³⁸ Each of the political forms could be perverted. In the case of democracy, its false variety was demagogy. A perverted form of aristocracy was the

³⁵ Quoted in Clark, 'After 1848', p. 181.

³⁶ See Heinz Gollwitzer, 'Der Cäsarismus Napoleons III im Widerhall der öffentlichen Meinung Deutschlands', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 173 (1952), 23-76; trans. by Gordon C. Wells as 'The Caesarism of Napoleon III as seen by public opinion in Germany', *Economy and Society*, 16 (1987), 357-404. One of the commentators on this topic was Karl Grün who in Brussels exile wrote the anonymously published work *Louis Napoleon Bonaparte: Die Sphinx auf dem französischen Kaiserthron* (Hamburg, 1859).

³⁷ Karl Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', in MECW, XI (1979): 99-197 (p. 185).

³⁸ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], 'Demokratie und Aristokratie', *Die Gegenwart: Eine encyclopädische Darstellung der neuesten Zeitgeschichte für alle Stände*, 9 (1854), 306-44; reprinted in Lorenz Stein, *Schriften zum Sozialismus 1848, 1852, 1854*, ed. by Eckart Pankoke (Darmstadt, 1974), pp. 63-101 (p. 76): 'Das Princip der Demokratie ist das der Bewegung, das der Aristokratie ist das der Erhaltung; jene gewinnt Neues, diese ordnet das früher Gewonnene.'

‘reaction’.³⁹ Social democracy was, according to Stein, a democracy ‘from below’, pushing for the ability to acquire property for those entitled to political power. By contrast, social demagoguery was a phenomenon that aimed to acquire property via political power. It did not want political power for its own sake, but only in order to abuse it for the redistribution of goods.⁴⁰ In this scheme of things, the Bonapartist perversion of democracy was easily explained for Stein. Concerned to draw conclusions for his own country, Stein pointed out that a ‘social demagoguery’ had also emerged in Germany in 1848. This was the tendency that wanted the establishment of a workers’ republic, and alienated the democratic movement – which favoured a constitutional monarchy. Stein claimed that the goal for Germany after the revolution was therefore to rebuild its relationship with aristocracy, following the distortions of the experience of 1848.

Stein therefore fully embraced the German political strategy after 1848. Despite his growing aversion to Prussia, he was sympathetic to the reforms initiated by Otto von Manteuffel, prime minister of Prussia from 1850 to 1858, and in many ways the symbol of post-revolutionary pragmatism. Like Stein trained in law and in state science, Manteuffel, who had likely read Stein’s work, shared his political priorities by taking social issues seriously and working towards a better state administration.⁴¹ Soon after coming into power, Manteuffel instigated a reform of municipal administration in Prussia. Its goal was to give more power to local authorities and to unify their government so that they could be part of a more efficient state apparatus.⁴² Stein acknowledged the significance of these reforms in his essay ‘Das Gemeindewesen der neueren Zeit’ of 1853. He explained the need for these reform with reference to the experience of 1848. During the revolution, Stein

³⁹ Ibid., p. 86.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 98.

⁴¹ On Manteuffel’s knowledge of Stein’s work see Günther Grünthal, ‘Im Schatten Bismarcks – der preußische Ministerpräsident Otto Freiherr von Manteuffel (1805-1882)’, in Hand-Christof Kraus (ed.) *Konservative Politiker in Deutschland: Eine Auswahl biographischer Porträts aus zwei Jahrhunderten* (Berlin, 1995), pp. 111-33 (p. 125).

⁴² See Ross, ‘Post-revolutionary politics’, pp. 253-54.

wrote, social tensions had manifested themselves in the first instance on the municipal level. In order to work against social upheaval on a bigger scale, social cohesion needed to be first restored in the municipalities.⁴³ Both Stein and Manteuffel thus believed that a major task of the *Nachmärz* was to learn lessons from the experience 1848, and to formulate new policies on this basis.

Stein also became involved in another major political project of the 1850s: railways construction. Both Germany and France launched a concerted effort to build national railway networks, a measure which was seen as central to the integrative political aims of *Nachmärz* politics.⁴⁴ Railway construction in the 1850s was an expression of pragmatic, and in many ways 'socialist', measures being executed by conservative governments. The French socialist Barthélemy Enfantin, a leading member of the Saint-Simonian movement in the 1820s, for example dedicated his efforts in the 1850s to railroad expansion, acting as the main administrator of a project connecting Paris, Lyon and the Mediterranean.⁴⁵ Stein also developed an interest in *Eisenbahnwesen* in the 1850s, later on becoming the editor of the journal *Centralblatt für Eisenbahnen und Dampfschiffahrt der Oesterreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie*. In 1872 he would sum up the immense significance railways acquired since the 1850s in the following terms:

It is pointless to repeat for the hundredth time what railways have become and will be for an individual people and for the entire development of European life. It suffices to stress that one cannot imagine without them the civilization of our time, political economy, education, administration, trade, industry,

⁴³ L.S. [Lorenz Stein], 'Das Gemeindewesen der neueren Zeit', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1853), I: 22-84 (pp. 64-65).

⁴⁴ Clark, 'After 1848', pp. 182-83. See also James M. Brophy, *Capitalism, politics and railroads in Prussia, 1830-1870* (Columbus, OH, 1998).

⁴⁵ Bernard Jouve, *L'Épopée saint-simonienne: Saint-Simon, Enfantin et leur disciple Alexis Petit de Suez au pays de George Sand* (Paris, 2001), pp. 284-85.

the military. They are at the centre of all things, and build one of their most important foundations.⁴⁶

As this statement makes clear, railroad construction in the post-1848 period represented more than mere infrastructural improvement, but was connected to further-reaching, philosophical, ambitions. This was typical of the era's political culture: the idealism of the pre-1848 era was translated into practical measures, a move that Stein was deeply invested in.

A similarly meaningful initiative of the 1850s was the turn to the collection of statistical information. In order to make government more efficient, the Prussian government, mirroring trends in other European countries, launched an unprecedented effort to collect statistical data.⁴⁷ This type of knowledge was recognized to be essential to policy making. What mattered was not only the numerical rise in statistical information, but also the kind of data that was considered important. A central example was the rise of *Criminalstatistik* in the post-revolutionary era. While *Justiz-Statistik* collected data about institutional practices such as court sentences, *Criminalstatistik* sought to identify the causes of crime, and the effects of penalties.⁴⁸ What this showed was that in the 1850s, governments were beginning to recognize society as a phenomenon that was separate from the state and that needed to be taken seriously in its own right – the philosophical point Stein had made in his work on socialism. The government's effort to collect statistical information could thus be regarded as a kind of 'science of society' in the making.

While there is little direct evidence for the impact of Stein's ideas on Prussian policy in the 1850s, Stein's theoretical writings from the time are replete with

⁴⁶ Lorenz von Stein, *Zur Eisenbahnrechts-Bildung: Gesammelte Aufsätze aus dem Centralblatt für Eisenbahnen und Dampfschiffahrt der Oesterreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie* (Wien, 1872), p. 4: 'Es ist nutzlos noch zum hundertsten Male zu wiederholen, was Eisenbahnen fuer ein einzelnes Volk und fuer die gesammte Entwicklung der europäischen Lebens geworden sind und sein werden. Es genügt zu betonen, daß man sich die Gesittung unserer Zeit, Volkswirthschaft, Bildung, Verwaltung, Handel, Industrie, Heerwesen ohne sie gar nicht mehr denken kann. Sie stehen in der Mitte aller Dinge, sie bilden eine ihrer wichtigsten Grundlagen.'

⁴⁷ Clark, 'After 1848', p. 183. Ross, 'Post-revolutionary politics', pp. 109-10. See also Theodore M. Porter, *The rise of statistical thinking 1820-1900* (Princeton, 1986).

⁴⁸ Ross, 'Post-revolutionary politics', pp. 195-97.

references to contemporary policy. He for example commented on the growing importance of statistics in his essay 'Die Errichtung einer deutschen Bank' in 1851. The piece argued for the urgent need to establish a national bank in Germany as this would, on the hand, help foster a sense of national unity. On the other hand, the standardization of currencies and measurements was also crucial to enabling economic growth.⁴⁹ In addition, Stein highlighted the importance of collecting statistical information on economic activity in different parts of Germany. He praised the efforts Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Dieterici, the head of the Prussian Statistical Office who worked closely together with Manteuffel, and encourage the further expansion of the statistical project that was already underway.⁵⁰

Moreover, Stein in this piece highlighted the importance of exchanging information with other countries, another major trend of the 1850s.⁵¹ This was again something which Stein had called for many years earlier. In his legal writings from the early 1840s he had argued that comparing legal practice in different countries was the only way to make progress. In the 1850s, governments across Europe began communicating more than ever before, as improving political accountability and effectiveness and creating economic growth were perceived as a joint project. Dieterici, for example, established formal connections with statistical offices in a range of European countries.⁵² An International Congresses of Statistic was established in 1851.⁵³ Once again, a vision of Stein's that dated back to the early 1840s was becoming reality in the *Nachmärz*.

What the manifold, yet subtle, changes in politics in the post-1848 decade amounted to was a narrowing gap between left and right. The heated public political battles of the 1840s, fuelled by polarizing positions and uncompromising labels,

⁴⁹ L. Stein, 'Die Errichtung einer deutschen Bank', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1851), II: 197-233.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 227-28. On Dieterici see Ross, 'Post-Revolutionary Politics', pp. 111-13.

⁵¹ Stein, 'Die Errichtung einer deutschen Bank', p. 227.

⁵² Ross, 'Post-revolutionary politics', pp. 140-41.

⁵³ Clark, 'After 1848', pp. 195-96. See also Nico Randeraad, 'The International Statistical Congress (1853-1876): Knowledge transfers and their limits', *European History Quarterly*, 41 (2011), 50-65.

disappeared. As Clark writes, ‘the decade was characterized by the dominance of pragmatic, centrist coalitions whose rhetoric and outlook marked a clear departure from the ideologically polarised positions of left and right in the pre-March era.’⁵⁴ In his analysis of 1848, Stein had repeatedly drawn attention to the alienating effect of socialist and other radical political doctrines. What indeed made the reforms of the 1850s successful was the fact that they were not called ‘socialist’. On Stein’s terms, this period thus saw a great deal of progress, and the emergence of a superior variety of socialism.

By the early 1860s, this experience came to be reflected in the definitions of ‘socialism’ and ‘communism’. The entry on ‘communism’ in Hermann Wagener’s *Staats- und Gesellschaftslexikon* from 1861 (the author of which might in fact have been Stein⁵⁵) stated:

In the storms of the year 1848, the state proved more powerful than had been assumed. The activity and movement of society has taken an entirely different direction than expected; instead of building on a uniform human economy, it focuses on the reestablishment and extension of organic circles and institutions, which had in the forties been based on the unheard of and seemingly outdated and superseded concepts such as estate, guild, district, province and the organic transformation of the state.⁵⁶

The author did not consider this development a betrayal of socialist hopes. He instead praised the fact that in the course of this development many socialist ideas had been realized in practice. It was when even conservative forces came to consider socialist ideas in the 1850s that true progress had been made. He cited examples from the

⁵⁴ Clark, ‘After 1848’, p. 174.

⁵⁵ Oliver Cnyrim, *Aspekte eines konservativen Weltbilds: Hermann Wagners Staats- und Gesellschaftslexikon (1858/9-1867)* (Ludwigshafen, 2005), see pp. 33, 35, 38 on Stein’s potential involvement as an author.

⁵⁶ ‘Communismus’, in Hermann Wagener (ed.), *Staats- und Gesellschaftslexikon in Verbindung mit deutschen Gelehrten und Staatsmännern* (23 vols, Berlin, 1859-67), V (1861): 484-87 (p. 485): ‘In den Stürmen des Jahres 1848 bewiesen sich die Staaten mächtiger, als man voraussetzte. Die Thätigkeit und Bewegung der Gesellschaft hat eine ganz andere Richtung genommen, als man erwartet; statt auf das Chaos einer uniformen Menschenwirthschaft auszugehen, ist sie auf die Wiederherstellung und auf den neuen Ausbau organischer Kreise und Institutionen gerichtet, die sich in die in den vierziger Jahren unerhörten oder als veraltet und abgethan belächelten Worte und Größen, wie Stände, Innungen, Kreise, Provinzen und organische Umbildung des Staats gründen.’

French context: ‘Even an imperial publication like the *Constitutionnel* considered seriously the question whether the state might be justified to intervene in the regulation of rents [...] The author of the brochure *Pourquoi des propriétaires à Paris* (1857) even came forward with the proposal that the government should expropriate the Parisian landlords.’⁵⁷ Far from being dead, socialism as it was envisioned by Stein, was accordingly a more mainstream phenomenon in the 1850s.

It was Stein’s willingness to see political concepts not as static labels, but as something that developed in historical context that allowed him to make sense of the post-1848 transformation of socialism. In that sense, he was also methodologically attuned to the post-revolutionary moment. It is no coincidence that it was in an essay from 1853 that he reflected on the relationship between political theory and real politics and historical context. The aim of the piece ‘Die staatswissenschaftliche Theorie der Griechen vor Aristoteles und Platon und ihr Verhältnis zu dem Leben der Gesellschaft’ was to show that the political thought of Aristotle and Plato had its origins in real political conditions in their time, as well as the thinking of their predecessors, rather than being completely original. Stein stated his belief that there were no purely abstract political, social or economic problems. Studying the ‘ideal’ state or model of society was only a preparatory exercise for those who ultimately wanted to address ‘the real political issues’.⁵⁸ Abstract concepts (‘durch die geistige Schule gewonnenen Grundbegriffe’), Stein argued, were always shaped by historical conditions.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 485: ‘Selbst ein kaiserliches Blatt wie der „Constitutionnel“ ließ sich auf eine ernsthafte Erörterung der Frage ein, ob nicht der Staat berechtigt sei, in die Regulierung der Miethszinse einzugreifen [...] Der Verfasser einer Broschüre „Pourquoi des propriétaires à Paris“ (1857) trat sogar mit dem Vorschlag auf, die Regierung möchte doch endlich die Pariser Häuserbesitzer durch die Stadtgemeinde expropriieren lassen.’

⁵⁸ Lorenz Stein, ‘Die staatswissenschaftliche Theorie der Griechen vor Aristoteles und Platon und ihr Verhältnis zu dem Leben der Gesellschaft’, in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 9, 1 (1853), 115-82 (p. 119): ‘die wirklichen Staatsfragen’.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 120-21: ‘Es wird der abstracte Begriff sich gleichsam einen Körper gewinnen an der praktischen Frage.’

Political philosophy was therefore inevitably contextual, and this had a number of implications, notably that no philosopher could possibly look beyond his own age.⁶⁰ Another implication was that ideas could acquire radically different meanings in different periods.⁶¹ Nothing better demonstrated this, Stein wrote, than the reception of utopian literature. While More's work had a great impact upon publication, the utopias by Campanella and Morelly were ignored, and their ideas only saw increased interest in the late eighteenth century.⁶² This led to the third major implication Stein highlighted, namely that it was unwise to focus one's studies only on the well-known thinkers from a period. Studying them in context, Stein argued, involved also consulting other, less well known writers.⁶³ These insights – very reminiscent of contemporary methodological convictions in the study of political thought – rang particularly true in relation to the transformed meaning of socialism in the 1850s. Holding on to an abstract and rigid notion of socialism was pointless in an environment that was seeing such profound changes to all aspects of political culture. It is not least this insight that made Stein the arguably most significant political theorist of the *Nachmärz*.

The project of a 'science of society' in the 1850s

Soon after he had finished his *Geschichte der Sozialen Bewegung* in 1850, Stein wrote to Robert von Mohl that he saw this work only as a preliminary step to a much larger undertaking: 'I hope that I will later have time and energy to work on the science of society in its own right, and to attribute to it a place among the sciences of the state.'⁶⁴ Stein embarked on this project immediately, and by 1852 had completed

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 123-24: 'Auch die grössten Staatskundigen haben in dieser Beziehung nie über ihr Zeit hinausgesehen.'

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 124.

⁶² Ibid., p. 124.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 125.

⁶⁴ Cf. Chapter 3 above. '7. Lorenz Stein an Robert v. Mohl, 1 December 1849', in Manfred Hahn, *Bürgerlicher Optimismus im Niedergang. Studien zu Lorenz Stein und Hegel* (Munich, 1969), pp. 200-02 (p. 201): 'Ich hoffe, daß ich später Zeit und Kraft haben werde, die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft selbstständig zu bearbeiten und ihr ihren Platz in den Staatswissenschaften anzuweisen.'

the first volume of *System der Staatswissenschaft*, the book that came to be his main publication of the 1850s. A second volume followed in 1856. The book presented an attempt to describe the totality of public organisations as an ‘organism’. The first volume was concerned with the economy, the second with ‘society’, and a planned third (but ultimately not completed) volume was intended to describe the tasks of the state and of government within this overall organisation. Such a holistic approach reflected not only the older tradition of *Staatswissenschaft*, but also the recent insight, re-affirmed by the experience of the early 1850s, that socialist aims could only be realized if they were integrated into the wider structures of the state.

Already by 1852, in his essay on socialism in Germany, Stein had been able to observe that his 1850 book on the history of socialism in France had inspired a number of German works on ‘the social’. It is worth briefly surveying what these books were about. Similarly to the reactions to Stein’s first book in the 1840s, many of these books contained mere repetitions of Stein’s ideas. Adolph Widmann’s *Gesetze der socialen Bewegung*, for example, was rather similar to Stein’s *Geschichte der socialen Bewegung*, and Widmann acknowledged his debt to him.⁶⁵ His book served to popularize Stein’s ideas, yet gave them an added Christian emphasis.⁶⁶

Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl’s *Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft* was more innovative. Like Stein, Riehl acknowledged that the ‘social’ had recently gained in significance. The ‘bürgerliche Gesellschaft’, Riehl wrote, was no longer synonymous with the ‘politische Gesellschaft’.⁶⁷ Riehl was a popular journalist who had been enthusiastic about the revolution of 1848, yet took a conservative turn in its aftermath. He focused on describing the distinct roles of the different social groups: peasants, aristocracy, bourgeoisie and proletariat, and hoped to find a solution to contemporary social conflict by advocating a return to a more traditional model of society in which

⁶⁵ Adolph Widmann, *Die Gesetze der socialen Bewegung* (Jena, 1851), pp. vii-viii.

⁶⁶ On Widmann see Hermann Arthur Lier, ‘Widmann, Christian Adolf Friedrich’, in ADB, 42 (1897), pp. 352-54 <<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd117338907.html>> [accessed 10 April 2014].

⁶⁷ Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, *Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft* (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1851), p. 4.

every estate had its designated task. His organic vision had both reactionary and progressive elements. Riehl was impressed by Robert Owen's model community at New Lanark.⁶⁸ But his vision was markedly hierarchical and suggested that a patriarchal industrial management, led by the aristocracy, could bring the return of a more harmonious society.⁶⁹ In the course of the 1850s Riehl travelled across Germany to study its *völkisch* customs and traditions, the recovery of which he also saw as central to the future of society.⁷⁰ Another German 'social theorist' was Heinrich Ahrens. His work from the 1850s, such as *Die Philosophie des Rechts und des Staats* (1850-52), was also marked by an organic notion of the relationship between the classes. He had lived in France and Belgium in the 1830s where he developed an interest in social issues.⁷¹

The perhaps most important reaction to Stein's *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung* came, once again, from Robert von Mohl. In his 1851 essay, 'Gesellschafts-Wissenschaften und Staats-Wissenschaften', he agreed with Stein that the social had become an important subject of study, marking a departure from the long-standing preoccupation with the state and constitutions.⁷² He praised Stein and Ahrens as serious contributors to the field – unlike Grün and Bensen whom he also mentioned but dismissed as unsophisticated.⁷³ As Mohl vividly put it:

'State novels' and utopias have been published at all times [...] What is new is that participation in such doctrines is no longer considered a sign of mental illness, but that one can openly profess them, like a legitimate and honourable position; that one can admit being a socialist like one used to admit being a realist or a nominalist, a Kantian or a follower

⁶⁸ See David F. Lindenfeld, *The practical imagination: The German sciences of state in the nineteenth century* (London, 1997), pp. 164, 183.

⁶⁹ See John Burrow, *The crisis of reason: European thought, 1848-1914* (New Haven, CT, 2000), pp. 117-18.

⁷⁰ Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, *Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes als Grundlage einer deutschen Social-Politik* (4 vols, Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1851-69).

⁷¹ Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 182.

⁷² Robert von Mohl, 'Gesellschafts-Wissenschaften und Staats-Wissenschaften', *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 7 (1851), 3-71 (p. 6): 'Das Wort Gesellschaft hat ertönt.'

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

of Hegel, a philosopher of law or a man of the historical school.⁷⁴

Yet, in his essay Mohl also put forward criticism of Stein. He claimed that his conception of society was too narrowly focused on economic factors: ‘Stein has been misled into seeing society as essentially only a relation directed at labour and order by property’.⁷⁵ Mohl suggested ways in which the ‘science of society’ should develop in the future. A typical *Staatswissenschaftler* obsessed with classification, Mohl envisaged the following subdivision of the subject:

- I. General science of society
- II. Dogmatic sciences of society
 - 1. Social-legal sciences
 - 2. Social ethical sciences
 - 3. Practical social science (social policy)
- III. Historical social sciences
 - 1. History of society and its own circles
 - 2. Statistics of society⁷⁶

Yet, instead of contributing to the theoretical project of the ‘science of society’, Mohl primarily spent the 1850s writing the survey work *Die Geschichte und Literatur der Staatswissenschaft* (1855-58).⁷⁷

Mohl’s opinion was, as usual, important to Stein, and he was quick to respond to his accusation that his notion of society was too narrowly focused on the economic. In his essay ‘Das Wesen des arbeitslosen Einkommens, und sein besonderes Verhältniss zu Amt und Adel’ from late 1852 Stein accepted Mohl’s critique – even if he never went on to truly ‘correct’ this aspect of his work. This essay was significant because Stein in it began to extend his theory of the social

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 9: ‘Allerdings waren zu allen Zeiten einzelne Staatsromane oder sonstige Utopien erschienen [...] Neu ist es, daß die Theilnahme an einer solchen Lehre nicht mehr als ein Zeichen von Geisteskrankheit gilt, sondern man sich offen dazu bekennt, als zu einem berechtigten und ehrenwerthen Standpunkte; dass man ein Socialist ist, wie man sonst ein Realist oder Nominalist, ein Kantianer oder ein Anhänger von Hegel, ein Rechtsphilosoph oder ein Mann der historischen Schule war.’

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 21: ‘[Stein] lässt sich verleiten, in der Gesellschaft doch wesentlich nur ein auf Arbeit gerichtetes und durch das System des Eigenthums geordnetes Verhältniss zu sehen.’

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 49.

⁷⁷ Robert von Mohl, *Die Geschichte und Literatur der Staatswissenschaft: In Monographien dargestellt* (3 vols, Erlangen, 1855-58).

dynamic by putting forward an argument for the social usefulness of the nobility. As it did not rely on making a living through labour, Stein argued that the aristocracy preserved ‘honour’ in society.⁷⁸ It was responsible for all immaterial and intellectual goods which were also important for society’s ‘progress’.

As Stein explained, originally there had been a number of social roles that did not rely on income through labour: priests, judges and warriors.⁷⁹ In the course of history, however, the state took charge of these functions and they became salaried offices.⁸⁰ The expansion of the bureaucracy thus increasingly allowed the state to control society. Stein wrote: ‘It is the lack of a society (*Gesellschaftslosigkeit*) which forms the character of our time. It is because social tasks have merged into government and offices that this peculiar organism of the social order, that has so far accompanied the history of our people, has almost completely disappeared.’⁸¹ The aristocracy had the leisure to cultivate ‘art and taste, learning and civilization’, which raised the social, as opposed to the purely economic value of a people.⁸² This was an important point, as Stein – agreeing with Mohl – observed that the ‘science of society’ had so far placed too much emphasis on economics:

After all, the entire science of society reduces itself to a mere reflex of economic laws and developments. It is on this indeed very inferior position that most works on society still remain, such as Widmann’s book which highlights exclusively the economic, or that by Plonek which looks at essentially the legal side of the science of society, while Riehl in his *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, and partly also Eisenhardt in

⁷⁸ Lorenz Stein, ‘Das Wesen des arbeitslosen Einkommens, und sein besonderes Verhältniß zu Amt und Adel’, *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1852), IV: 139-90 (p. 149).

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 175-76: ‘Es ist die Gesellschaftslosigkeit, die den Charakter unserer Zeit bildet. Es ist durch das Aufgehen der gesellschaftlichen Aufgaben in die Staatsgewalt und das Amt jener eigenthümliche Organismus der Gesellschaftsordnung fast ganz verschwunden, der die Geschichte unseres Volkes bis dahin begleitet hat.’

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 183: ‘Kunst und Geschmack, Bildung und Gesittung’.

his *Berufe des Adels*, went further, without however having the task to create an actual system.⁸³

Stein therefore credited Mohl with having done a great service to *Gesellschaftswissenschaft* by pointing out ‘that one cannot let the science of society merge completely into economics, that the human society has a much deeper content than economics.’⁸⁴

Mohl was also one of the first readers of Stein’s *System der Staatswissenschaft*. In the spring of 1852 Stein sent him a copy of the recently completed first volume, entitled *System der Statistik, der Populationistik und der Volkswirtschaftslehre*. Stein claimed that the book had emerged organically out of his earlier work on the social question, but also admitted that the way he had chosen to approach the new topic was an ambitious one. He wrote:

I know indeed that I have undertaken something which I alone, and least of all on the first attempt, will not be able to bring to a proper conclusion; I have set myself the difficult task to first find an organic *system* for these three parts of state science. I am of the firm conviction [...] that the field of state science [...] is an organic whole and operates according

⁸³ Ibid., p. 145: ‘So daß im Grunde die ganze Gesellschaftswissenschaft sich auf einen bloßen Reflex der wirtschaftlichen Gesetze und Entwicklungen reducirt hätte. Auf diesem in der That noch sehr untergeordneten Standpunkt, halten sich auch noch die meisten Schriften über die Gesellschaft, welche, wie das Buch von Widmann, allein die wirtschaftliche, oder wie das von Plonek, die wesentlich rechtliche Seite der Gesellschaftslehre in den Vordergrund stellen, während schon Riehl in seiner „bürgerlichen Gesellschaft“ und zum Theil auch Eisenhardt in seinem „Berufe des Adels“ tiefer griffen, beide jedoch ohne die Aufgabe, ein eigentliches System zu schaffen.’ Stein was referring to Hugo Eisenhart, *Ueber den Beruf des Adels im Staate und die Natur der Prärieverfassung* (Stuttgart, 1852).

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 146: ‘Es war Robert v. Mohl, dem die Staatswissenschaften so viel verdanken, der unermüdet neben kräftiger Anregung der jungen Bestrebungen darauf hinwies, daß man die Gesellschaftswissenschaft nicht in der Wirtschaftslehre gänzlich aufgehen lassen möge, daß die Gesellschaft der Menschen einen tieferen Inhalt habe als das Güterleben.’

to very specific laws; and the attached work is a first attempt to depict this organism and its laws.⁸⁵

Stein's approach was marked by an organic conception of the interaction between state and society. In the foreword to *System der Staatswissenschaft*, Stein, in an uncharacteristically spiritual language, described the broader movement towards organicism in his time: 'We feel that the creator's one great thought realizes itself in all life [...] the fragmentation of our knowledge disappears [...] the individual sciences pass to each other their mighty hands.'⁸⁶ As Stein summarized the mission of his book: 'I have first strived to create a real system; I have then tried to arrange this system as an organism of concepts and laws [...] It first seemed necessary to find for the extraordinary mass of political facts ('staatswissenschaftliche Thatsachen') a systematic shape, in which each had its proper place.'⁸⁷

Stein's new work was also strongly marked by his continuing nationalism. He saw this project of a holistic 'science of the state' as a distinctly German mission. *Das System der Staatswissenschaft* opened with a reference to Auguste Blanqui's *Histoire de l'économie politique* in which he had claimed that German political economists conceived of their discipline in highly philosophical terms, taking it to encompass diplomacy, constitutional right, statistics and 'police science' (*Polizeiwissenschaft*), and because of this diversity, often got lost in their own

⁸⁵ 'Nr. 6 [Lorenz Stein to Robert von Mohl, 29 March 1852]', in Roman Schnur (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft: Studien über Lorenz von Stein* (Berlin, 1978), p. 552: 'Ich weiß freilich, daß ich etwas unternommen habe, was ich allein, und am wenigsten im ersten Versuche, gewiß nicht zu einem abgeschlossenen Ende zuführen im Stande sein werde; ich habe [...] mir die schwere Aufgabe gestellt, das organische System zunächst dieser drei Theile der St. W. Zu finden. Ich habe die innige und unwandelbare Überzeugung gehabt u. Jetzt wieder befestigt, daß das Gebiet, welches die St. W. umfaßt, eben so weit wie jedes andere Gebiet des Lebendigen ein organisches Ganzes ist und sich nach ganz bestimmten Gesetzen bewegt; und das anliegende Werk ist ein erster Versuch, diesen Organismus und seine Gesetze darzustellen.'

⁸⁶ Lorenz Stein, *System der Staatswissenschaft* (2 vols, Stuttgart, Tübingen and Augsburg, 1852-56), I (1852): *System der Statistik, der Populationistik, und der Volkswirtschaftslehre*, viii: 'wir fühlen, daß in allem Leben Ein großer Gedanke des Schöpfers sich verwirklicht [...] Die Zersplitterung unserer Kenntnisse verschwindet in den einzelnen Gegenständen derselben, die Entfremdung in ihren großen Gebieten. Die einzelnen Wissenschaften reichen sich die mächtigen Hände.'

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. ix: 'Ich habe zuerst ein wirkliches System angestrebt; ich habe versucht, alsdann dies System als einen Organismus von Begriffen und Gesetzen hinstellen [...] Mir schien es zuerst nothwendig für die ungemeine Masse staatswissenschaftlicher Thatsachen, die sich sammelt, die systematische Gestalt zu finden, in der jedes Einzelne seinen rechten Platz habe.'

ideas.⁸⁸ Stein countered that the Germans' tendency towards systematizing was a virtue.⁸⁹ Since no nation alone was capable of grasping all aspects of a discipline, it was the different emphases among the countries that enabled the international scholarly community to work on constructing an academic field in its entirety.⁹⁰

Stein's strategy in the first volume of *System der Staatswissenschaft* was to deconstruct the discipline of political economy, conceived in a very abstract way, into its most basic components, in order to ultimately explain their organic connection. The introductory chapters, for example, attempted to define what constituted, among other terms, a 'deed', 'real life', a 'fact', and 'freedom'. It would be impossible to examine the details of Stein's convoluted, and in many parts utterly unreadably, discussion. What I will focus on is how he envisaged the broader composition of his work, the role of the analysis of political economy in relation to the two other planned parts of his work. The first volume of *System der Staatswissenschaft* laid the groundwork for the following which would be concerned with 'immaterial goods' and the actual 'science of society'.⁹¹ As Stein described his 'system':

The first area is political economy (*Güterwesen*) in which personality subjects the natural to its purposes, and determines and dominates it through its activity; the second is society in which awareness develops of this dominance of individual personalities, and moves from natural life to the order of personalities among each other; the third is the state, in which the totality of personalities unites as personal unity [...] These three areas, combined into one scientific system, make up the real science of the state.⁹²

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. v.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. vi.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. vii.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. xii.

⁹² Ibid., p. 21: 'Das erste [Gebiet] ist das der Güterwesen, in dem die Persönlichkeit sich das Natürliche zu ihrem Zwecke unterwirft, und es durch seine Thätigkeit bestimmt und beherrscht; das zweite ist das der Gesellschaft, in dem diese Herrschaft der einzelnen Persönlichkeit zum Bewußtsein kommt, und von dem natürlichen Leben auf die Ordnung der Persönlichkeit untereinander übergeht; das dritte ist das des Staats, in dem die Gesamtheit der Persönlichkeiten sich als persönliche Einheit zusammenfaßt [...] Diese drei Gebiete, in ein wissenschaftliches System zusammengefaßt, bilden die wirkliche Staatswissenschaft.'

Stein offered a summary of what each area would entail. The first part, covered in the first volume, described how individual economic activities, differentiated mostly by varying natural conditions, formed a holistic interaction that could be described as ‘national economy’ (*Volkswirtschaft*).⁹³ Explaining the transition to the second part, Stein claimed that economy and society were very closely entwined: ‘In the same way in which it is impossible to have an exchange of goods (*Güterleben*) without an economy, or a national economy without an individual economy, it is also impossible to have an economy (*Güterwelt*) without society or a society without an economy.’⁹⁴

The most significant section was Stein’s summary of what the role of the state would consist in – as this part of the book never ended up being published. This was the actual ‘state science’. Stein’s summary of the proposed work is worth citing in full:

The science of the state takes as its starting point the independent unity or totality of individuals which has its own will and its own deed. It is first the science of the concept of the state, in which the latter is understood as an organic personality in the totality of its organs and their designations. It is second the science of the state constitution, in which the actual state in turn gains its specific shape through the element of its society and thus its economy. It is finally the science of the state administration, in which the content of stately life, the economy and society become the subject of the state’s deed. The state’s deed, however, as the deed of a person, is subject to the law of the deed as such, and so when life reaches its highest point it also starts at the point of origin

⁹³ Ibid., p. 21.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 22: ‘So wenig wie es daher ein Güterleben ohne Wirtschaft, oder eine Volkswirtschaft ohne Einzelwirtschaft gibt, ebenso wenig gibt es ein Güterwesen ohne Gesellschaft oder eine Gesellschaft ohne Güterwesen.’

of life itself, the deed and the degree from which the life of the individual emerged.⁹⁵

This was the ‘total organism’ that Stein sought to describe in his work. A decade after he had first called for the establishment of a ‘science of society’ in 1842, and having spent a number of years familiarizing himself with the academic discipline of *Staatswissenschaft*, the main achievement of *System der Staatswissenschaft* was to come up with a strengthened defence of this German holistic and organic tradition against French and English political economy.

Even before he had published it, Stein admitted that he expected *System der Staatswissenschaft* to be a controversial work. The main problem, however, was that it ended up being largely ignored. The book did not receive nearly as much attention as Stein’s earlier publications on socialism. It was mentioned in the review section of the *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* under ‘encyclopaedic works’, but not discussed at length. One of the very few critics to respond to it was Robert von Mohl. In the first volume of his history of state science from 1855, Mohl briefly discussed *System der Staatswissenschaft*, comparing it to Heinrich Ahrens’s *Die Philosophie des Rechts und des Staats* which shared Stein’s desire to grasp the state in an organic and holistic way. Mohl was harsh in his verdict of Stein, arguing that his work had a fundamental flaw: ‘The author appears to be giving partly too much, and partly too little.’⁹⁶ On the one hand, the broad approach, the fact that ‘state science’ itself represented only a third of the overall work and was preceded by a

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 22: ‘Die Lehre vom Staate geht aus von der zur selbstständigen, mit eigenem Wollen und eigener That begabten Persönlichkeit erhobenen Einheit oder Gesammtheit der Einzelnen. Sie ist als solche zuerst die Lehre vom Begriffe des Staats, in der derselbe als organische Persönlichkeit in der Gesammtheit seiner Organe und ihrer Bestimmung aufgefaßt wird. Sie ist zweitens die Lehre von der Staatsverfassung, in der wirkliche Staat wiederum durch das Element seiner Gesellschaft und damit seines Güterwesens seine bestimmte Gestalt erhält. Sie ist endlich die Lehre von der Staatsverwaltung, in der Inhalt des staatlichen Lebens, das Güterwesen und die Gesellschaft zum Gegenstand der That des Staats werden. Die That des Staats aber, als That einer Persönlichkeit, unterliegt alsdann den Gesetzen der That überhaupt, und so beginnt auf dem Punkte, wo das Leben seinen höchsten Punkt erreicht hat, dasselbe wieder bei dem ersten Ausgangspunkte des Lebens selber, der That und dem Maße, aus denen das wirkliche Leben des Einzelnen hervorging.’

⁹⁶ Mohl, *Geschichte und Literatur der Staatswissenschaft*, I (1855), 157: ‘Der Verf. scheint nämlich theils viel zu viel, theils viel zu wenig zu geben.’

overly detailed treatment of political economy and social science, was overambitious. On the other hand, Stein's conception of 'human life' which was defined solely in terms of its interaction with 'nature' was, according to Mohl, too narrow. Mohl praised some individual points Stein made, yet ultimately concluded that he was 'his own worst enemy' because of his convoluted writing style.⁹⁷

The period of unemployment following Stein dismissal in summer 1852 and his move to Vienna delayed the publication of the second volume of *System der Staatswissenschaft*, which appeared in 1856. This book was intended to contain his 'science of society'. In the preface he explained that the work, subtitled *Der Begriff der Gesellschaft und die Lehre von den Gesellschaftsklassen* (the concept of society and the science of the social classes) was only the first part of the project: 'The second part shall contain the depiction of the nature and history of the first form of society, the dynastic order. I hope to be able to finish it soon.'⁹⁸ But the work that was published in 1856 remained the last part of *System der Staatswissenschaft*. Probably because of the negative reactions the first two volumes received, neither the planned second part of the *Gesellschaftswissenschaft*, nor the third volume that should address the role of the state were ever completed.

The task of a 'science of society', as Stein wrote in the introduction to the second volume, was to allocate all social phenomena to a place in a holistic and rigid system. He claimed: 'What we need to do [...] is to unite these elements of an infinitely wide and extraordinarily important field, which is so far almost unexplored, in a system, that is to develop it into a science.'⁹⁹ Stein's discussion covered topics

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 157: 'Darin aber war begabte Verf. jeden Falles sein eigener schlimmster Feind, dass er seine Sätze in eine ganz ungeniessbare und nur zu oft völlig unverständliche scholastische Sprache hüllt.'

⁹⁸ Lorenz Stein, *System der Staatswissenschaft* (2 vols, Stuttgart, Tübingen and Augsburg, 1852-56), II (1856): *Die Gesellschaftslehre. Erste Abtheilung: der Begriff der Gesellschaft und die Lehre von den Gesellschaftsklassen*, vi: 'Die zweite Abtheilung soll die Darstellung des Wesens und der Geschichte der ersten Gesellschaftsform, der Geschlechterordnung, enthalten. Ich hoffe, sie bald vollenden zu können.'

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 13: 'Es kommt [...] darauf an, diese Theile eine, noch beinahe unerforschten, aber unendlich weiten und außerordentlich wichtigen Gebietes zu einem System, das ist also zu einer Wissenschaft auszubilden.'

such as the effects of property, the formation of classes and the resulting range of conflicts. This was the central content of the ‘science of society’, its movements before it entered into any interaction with the state. Stein made clear that the shape of society changed throughout history, and one therefore had to distinguish between a particular form of society and ‘society itself’ (*‘Gesellschaft an sich’*).¹⁰⁰

As Stein knew that this method was controversial, he spent some time justifying his ‘systematizing’ tendencies. ‘Human society’, he wrote, was an order created by the manifold interactions between individuals.¹⁰¹ It was governed by a set of stable factors, the possession of property foremost among them. Just like economic laws, these ‘intellectual’ relations could be analysed as part of an organic system. It was thus possible, Stein argued, to conceive of an ‘order of human life’ (*‘Ordnung des menschlichen Lebens’*). His book was a first attempt to give an arrangement to the elements that governed social interactions. Given that this field of *Gesellschaftswissenschaft* was new, Stein asked his readers to be open-minded, and to remember his humble ambitions: ‘this system [...] does not claim to contain the entire life of society. It only seeks to do what it has to do. It seeks to establish the basic concepts and their organic relations.’¹⁰²

A central question Stein addressed in the second volume was how society differed from the state. Stein still had a deeply Hegelian viewpoint and defined society as the sphere in which individuals pursued activities leading to their ‘full development’. This was a distinctly egoistical activity and consequently there was a need for a higher entity. He wrote, ‘what is missing is an organism whose nature is that it does not find its highest development and accomplishment in part of the community, but only in that of all individuals, the extent and degree of its

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 8: ‘In der sich [...] die geistige Welt mit ihrem Organismus, seinen Bewegungen und seinem höchsten Ziel ausdrückt oder zur Verwirklichung bringt.’

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 73-74: ‘Daß [...] dieses System ja keinen Anspruch darauf macht, das ganze Leben der Gesellschaft enthalten zu wollen. Es will nur, was es wollen muß. Es will die Grundbegriffe und ihre organischen Verhältnisse feststellen.’

development being in proportion to the development of all.’¹⁰³ As Stein argued, an early mistake in relation to social occurrences had been to seek to ‘remedy’ them through the institutions of the state. This accounted for the negative perception of the phenomenon of society which was originally understood only in terms of a disturbance. A breakthrough was the realization that society was distinct from the state and needed to be understood on its own terms.

State and society were deeply entwined, and the task of Stein’s book was to add to this Hegelian insight by describing their interaction in some more detail. Society was notably capable of shaping the state. Going back to the distinction introduced in his 1850 book, Stein suggested that the ‘law of formations of constitutions’ (‘Gesetz der Verfassungsbildung’) was the phenomenon that the ruling class in a given society sought to appropriate political power.’ By contrast, the so-called ‘law of the formation of administration’ (‘Gesetz der Verwaltungsbildung’) was the movement that attempted to break this association and to ensure that the state supported the interests of all in equal measure.’¹⁰⁴ Stein further argued that there was a ‘constant movement in which the state sought to assert its principle against that of society.’¹⁰⁵ What he meant was the fight against the idea of popular sovereignty. He wrote: ‘popular sovereignty is therefore in truth nothing but the stateless sovereignty of society; a state, in which the life of community lacks an absolutely crucial element.’¹⁰⁶

Another connecting point between society and the state was, according to Stein, positive law.¹⁰⁷ This discussion in *System der Staatswissenschaft* contained a

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 30: ‘Es fehlt ein Organismus, dessen Wesen es ist, daß er seine eigene höchste Entwicklung und Vollendung nicht mehr in derjenigen eines Theiles der Gemeinschaft, sondern erst in derjenigen aller Einzelnen finde, und zwar so, daß das Maaß oder der Grad seiner eigenen Entwicklung in dem Grade gegeben sey, in welchem alle Einzelnen ihre Entwicklung finden.’

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 52: ‘Beständige Bewegung, in welcher der Staat sein Princip gegen dasjenige der Gesellschaft geltend zu machen strebt’.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 57: ‘Die Volkssouveränität ist demnach in Wahrheit nichts anderes, als die staatlose Souveränität der Gesellschaft; ein Zustand, in welchem dem Leben der Gemeinschaft ein absolute nothwendiges Element fehlt.’

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 61.

continuation of Stein's critique of philosophy of law which he had begun in his earliest academic projects. *Rechtsphilosophie*, Stein wrote, described an abstract state, which was as unreal as an abstract person.¹⁰⁸ Instead, society and its movements were crucial to the development of law. Stein claimed: 'There is therefore no doubt, that the science of society is and will remain the essential basis and premise of legal science.'¹⁰⁹ It was through *Verwaltung* that the state expressed the changed legal conditions based on the particular social system. The 'history of law' was thus the 'history of society'.¹¹⁰

The principal innovation of the *Gesellschaftslehre* of 1856 was therefore to find a more concrete place for 'society' in the established academic model of law and the state, and thus, in some ways, to elaborate on Hegel's concept of 'civil society'. Yet, despite its ambitious claims, the second volume of *System der Staatswissenschaft* received even fewer reactions than the first. It was mentioned in the *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* as a new publication in 'politics', but again not discussed in detail. Even Mohl did not pay it any attention. Stein himself did not feel very confident about his work, and when sending a copy to Mohl, was highly apologetic for it. He tried to defend his desire to build a system, yet regretted being very lonely in this project.¹¹¹ He added: 'The more I reflect on myself and my mistakes and peculiarities, the more I see that it is impossible to change one's own structure.'¹¹² Stein hoped that 'the attached work will prove to you how much I am trying to change about myself what I am capable of changing.'¹¹³ Yet Mohl had lost his patience with Stein. The second volume was not discussed in the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 61: 'Und somit leidet der Satz keinen Zweifel, daß die Gesellschaftslehre die unentbehrliche Grundlage und Voraussetzung der Rechtswissenschaft ist und bleiben wird.'

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 65.

¹¹¹ 'Nr. 10 [Lorenz Stein to Robert von Mohl, 28 October 1857]', in Schnur (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft*, p. 558: 'Ich bedauere nur, daß ich dabei etwas alleine stehe'.

¹¹² 'Nr. 11 [Stein to Mohl, 23 November 1857]', in Schnur (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft*, p. 559: 'Je mehr ich mich und meine Fehler und Eigenheiten mir selbst überlege, je mehr sehe ich ein, daß es außerhalb menschlicher Kraft liegt, die eigene Struktur zu ändern.'

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 559: 'die anliegende Arbeit auch Ihnen einen Beweis davon liefert, wie sehr ich mich bemühe, an mir zu ändern, was ich zu ändern vermag.'

later two volumes of Mohl's *Geschichte und Literatur der Staatswissenschaft* or any of his other works.

The one lengthy engagement with Stein's *Gesellschaftslehre* that was published at the time was a vicious critique. Constantin Roessler, a fellow 'state scientist' and 1848 revolutionary, discussed the second volume of Stein's *System der Staatswissenschaft* in his similarly titled *System der Staatslehre* from 1857. Roessler was dismissive of virtually all elements of Stein's project. Most of all, he objected to Stein's continuing reliance on Hegelian ideas. According to Roessler, Stein's quest to formulate general laws took Hegelian concepts to unnecessary extremes. Hegel's own conceptions of laws and rational historical development had been much subtler than Stein's crude interpretation of it. It was impossible, Roessler claimed, to find natural laws in the spiritual and 'human' sphere.¹¹⁴ Causal connections were much more tenuous in the social realm. As Roessler put it, 'if a flame drops on dry powder, it inevitably lights it on fire. But one cannot say: if a people are ruled in a despotic or aristocratic way, certain particular ethical consequences necessarily arise.'¹¹⁵ Stein's quest for such natural laws, his 'obsession with turning every observation into an absolute rule', according to Roessler undermined Stein's otherwise valuable observations about society.¹¹⁶

Roessler also disagreed with the way Stein distinguished between society and the state. He argued that according to Stein's definition of society the state appeared superfluous. Stein's defence of the need to study society as a separate category was a rehearsal of familiar Hegelian ideas, as was his use of the distinction between the general concept and its historical manifestation.¹¹⁷ The current age, Roessler claimed, was interested in more concrete practical reforms and this was another reason why Stein's generalizing moves and broad theories were inadequate and not well

¹¹⁴ Constantin Roessler, *System der Staatslehre* (Leipzig, 1857), p. 432.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 434: 'Wenn Feuer auf trockenes Pulver fällt, so entzündet sich nothwendig das Pulver. Aber man kann nicht sagen: wenn ein Volk despotisch oder aristokratisch regiert wird, so entstehen nothwendig diese und diese sittlichen Folgen.'

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 'Sucht, aus jeder Beobachtung eine absolute Regel zu machen'.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 436.

received.¹¹⁸ Roessler also took issue with Stein's strict division between constitution and administration. As he argued, not only the administrative structures in the state could be used to level out class differences. Only at a specific point in history had the administration fulfilled this role in particular.¹¹⁹ Ultimately, Stein's suggestion that the conflict between the classes was about the possession of political power was, according to Roessler, also false. If the issue at stake was political power, this was surely something that concerned the state, and could not serve as the definition feature of society. In short, Roessler was entirely unconvinced by Stein's method and arguments in *System der Staatswissenschaft*.

Another important assessment of Stein's *System der Staatswissenschaft* stemmed from a later period, yet is worth addressing here. In 1867, Gustav von Schmoller published an extensive discussion of Stein's lifework (which will be discussed in the next chapter). Having praised his early writings on socialism, Schmoller wrote regarding Stein's *System der Staatswissenschaft*:

He then published a work that unfortunately remained uncompleted, a system of state science. The parts on statistics, political economy and general social science that did appear contain as much ingenious as abstrusely scholastic material, and have contributed more than anything else to making Stein an author who is only read by academics, and whom it therefore seems all the more acceptable to plunder and plagiarize, without simultaneously feeling bad about ignoring or attacking him. Many are also against him, because they haven't understood him.¹²⁰

Schmoller blamed Stein's excessive drive to systematize for his bad reception, and explained that it was his background in outdated speculative philosophy that

¹¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 437-38.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 441.

¹²⁰ Gustav Schmoller, 'Lorenz Stein', in *Preußische Jahrbücher*, 19 (1867), 245-70 (p. 245): 'Dann trat er mit einem leider unvollendet gelassenen Werk, mit einem Systeme der Staatswissenschaft vor die Öffentlichkeit. Die erschienenen Theile Statistik, Volkswirtschaftslehre und allgemeine Gesellschaftslehre, enthalten ebensoviele Geistreiche, als abstruses Scholastisches und haben am meisten dazu beigetragen Stein zu einem Schriftsteller zu machen, den außer Gelehrten Niemand liest, den man daher auch um so ungestrafter plündern und abschreiben kann, ohne sich nebenher ein Gewissen daraus zu machen, ihn todt zu schweigen oder über ihn loszuziehen. Vielen paßte er auch nicht, weil sie ihn gar nicht verstanden.'

accounted for this tendency. Describing further the *System der Staatswissenschaft*, Schmoller wrote:

The work certainly does not lack rich ideas and depth of understanding; as much one can criticize the details of its structure, it represents [...] a great improvement compared to previous political economy. But it is precisely because of its excesses in this direction [towards speculative philosophy] the most one-sided and least accomplished work of Stein's. It falls into an utter systematizing rage. The heavy weight of pure constructions, which leads to never ending repetitions, this lofty and self-indulgent grandiloquence is not amenable to our time's precise scientific manner. The most ordinary things are expatiated in the name of the concept or the system, and where national economy demands above all the examination of facts, of real life, one is fobbed off with definitions and concepts.¹²¹

This retrospective assessment was a harsh indictment of Stein's attempt to create a 'science of society' in the 1850s.

By the end of the 1850s, a wider attack was launched on the German idea of a separate 'science of society', the innovation which intellectuals like Stein, Riehl, Ahrens and Mohl had been so enthusiastic about in the aftermath of 1848. In 1859, Heinrich von Treitschke, a young state scientist, published his habilitation treatise entitled *Die Gesellschaftslehre: Ein kritischer Versuch* the aim of which was to discredit the entire movement towards a 'science of society'. Treitschke's main objection to the idea of studying society was that while it was clearly distinguishable from the state, the boundary line to 'private life' was unclear.¹²² Treitschke referred primarily to Mohl, but also mentioned Stein and made references to both volumes of

¹²¹ Ibid., pp. 262-63: 'Es hat dieses Werk gewiß nicht weniger Gedankenreichthum und Tiefe der Auffassung; es bildet auch [...] einen großen Fortschritt gegenüber der bisherigen Nationalökonomie, soviel man auch wieder im Einzelnen die Anordnung tadeln kann. Aber es ist gerade wegen der Uebertreibung nach dieser Richtung das einseitigste und in sich am wenigsten vollendete Produkt Stein's. Es verfällt in eine förmliche Wuth der Systematisirung. Dieser schwere Ballast bloßer Konstruktion, der zu unendlichen Wiederholungen führt, dieser salbungreiche und selbstgefällige Bombast ist der exakten wissenschaftlichen Manier unserer Zeit ungenießbar. Die gewöhnlichsten Dinge werden des Begriffs oder des Systems wegen breit getreten, und wo die Nationalökonomie vor Allem Untersuchung der Thatsachen, des realen Lebens fordert, wird man mit Definitionen und Begriffen abgespeist.'

¹²² Ibid., p. 66.

System der Staatswissenschaft.¹²³ According to Treitschke, it was precisely because it was hard to find this boundary line that theorists like Stein originally over-emphasized the importance of economics.¹²⁴ In connection with his critique of Hegel, Treitschke commented on Stein's recent work:

Because of their amalgamation of purely political things with society, Hegel's teachings have remained useless for 'Staatswissenschaft'. L. Stein – more in his recent work than in his earlier economic perspective – follows Hegel. His theory of society is also driven by dialectics. He has formed a concept of the state a priori; he then finds that it does not fit the real state. Instead of then concluding: 'my concept is false', he says, 'No, there is actually another thing that alters the concept of the state' – and this other thing is society.¹²⁵

Besides Mohl and Stein, Treitschke also attacked as representatives of this tendency Adolph Widmann, Heinrich Ahrens, Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl as well as Heinrich Costa, who in 1855 had published the book *Encyclopedische Einleitung in ein System der Gesellschaftswissenschaft*.¹²⁶ Treitschke furthermore criticized *Staatswissenschaft*'s tendency to describe existing conditions. This, he believed, had led to the false attempt to theorize 'society'. Instead of theorizing the gap that had emerged between the state and society, the true aim of 'state science', he claimed, should be to work towards a stronger state and its healthy relationship with the people.¹²⁷

¹²³ Heinrich von Treitschke, *Die Gesellschaftswissenschaft: Ein kritischer Versuch* (Leipzig, 1859), pp. 11, 37, 39, 42.

¹²⁴ Ibid., pp. 67-68.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 75: 'Wegen der Vermischung rein-politischer Dinge mit der Gesellschaft, ist Hegel's Lehre für die Staatswissenschaft unfruchtbar geblieben. An Hegel schließt sich – mehr in seinem neuesten Werke als auf seinem früheren ökonomischen Standpunkte – L. Stein. Auch seine Gesellschaftstheorie ist durch ein dialektisches Bedürfnis hervorgerufen. Er hat sich a priori einen Begriff vom Staat gebildet; er findet dann, dieser passe nicht auf die wirklichen Staaten. Statt nun einfach zu schließen: "mein Begriff ist falsch," sagt er: "Nein, es muß in der Wirklichkeit ein Anderes hinzukommen, das den reinen Staatsbegriff verändert" – und dieses Andere ist die Gesellschaft.'

¹²⁶ Ethbin Heinrich Costa, *Encyclopaedische Einleitung in ein System der Gesellschaftswissenschaft* (Wien, 1855).

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 106: 'Mit einem Worte, Staat und Gesellschaft fallen in dem Deutschland der Gegenwart sehr weit auseinander. Und wie es den schwungvollen Ideen des letzten Jahrhunderts ein Bedürfnis war, ideale Staaten zu bauen, so ist der epidemische gesunde Menschenverstand der Gegenwart nur zu sehr geneigt, die augenblicklichen thatsächlichen Zustände als normal und nothwendig zu begreifen.'

The German project to scientifically study society that emerged in the immediate aftermath of the 1848 revolution was thus a relatively short-lived phenomenon. The thinkers who had embarked on it were concerned to grasp the organic relationship between the different elements in society, especially the relationship between society and the state. Some efforts in this respect were successful. Riehl's notion of a science of society, for example, became well-known not only in Germany but also abroad.¹²⁸ Among other English writers, George Eliot engaged at length with Riehl's work on social science, reviewing it in the *Westminster Review* in 1856.¹²⁹ Others, however, were less successful. Stein's work did not see any positive reaction, and his mentor Mohl appeared to have entirely given up on the project of a 'science of society', which he had still been so enthusiastic about in the early 1850s. His 1859 work *Enzyklopädie der Staatswissenschaften* from 1859 did not discuss social issues in any length, and Mohl even in parts acknowledges Treitschke's critique.¹³⁰ Furthermore, Mohl in 1862 left his chair in Heidelberg and primarily dedicated the rest of his life to politics.

Treitschke's attack was arguably also responsible for delaying the rise of a sociological tradition in Germany.¹³¹ Sociology became a well established phenomenon in France and in England by the 1850s, with August Comte publishing his *Système de Politique Positive* (1851-54) and Herbert Spencer his *Social Statics* (1851).¹³² Following the demise of the movement towards a 'science of society' rooted in *Staatswissenschaft* that Stein, Mohl and others stood for in the 1850s, it

¹²⁸ Heinz Maus, 'Geschichte der Soziologie', in Werner Ziegenfuß (ed.), *Handbuch der Soziologie* (Stuttgart, 1956), pp. 1-120 (p. 19).

¹²⁹ George Eliot, 'The natural history of German life', *Westminster Review* (July 1856), pp. 51-72.

¹³⁰ See Robert von Mohl, *Enzyklopädie der Staatswissenschaften* (Tübingen, 1859). See also Erich Angermann, *Robert von Mohl (1799-1875): Leben und Werk eines altliberalen Staatsgelehrten* (Neuwied, 1962), pp. 376-78.

¹³¹ Maus, 'Geschichte der Soziologie', p. 19.

¹³² See Cheryl B. Welch, 'Social science from the French Revolution to positivism', in Gareth Stedman Jones (ed.), *The Cambridge history of nineteenth-century political thought* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 171-99. Auguste Comte, *Système de politique positive: ou, Traité de sociologie instituant la religion de l'humanité* (4 vols, Paris, 1851-54); Herbert Spencer, *Social statistics, or, The conditions essential to happiness specified, and the first of them developed* (London, 1851).

was not until the 1880s that Germans began develop their own social science again.¹³³

Politics and philosophy in the 1850s: Departure from Hegelianism

The most common objection commentators put forward with regards to Stein's *System der Staatswissenschaft* was his excessive use of Hegelian concepts. One of the main reasons why Stein's work failed to have a wider impact was that it used a philosophical language that was no longer current. In the course of the 1850s, a departure from Hegelianism took place. From the early 1850s, Hegel's idealist philosophy, blamed by many commentators for the failure of the revolutions of 1848, was no longer taught at universities and lost the hegemonic position it had had in the 1830s and 40s.¹³⁴ As Rudolf Haym, the author of the book *Hegel und seine Zeit* (1857) which attempted to demystify Hegel by locating him in his historical context, commented:

In the course of the revolution, which we have lived through, the abstract pathos of freedom translated into reality and was broken by this reality. During the reaction and the materialist move that followed, which in large extent dominates contemporary science and life, the opposite has asserted itself, a realism that is devoid of ideals.¹³⁵

¹³³ Maus, 'Geschichte der Soziologie', p. 12. Maus attributed the birth of German sociology to the publication of Ludwig Gumpłowicz's *Grundriß der Soziologie* in 1885, followed by Ferdinand Tönnies's *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* in 1889.

¹³⁴ See Klaus Christian Köhnke, *The rise of neo-Kantianism: German academic philosophy between idealism and positivism*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge, 1991), Part II 'Philosophy in the post-March period and the neo-Kantian programmata (1849-1865)'. This was also a topic that Karl Grün, the leading representative of German humanist socialism in the 1840s, explored in his late work *Die Philosophie in der Gegenwart: Realismus und Idealismus* (Leipzig, 1876). After serving as a representative in the Prussian National Assembly in 1848, Grün spent the 1850s in exile in Brussels. After a brief return to Germany in early 1860s, he later moved to Vienna and dedicated his efforts to editing Ludwig Feuerbach's papers. See Karl Grün (ed.), *Ludwig Feuerbach's philosophische Charakterentwicklung: Sein Briefwechsel und Nachlass* (2 vols, Leipzig, 1874).

¹³⁵ R. Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit: Vorlesungen über Entwicklung, Wesen und Werth der Hegel'schen Philosophie* (Berlin, 1857), p. 464: 'In der Revolution, die wir erlebt haben, übersetzte sich in die Wirklichkeit und scheiterte an dieser Wirklichkeit das abstrakte Freiheitspathos. In der nachfolgenden Reaction und in dem materialistischen Zuge, welcher zu einem großen Theil Wissenschaft und Leben der Gegenwart beherrschte, macht sich die andere Einseitigkeit, der idealitätslose Realismus geltend.'

Seen against the background of this cultural shift, it is not surprising that Stein's Hegelian thought, despite the innovations he brought to it, did not resonate with the wider public in the 1850s.

Instead of reflecting on what had 'gone wrong' in 1848, many intellectuals in the 1850s in their desperation turned to the opposite extreme. Hegelian idealism was replaced with materialism and realism. The 1850s also saw a surge in popularity of the philosophy of one of Hegel's most astute critics, Arthur Schopenhauer. His *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, originally published in 1819, was republished in 1859, a time when his philosophical pessimism was highly popular.¹³⁶ The new goal of philosophy was seen to be to study true life. As Karl Sigmund Barach put it in *Die gegenwärtige Aufgabe der Philosophie* (1858) philosophy should instead of postulating ideals seek to understand nature.¹³⁷

This reversal of trends translated into a widespread preoccupation with natural science in the 1850s. Many books on science for a popular audience were published, such as Jacob Moleschott's *Der Kreislauf des Lebens* (1852) or Ludwig Büchner's *Kraft und Stoff* (1855).¹³⁸ The sense was that not philosophy, but science, could explain life and give reassurance in a time of uncertainty. As Burrow writes, 'It was the promise of a wholly unified, scientific account of all existence that underlay some of the most aggressively confident 'materialist' pronouncements of the 1850s and 1860s.'¹³⁹

Yet it is easy to see how 'science' was in this context no more than a shallow replacement activity. That the interest in science served as an alternative outlet for political radicalism was vividly illustrated by the cover of the popular science journal *Die Natur* which began to appear in 1852: it depicted an erupting volcano, an

¹³⁶ Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (3rd edn, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1859).

¹³⁷ Karl Sigmund Barach, *Die gegenwärtige Aufgabe der Philosophie, aus der bisherigen Stellung der Philosophie zum Leben und den Forderungen des Lebens entwickelt* (Vienna, 1858), pp. 243-244.

¹³⁸ Jacob Moleschott, *Der Kreislauf des Lebens: physiologische Antworten auf Libig's Chemische Briefe* (Mainz, 1852); Ludwig Büchner, *Kraft und Stoff: empirisch-naturphilosophische Studien: In allgemein-verständlicher Darstellung* (Frankfurt am Main, 1855).

¹³⁹ Burrow, *Crisis of Reason*, p. 35.

imagine that had previously been used by revolutionaries.¹⁴⁰ It was also no coincidence that such a move to popular science was particularly strong in Germany, the former home of idealism.¹⁴¹ For many German socialists, science became a substitute activity in the period after 1848. Arnold Ruge, for example wrote to his son in a time of deep personal uncertainty and disillusionment in the early 1850s: ‘This gives me solace in this bad time [...] Please continue to study hard, especially the natural sciences.’¹⁴² Moses Hess also spent the 1850s with scientific studies.¹⁴³ The author of an 1852 pamphlet captured this trend among German socialists quite accurately when he wrote: ‘The mysteries of religion have now become problems of physics and geology, and one searches for their solution not in dogmatics but in the cosmos.’¹⁴⁴ Rather than being a profound new philosophy, the turn to popular science in the 1850s represented an emotion-driven trend that ultimately proved short-lived. Already by the end of the decade, materialism was being attacked as crude, and the 1860s saw the rise of neo-Kantianism, a philosophical tendency that, at least to an extent, revived idealism.¹⁴⁵

The superficiality of the turn to materialism in this period was apparent to Lorenz Stein. He consciously refused to succumb to this trend and held on to idealist Hegelian philosophy because he genuinely believed it was the right, distinctly German method to come to terms with modern politics. Materialism was for Stein just another French import which German intellectuals followed for a lack of

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁴² ‘310. Arnold Ruge to Richard Ruge, September 1853’, in Arnold Ruge, *Briefwechsel und Tagebuchblätter aus den Jahren 1825-1880*, ed. by Paul Nerrlich (2 vols, Berlin, 1886), II 1848-1880, p. 136: ‘Dies ist mir ein Trost in dieser schlechten Zeit [...] Versäume nichts, Dich gründlich zu unterrichten, und vor allem studiere die Naturwissenschaften.’

¹⁴³ He wrote to the scientist Jacob Moleschott in 1852 announcing his turn to science following his ‘retirement’ from socialism. See ‘Moses Hess to Jacob Moleschott, 18 December 1852’, in Moses Hess, *Briefwechsel*, ed. by Edmund Silberner (s-Gravenhage, 1959), pp. 290-92. Cf. Chapter 3, note 72.

¹⁴⁴ [Anon.], *Die Triarier D. F. Strauss, L. Feuerbach und A. Ruge und ihr Kampf für die moderne Geistesfreiheit: Ein Beitrag zur letztvergangenen Deutschen Geistesbewegung. Von einem Epigonen* (Kassel, 1852), p. 144: ‘Die Mysterien der Religion sind jetzt zu Problemen der Physik und Geologie geworden, und nicht in der Dogmatik, sondern im Kosmos sucht man ihre Lösung.’

¹⁴⁵ See Köhnke, *The rise of neo-Kantianism*.

confidence. He ridiculed those who believed it was a key to understanding modern society in his essay ‘Zur Physiologie der Städtebildung’ from 1861. Stein there mocked the recent tendency to seek ‘natural’ explanations for all kinds of phenomena.¹⁴⁶ He wrote that in most cases such excessively ‘factual’ explanations were inappropriate and utterly naïve. They equalled looking for the ‘Kosmos im Theecirkel’ (the cosmos in the tea club).¹⁴⁷ Stein predicted that the current obsession with natural science was a mere trend, an intellectual fashion that would soon decline. As he wrote, ‘the pendulum has not yet reached the highest point as far as this factual movement is concerned; but it will reach it, and will then swing back even more vehemently to the idealist side.’¹⁴⁸ In his essay he defended the insights gained (in this instance into the formation of cities) from historical, economic and geopolitical arguments as opposed to naturalistic ones.

Stein was not alone in his scepticism about the trend towards ‘nature’ and the reluctance to abandon idealist philosophy. He was joined by the figure that later on became more than anyone else associated with materialist philosophy: Karl Marx. In London exile after 1848, Marx was not only struggling to sustain a political party around him, but also confronted profound intellectual challenges.¹⁴⁹ Jonathan Sperber describes the predicament he faced after the revolution of 1848 – that was strikingly similar to Stein’s:

[Marx’s] socialism was *wissenschaftlich*, but the *Wissenschaft* he had in mind in making these claims was the Hegelian scholarship that he had joined at the University of Berlin and that was still intellectually dominant in the 1840s. The rise of positivism by the 1850s and 1860s was producing a very different form of *Wissenschaft*. Marx, who along with Engels followed scientific developments closely, was very much aware of this intellectual transformation. Could his theories continue to be *wissenschaftlich* while still being

¹⁴⁶ L.S., ‘Zur Physiologie der Städtebildung’, *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1861), IV: 57-83 (p. 57).

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 61: ‘Der Pendel hat in der Richtung der Thatsachen noch seine Höhe nicht erreicht; aber er wird sie erreichen, und mit um so größerer Gewalt dann wieder nach der idealen Seite hin schwingen.’

¹⁴⁹ On Marx in exile see Christine Lattek, *Revolutionary Refugees: German Socialism in Britain, 1840-1860* (London, 2002).

Hegelian, or would he jump on the positivist bandwagon as well?¹⁵⁰

As Sperber highlights, Marx, just like Stein, faced the challenge of adjusting his Hegelian philosophical convictions to the changed political climate. As late as in his *Das Kapital* from the late 1860s, Marx insisted on the value of the dialectical method and denounced those who saw Hegel as a ‘dead dog’.¹⁵¹ Others too remained convinced by Hegelianism in the 1850s. The philosopher and Hegel scholar Karl Ludwig Michelet, for example, remained loyal to his subject and continued to defend Hegel’s philosophy in his association, the *Philosophische Gesellschaft zu Berlin*. On his initiative, a Hegel statue was also set up in Berlin in 1871.¹⁵²

Because he was so confident of the continuing relevance of Hegelian philosophy, Stein was also not afraid to defend his work against the criticism it had received. He responded to his critics, especially to Roessler, in his works from the end of the decade, the *Lehrbuch der Volkswirtschaft* (1858), and the *Lehrbuch der Finanzwissenschaft* (1860). Stein in these books, which were primarily intended as textbooks for his students, defended his ‘systematic’ approach, and repeated his conviction that political economy needed to be understood as part of a holistic system. As Stein polemically put it in the preface to the 1858 book:

It is a puzzling contradiction, to be explained only historically, that the scientific system current in our country, has its greatest enemy here in the accommodation to an arbitrary order; it is even more puzzling that this accommodation becomes, even among significant men, variably the accusation of a misunderstood materialism, or the inability to digest systematic thought, or even, as with Mr

¹⁵⁰ Jonathan Sperber, *Karl Marx: A nineteenth-century life* (New York, NY, 2013), p. 390.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 395.

¹⁵² See Adolf Lasson, ‘Michelet, Karl Ludwig’, in ADB (1910), pp. 842-44 <<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd11858216X.html>> [accessed 19 August 2014].

Rößler in his *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, an unclear fear of the laws of the movement of real life.¹⁵³

The 1860 *Lehrbuch der Finanzwissenschaft* also confidently stated Stein's controversial objectives: first to clarify the 'organic basic concepts', especially relating to taxation, and, second, to contribute to a comparative financial science, another countermove to purely mathematical approaches to the subject.

In contrast to *System der Staatswissenschaft*, the two books saw a rather positive reception. Julius Kautz in his *Die geschichtliche Entwicklung der National-Oekonomik und ihrer Literatur* (1860), for example, praised the theoretical insights which Stein provided in these works, for example on the nature of trade crises, credit, protective tariffs and free trade.¹⁵⁴ Especially Stein's contribution to 'financial science' were highly valuable, making his 1860 work 'indisputably one of recent time's most solid achievement in this field'.¹⁵⁵ Yet even Kautz could not fail to notice the problems generated by Stein's Hegelian style which allegedly made parts of the work unintelligible. Kautz also commented on Stein 'often far too precipitous protuberant addiction to originality' which led him to arrogantly dismiss the work of others.¹⁵⁶

Stein's focus on more specific economic topics in the *Lehrbuch der Volkswirtschaft* (1858) and the *Lehrbuch der Finanzwissenschaft* (1860) was probably a partly concession to the changed intellectual climate of the time. The Europe-wide financial crisis of 1857-58 had highlighted the need to better understand

¹⁵³ L. Stein, *Lehrbuch der Volkswirtschaft: Zum Gebrauche für Vorlesungen und für das Selbststudium* (Vienna, 1858), p. vi: 'Es ist ein wunderlicher, nur historisch zu erklärender Widerspruch, daß das wissenschaftliche System, das bei uns allenthalben gilt, hier seinen größten Gegner in der Gewöhnung an willkürliche Ordnung hat; wunderlicher noch, daß sich diese Gewöhnung auch unter bedeutenden Maennern bald zum Vorwurf eines unverstandenen Materialismus, bald zur Unfähigkeit der Verarbeitung systematischer Gedanken, bald sogar, wie bei Herrn Rößler in seiner Allgemeinen Staatslehre, zu einer unklaren Angst vor der Gesetzmäßigkeit der Bewegung des wirklichen Lebens steigert.'

¹⁵⁴ Julius Kautz, *Die geschichtliche Entwicklung der National-Oekonomik und ihrer Literatur* (Vienna, 1860), pp. 699: 'eigenthümlichen philosophischen Methode'.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 700: 'Unstreitig als eine der gediegensten Leistungen der neuesten Zeit auf diesem Gebiete bezeichnet werden kann.'

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.: 'die oft viel zu schroff hervortretende Originalitäts-Sucht und die die Leistungen anderer geringerschätzende Selbstüberhebung desselben.'

economics. Yet, Stein combined these concessions with a continuing reliance on Hegelian thought. While there had been a marked retreat from Hegelian ideas in the 1850s, what is certain is that it had not been accompanied by the emergence of an obvious substitute trend.

Conclusion: New socialisms

Coming to terms with the failure of 1848 during the *Nachmärz* was far from a straightforward process. That the experience of the revolutions and their aftermath had undoubtedly changed the meaning of radical politics is illustrated by the following anecdotal account from Alexander Herzen's memoir. Herzen described the arrival of Mikhail Bakunin, an enthusiastic Russian participant in the 1848 revolution, in his London home in 1860, following a dramatic escape from more than ten years in Siberian exile:

The European reaction did not exist for Bakunin, the bitter years from 1848 to 1858 did not exist for him either; of them he had but a brief, far-away, faint knowledge. He had read of them in Siberia, just as he had read... about the Punic Wars and of the fall of the Roman Empire [...] The events of 1848, on the contrary, were all about him [...] To Bakunin [...] these were affairs of yesterday; they were all still ringing in his ears and flashing before his eyes.¹⁵⁷

When Bakunin attempted to continue his socialist project from the 1840s in this new climate he quickly met with resistance and was ostracised as an 'anarchist'. His case demonstrated that in order to have success as a socialist from the 1850s onwards one needed to follow a very different strategy than before 1848.

Yet what exactly this new socialist strategy consisted in was not fully obvious to anyone at the time. Trial and error was a large part of the process that defined the period after 1848. Socialist ideas had not disappeared, but begun to express

¹⁵⁷Alexander Herzen, *My past and thoughts: The memoirs of Alexander Herzen*, trans. by Constance Garnett, revised by Humphrey Higgs, introduction by Isaiah Berlin, abridged, preface and notes by Dwight MacDonald (London, 1974), pp. 566.

themselves in new shapes. It was no longer subversive radicals alone that campaigned for more social harmony and state-led labour organisation. Interest in the social became more mainstream in the period and also more pragmatic. The changes that occurred were in many cases subtle, but significant, shaping the meaning of 'social policy' and the 'welfare state' in a lasting way. A concerted effort to create a 'science of society' by a number of leading intellectuals, such as Stein, Riehl and Mohl, meanwhile resulted in failure.

The 1850s were a decade full of confusing and in part contradictory developments. This is perhaps a central reason why this period has so far been only poorly understood by scholars.¹⁵⁸ No single character captured the challenges of the period better than Lorenz Stein. He was, on the one hand, at the forefront of the new developments, and, on the other hand, like many veterans of 1840s socialism, a victim of the changed political and intellectual climate of the *Nachmärz*. Stein had predicted many of the developments in socialist thought that happened in the 1850s, such as the departure from polarizing political labels, and the merging of socialist ideas into the wide administrative structures of the state. Yet that did not save him from producing work such as the *System der Staatswissenschaft* that were deemed outdated by his contemporaries. For him too, adjusting to changed personal and political conditions was a matter of trial and error. There was certainly a strong element of opportunistic accommodation in Stein's behaviour in the 1850s. Yet, in other respects Stein was truly ahead of his time, and had profound insights into the politics of his age.

¹⁵⁸ Burrow, *Crisis of Reason* is a relatively recent attempt to write about the intellectual changes of the 1850s that leaves much unexplored. The classic Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche: The revolution in nineteenth-century thought*, trans. by David E. Green (London, 1965), pays little attention the broader cultural impact of this philosophical transition.



Figure 4.2. Lithograph of Lorenz Stein in 1859

Dirk Blasius, *Deutsche Gelehrtenpolitik in der Habsburger Monarchie* (Kiel, 2007), p. 86; original in Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Wien, Bildarchiv.

CHAPTER 5

Lorenz Stein and social democracy, 1862-1872

The 1860s saw the emergence of an organised workers' movement in Germany. In 1863, Ferdinand Lassalle founded the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein* (ADAV), the first political workers' organisation in Germany. Its primary focus was a campaign for universal suffrage. By 1869, it was rivalled by August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht's more overtly revolutionary *Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands* (SDAP). The 1860s were also a formative period for German socialism in another sense. Otto von Bismarck became prime minister of Prussia in 1862 and especially in his first years in power took a strong interest in social issues. In the course of the decade, a number of leading figures on the crossroads of academia and politics, like Gustav Schmoller and Adolph Wagner, developed an interest in social issues and social reform. The efforts of these so-called *Kathedersozialisten* culminated in the foundation of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* in 1872, an institution that in the newly founded German Empire served as an advocate of both social research and social legislation, and ultimately helped bring about Bismarck's social insurance laws in the 1880s.

It thus looked as if this period brought the fulfilment of Lorenz Stein's long-standing intellectual and political goals. The importance of social issues was increasingly acknowledged, and it was notably the state that was addressing them. Yet, the 1860s were also the time when Stein came increasingly under attack. His main work from the period, the *Verwaltungslehre* (1865-68), while honoured by the Austrian Emperor with a knighthood for Stein, failed to have a significant impact in either the academic world or politics. Later histories of German 'state socialism' would admit that Stein provided important inspiration to the emergence of a social state in Germany, yet failed to have a direct impact on its creation. As one commentator put it, Stein was 'the actual founder of state socialism in Germany [...]

the founder! Nothing more.’¹ This was allegedly because ‘Stein had gradually isolated himself [...] He ignored Marx and did not understand Lassalle’s agitation.’²

However, this focus on Marx and Lassalle, retrospectively the canonical names of German socialism, has obscured the extent to which Stein did retain an interest in socialism and its development in Germany in the 1860s. Continuing the line of argument introduced in the last chapter, that Stein by no means abandoned but merely modified the shape of his preoccupation with socialism in the decades after 1848, this chapter re-assesses his relationship to socialism in the 1860s, examining first his role in the emerging German social democratic movement, and then highlighting the deeply socialist dimension of Stein’s *Verwaltungslehre*. Yet, I also assess the reasons why Stein failed to have a wider impact in this time. Various new methodological trends challenged Stein’s distinct approach to the social question – which he continued to defend. It was ultimately the political developments of the period, the rocky road to German unification, that had the most decisive effect on his role in politics and academia. Stein’s thinking on socialism had always been closely entwined with his nationalism, and his desire to create a distinctly German contribution to socialist thought. By the early 1870s, Stein had effectively lost his German identity, and this had a decisive effect on his vision of a ‘science of society’.

Stein and the rise of a workers’ movement in Germany

The first formal German workers’ organisation, the *Zentralverein für das Wohl der Arbeitenden Klassen*, dated back to the mid-1840s. Although its membership declined sharply in the 1850s, it served as the starting point for important developments in the time after 1848. Stein, as it turned out, proved right in his prediction that Germany, which had been slow to develop its own socialist tradition

¹ Erich Thier, *Rodbertus, Lassalle, Adolph Wagner: Ein Beitrag zur Theorie und Geschichte des deutschen Staatssozialismus* (Jena, 1930), p. 13: ‘zum eigentlichen Begründer des Staatssozialismus in Deutschland [...] Zum Begründer! Mehr nicht.’

² Ibid., p. 14: ‘Stein nach und nach sich Abseits stellte [...] Er hat Marx ignoriert und Lassalles Agitation nicht verstanden.’

in the first half of the nineteenth century, would after the experience of 1848 ‘catch up’ with other European nations and become a pioneer of socialistic change. By the end of the 1860s, Germany had developed, as one of the first countries in Europe, a fully-fledged working-class political party – a puzzling development, as Thomas Nipperdey observes, as it was at the time still one of the continent’s least industrialized nations.³ How far did these new movements draw on Stein’s socialist thought, and what did he make of them?

In his 1852 essay on socialism in Germany, Stein had been dismissive of the *Zentralverein für das Wohl der Arbeitenden Klassen*, rejecting its principally ameliorative programme and its lack of ambition for more far-reaching societal change.⁴ Yet, by the early 1860s, he came to support its measures because the *Verein* had by that time radically rebranded itself. In the 1850s it had begun to present itself as a scientific research institution, a move that strongly appealed to Stein.⁵ Important innovation in the *Verein* came from Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch, a lawyer, who in 1848 had been a member of Prussian National Assembly for the ‘Linkes Zentrum’.⁶ Originally from Saxony, where despite his privileged upbringing Schulze-Delitzsch had been exposed to social problems, he dedicated his efforts after the revolution to establishing so-called *Selbsthilfvereine* and *Genossenschaften*. The principle behind these institutions was self-help and the rejection of state intervention. These organisations provided financial assistance in cases of sickness or death, as well as

³ Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck 1800-1866*, trans. by Daniel Nolan (Dublin, 1996), p. 654.

⁴ Anon. [Lorenz Stein], ‘Der Socialismus in Deutschland’, *Die Gegenwart: Eine encyclopädische Darstellung der neusten Zeitgeschichte für alle Stände*, 7 (1852), 517-63; repr. in Lorenz Stein, *Schriften zum Sozialismus, 1848, 1852, 1854*, ed. by Eckart Pankoke (Darmstadt, 1974), pp. 16-62 (p. 45).

⁵ See Jürgen Reulecke, ‘Die Anfänge der organisierten Sozialreform in Deutschland’, in Rüdiger vom Bruch (ed.), *“Weder Kommunismus noch Kapitalismus”: Bürgerliche Sozialreform in Deutschland vom Vormärz bis zur Ära Adenauer* (Munich, 1985), pp. 21-59 (pp. 37-38).

⁶ On Schulze-Delitzsch see Rita Aldenhoff-Hübinger, ‘Schulze-Delitzsch, Franz Hermann’, NDB, 23 (2007), pp. 731-732 < <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118762575.html> > [accessed 17 April 2014].

loans, consumer goods, and practical assistance with a range of issues.⁷ For the most part, they were used by skilled craftsmen rather than factory workers. By the early 1860s, there were several hundred such institutions across the German states.⁸ One of Schulze-Delitzsch's principal goals was to also to gain legal recognition for the *Vereine*. The Prussian *Genossenschaftsgesetz* of 1867, which gave these institutions more independence and protection from state interference, drew on his ideas.⁹

Schulze-Delitzsch's legal project resonated strongly with Stein, who had in *System der Staatswissenschaft* argued that social factors played a significant role in the creation of new legislation. The evolution of the *Vereine* in the 1850s also proved to be crucial to the development of his thinking on socialism. Stein commented on the associational movement in an essay of 1862, where he argued that associations were an important addition to the structures of the state. He saw in them a symbol of the power of the administration and an important expression of freedom. They were after all voluntary associations that were created solely in response to citizens' distinct needs.¹⁰ Stein pointed out that while they had their origins in medieval guilds, such associations had especially begun to flourish in recent times. This notably changed the way the state could address social conflict. Stein wrote:

We can conclude that [associations have] in general evolved into a great and powerful system of self-administration of public interest, whereas they previously only encompassed individual areas of it; that they naturally follow the character of the social order of the present, and in their main capacity turn to economic interests; and that they finally in this main capacity begin to take up the social question [...] in a both energetic and systematic manner. It is therefore beyond

⁷ Hermann Beck, 'Working-class politics at the crossroads of conservatism, liberalism, and socialism', in David E. Barclay and Eric D. Weitz (eds), *Between reform and revolution: German socialism and communism from 1840 to 1900* (New York and Oxford, 1998), pp. 63-85 (p. 64).

⁸ Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck*, p. 655.

⁹ See Aldenhoff-Hübinger, 'Schulze-Delitzsch, Franz Hermann'.

¹⁰ Lorenz Stein, 'Studien über Vereinswesen und Vereinsrecht', in *Österreichische Vierteljahrsschrift für Rechts- und Staatswissenschaft* (Haimel's *Vierteljahrsschrift für Rechtswissenschaft*), 9 (1862), 141-94.

question that the associations of our times are highly relevant to the general development of the state.¹¹

Stein's endorsement of Schulze-Delitzsch's project was in many ways surprising as there were other, decisive differences between them. Schulze-Delitzsch was a liberal who rejected state involvement in social issues, and was critical of the 'bureaucratic state' which Stein defended and theorized in his work. In liberal opinion, workers' grievances were transitional problems that could be remedied by 'bourgeois' means such as loans and education. For the proponents of this movement, social tensions were not engrained into the nature of the modern state itself, as Stein believed.

Despite the success of the *Vereine*, opposition to the liberal idea of workers' welfare soon emerged in Germany. Dissatisfied with its lack of political ambitions, in 1863, members of the Leipzig central committee of the *Arbeiterbildungsverein* approached Ferdinand Lassalle, a well-known agitator for the political emancipation of the working class, and asked him to formulate a new programme. In May 1863, Lassalle oversaw the foundation of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein* (ADAV). Its main goal was universal suffrage, as its members believed that only if everyone, including the lower orders, had access to political power, social justice could be brought about. This differed substantially from liberal political goals, and it has been suggested that the split between the liberal movement and the workers in Germany in the 1860s weakened the workers' movement in the long term.¹²

The early 1860s were marked by heated polemical exchanges between Schulze-Delitzsch's and Lassalle's camps. Lassalle was open to cooperation with the state, and even favoured a concept of 'social monarchy'. In 1863, he corresponded

¹¹ Ibid., p. 157: 'Fassen wir nun das bisher über den Character des Vereinswesens der Gegenwart gesagte kurz zusammen, so können wir sagen, daß es sich im Allgemeinen zu einem großen und mächtigen Systeme der Selbstverwaltung öffentlicher Interessen entfaltet, während es früher nur einzelne Gebiete desselben umfaßte. daß es naturgemäß dem Character der gesellschaftlichen Ordnung unserer Gegenwart sich anschließt, und mit seiner Hauptrichtung den wirthschaftlichen Interessen sich zuwendet; und daß es endlich in dieser Hauptrichtung zugleich die sociale Frage zur Hebung der niederen Classen eben so energisch wie systematisch aufzunehmen beginnt. Es ist daher keine Frage, daß das Vereinswesen unserer Zeit viel höher steht, als es je gestanden, und daß es daher schon vom Standpunkte der allgemeinen staatlichen Entwicklung der höchsten Beachtung werth ist.'

¹² See Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck*, p. 666.

and met in person with Otto von Bismarck to advise him on social policy.¹³ For that, liberal critics accused Lassalle of drawing workers in the arms of the reactions. Lassalle's name eventually became firmly linked with the idea of social democracy and the use of the state for socialist purposes. He was a deeply popular and charismatic figure who managed to create a personality cult around him, fuelled by his early death in a duel in 1864.

What were Lassalle's intellectual sources? Like virtually all radicals of his generation, he had been deeply influenced by Hegel's thought. In 1848, he had called on the citizens of Berlin to refuse tax payment and was as a result arrested and imprisoned until the end of the revolution. After his release, he remained in the Rhineland where he became involved in workers' clubs, whilst also continuing to study Hegelian philosophy. In one of his principal theoretical texts, *Über den besonderen Zusammenhang der gegenwärtigen Geschichtsperiode mit der Idee des Arbeiterstandes* from 1862, he described the political and social development of mankind, concluding that the period after 1848 was bound to see a proletarian revolution and the victory of the fourth estate. The idea of the state which he evoked in this text was deeply Hegelian. Lassalle spoke of the state's 'ethical nature' which could only be preserved if the proletariat gained control over political power.¹⁴

It is extremely likely that Lassalle knew Lorenz Stein's work.¹⁵ Yet, as Lassalle's biographer Hermann Oncken perceptively commented on this topic:

[In Stein's work] Lassalle's theory and practice seem to be prefigured more than anywhere else. A whole chain of connections leads from Stein's to Lassalle's train of thought. One cannot doubt that the latter knew his predecessor; it does not mean anything that Stein is never mentioned in his writings and speeches, given his method of citation. And yet I

¹³ See Gustav Mayer (ed.), *Bismarck und Lassalle: Ihr Briefwechsel und ihre Gespräche* (Berlin, 1928).

¹⁴ Ferdinand Lassalle, *Gesammelte Reden und Schriften*, ed. by Eduard Bernstein (12 vols, Berlin, 1919-20), II (1919): *Die Verfassungsreden. Das Arbeiterprogramm und die anschliessenden Verteidigungsreden*, 198: 'Sittliche Natur des Staates'.

¹⁵ Cf. Eva Mayer, *Lorenz von Stein und die Anfänge des Sozialismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt, 1965), p. 112.

would caution against the view [...] that he simply borrowed his notion of history from Stein. Stein's work contained the conceptual summary of everything that the ideas of French and German socialism aspired to until the forties: these were ideas that Lassalle could have also absorbed directly at their source. Therefore it would go too far to establish such straightforward connections.¹⁶

A major similarity between Lassalle and Stein was certainly their continued reliance on Hegelian ideas in the 1850s and 1860s. Yet, in his economic views, which focused on a rejection of Ricardian 'mechanics', Lassalle was more influenced by Johann Karl Rodbertus whose theories he promoted in his work *Herr Bastiat-Schulze oder Capital und Arbeit* (1863-64).¹⁷

As far as Stein's opinion of Lassalle is concerned, evidence is also scarce. The library Stein owned at the time of his death contained virtually all of Lassalle's writings. Yet they were predominantly editions from the 1870s, which might suggest that Stein discovered Lassalle belatedly.¹⁸ In the 1860s he did not comment on him and his success, with the exception of one brief and insignificant reference to one of Lassalle's texts.¹⁹ A major reason why Stein did not take much notice of Lassalle in the early 1860s was likely the latter's political position. A distinctly pro-Prussian supporter of Bismarck, Stein, who had by then become an Austrian, could not be

¹⁶ Hermann Oncken, *Lassalle: Zwischen Marx und Bismarck*, ed. by Felix Hirsch (5th edn, Stuttgart, 1966), p. 206: 'Theorie und Praxis Lassalles scheinen hier am ehesten vorgebildet zu sein. Eine ganze Kette von Berührungen führt von der Gedankengängen Steins zu Lassalle hinüber. Dass dieser seinen Vorläufer gekannt hat, kann nicht zweifelhaft sein; wenn Stein in seinen Schriften und Reden niemals erwähnt wird, so besagt dies bei seiner durchgängigen Zitiermethode nichts. Trotzdem würde ich abraten, das gegenseitige Verhältnis in der Weise zu bestimmen, dass er sein Geschichtsbild einfach von Stein entlehnt habe. In Stein haben wir die begriffliche Zusammenfassung alles dessen, was die Idee des französischen und deutschen Sozialismus bis zu den vierziger Jahren erstrebten: Ideen, die Lassalle auch unmittelbar an der Quelle in sich aufgenommen hatte. Da geht es zu weit, klipp und klar Abhängigkeiten zu konstruieren.'

¹⁷ Ferdinand Lassalle, *Herr Bastiat-Schulze von Delitzsch, der ökonomische Julian: oder Capital und Arbeit* (Berlin, 1864)

¹⁸ See Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek, Kiel: Nachlass Lorenz von Stein, II. Lorenz von Stein's library, 4.5.

¹⁹ See Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart, 1865-68), VII (1868): *Innere Verwaltungslehre. Drittes Hauptgebiet. Die wirtschaftliche Verwaltung. (Volkswirtschaftspflege.) Erster Theil. Die Entwährung. Grundentlastung, Ablösung, Gemeinheitstheilung, Enteignung und Staatsnothrecht in England, Frankreich und Deutschland*, 222.

sympathetic to him. The major difference between Stein and Lassalle ultimately lay in their personalities. The quiet, shy, and probably awkward scholar Stein could not rival the great personal appeal and ability for self-promotion that Lassalle was known for.

Not only Lassalle, but also others involved in organised socialism in the 1860s, were increasingly turning to Rodbertus's writings – and not Stein's. Rodbertus became an economic authority and major theorist of 'state socialism' in this period. To what did he owe this sudden fame? We encountered Rodbertus in chapter 1 as one of the few Germans who paid academic attention to the social question before 1840. It was his role in the 1848 revolution, as a leading representative of the *Linkes Zentrum* in the Prussian national assembly and briefly minister for education, that made Rodbertus more widely known.²⁰ In the early 1850s, Rodbertus articulated his economic views in his three 'Social letters to von Kirchmann'.²¹ One of his core convictions was that Ricardo's claim regarding the adjustment of wages was false and that, because of what his admirer Lassalle coined the 'iron law of wages', workers were destined to remain in a position of misery unless the state intervened on their behalf.²² In an unpublished fourth letter, Rodbertus also reflected on the possibility of 'communism' as an economic order. Rather than a completely egalitarian society, he envisaged a 'communism of production' (and not consumption).²³ Rodbertus was a supporter of the monarchy, and like Stein envisaged a 'social monarchy' as the only solution to the social problems endemic to modern industrial society. His rise to fame in the 1860s remains surprising. He was certainly a less systematic and thorough theorist than Stein, who never mentioned him or his work.

²⁰ On Rodbertus see Moritz Wirth, 'Rodbertus, Johann Karl', ADB (1889), pp. 740-63 <<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118745638.html> > [accessed 14 April 2014].

²¹ Rodbertus, *Soziale Briefe an von Kirchmann* (3 vols, Berlin, 1850-51).

²² Cf. Wirth, 'Rodbertus, Johann Karl'.

²³ See Udo Endbring-Romang, *Karl Rodbertus (1805-1875): Sozialismus, Demokratie und Sozialreform. Studien zu Leben und Werk* (Pfaffenweiler, 1990), pp. 135-38.

Rodbertus's influence was also acknowledged by Hermann Wagener, a central figure in the development of German state socialism in the 1860s. Wagner was Bismarck's advisor on social issues between 1862 and 1873. Deeply religious and a lawyer by training, he turned to journalism, editing the conservative *Kreuzzeitung* after 1848, and entered politics in the mid-1850s. During his time as Bismarck's advisor he composed countless memoranda on social issues and served as a mediator between the state and the workers' movement. It was Wagener who initiated Bismarck's meetings with Lassalle.²⁴ August Bebel fittingly called him the 'royal Prussian court socialist' ('königlich Preussischer Hofsozialist').²⁵ In the 1870s, he also befriended Rodbertus and later edited his *Nachlass*.²⁶

As well as being close to Rodbertus, there is evidence that Wagener was strongly influenced by Stein's thought. Wagener's central concept was the notion of a 'social monarchy'. In the 1855 draft programme for the Prussian conservative party he wrote, in a language that was strongly reminiscent of Stein's arguments in his work of 1848 and 1850: 'The entire monarchy will henceforth either become an empty shadow or despotism or go under in a republic, unless it develops the high ethical courage to become a monarchy of social reform.'²⁷ References to Stein can also be found in his principal theoretical work, *Die Lösung der sozialen Frage vom Standpunkt der Wirklichkeit und Praxis* (1878). Wagener, who published the work anonymously, there admitted that he and Stein agreed in their interpretation of the social question and its historical origins.²⁸ Although Stein never ended up having a

²⁴ See Wolfgang Saile, *Hermann Wagener und sein Verhältnis zu Bismarck: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des konservativen Sozialismus* (Tübingen, 1958) which reprints some of these memoranda.

²⁵ Cited in Hermann Beck, *The origins of the authoritarian welfare state in Prussia: Conservatives, bureaucracy, and the social question, 1815-70* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1995), p. 112.

²⁶ *Aus Rodbertus' Nachlass*, ed. by Hermann Wagener (Minden, 1886).

²⁷ Quoted in Klaus Hornung, 'Preußischer Konservatismus und Soziale Frage: Hermann Wagener (1815-1889)', in Hans-Christof Kraus (ed.), *Konservative Politiker in Deutschland: Eine Auswahl biographischer Porträts aus zwei Jahrhunderten* (Berlin, 1995), pp. 157-83 (p. 176): 'Alles Königtum wird fortan entweder ein leerer Schatten oder eine Despotie werden oder untergehen in Republik, wenn er nicht den hohen sittlichen Mut hat, ein Königtum der sozialen Reform zu werden.'

²⁸ Anon. [Hermann Wagener], *Die Lösung der sozialen Frage vom Standpunkt der Wirklichkeit und Praxis – Von einem praktischen Staatsmanne* (Bielefeld and Leipzig, 1878), p. 156.

direct impact on Prussian social policy, via Wagner his ideas therefore still played a part in this tradition.

By the mid-1860s, it was clear that in one major way Stein's prediction regarding the development of German socialism had come true. In the aftermath of 1848, he had argued that Germany had to achieve national unity before it could turn to the creation of socialism. Indeed, the emerging German social democratic movement was deeply affected by disagreement on national issues. As Beck writes, 'it was not a social issue, but the different visions of the resolution of the German question that divided the workers' movement.'²⁹ Schulze-Delitzsch, for example, was an ardent nationalist and co-founder of the *Deutscher Nationalverein* in 1859, which he used to mobilise workers for national issues. Lassalle was also distinctly pro-Prussian. This explains why a rival socialist party came into existence in Germany. In summer 1863, the *Verband Deutscher Arbeiter-Vereine* (VDAV), headed by figures with anti-Prussian and pro-Austrian views, was founded in opposition to Lassalle's ADAV. In 1866, it merged with the *Volkspartei*, the major anti-Prussian party in Germany. By 1869 this translated into the foundation of the *Sozialdemokratische Deutsche Arbeiter-Partei* (SDAP), under the leadership of August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht who were also close to Marx. The new party's sphere of dominance came to be south Germany and Saxony, while the ADAV predominated in the north.³⁰ Liebknecht and Bebel ended up in prison in 1872, and it was there that Bebel, as he writes in his memoir, read Lorenz Stein's work.³¹

This entanglement in national issues was also the reason why the International Workingmen's Association, founded in London in 1864, did not initially have a large impact in Germany. The goal of the International, in which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels played leading roles, was to unite the socialist movements

²⁹ Beck, 'Working-class politics', p. 74.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 80.

³¹ August Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben* (Berlin, 1961), p. 455.

across different countries. Yet, its project was undermined by severe internal struggles, notably Marx's conflict with Mikhail Bakunin which led to the institution's effective dissolution in 1872. In the 1860s Marx sent a special envoy, Johann Philipp Becker, to promote the cause of the International in Germany.³² Yet, most participants in the German workers' movement were not ready to commit to its radical socialist principles at the time. The break with the liberals was not yet complete, and committing to the International was then, as Beck writes, 'a litmus test for true socialism'.³³ It was only in the 1870s, when an increased reaction to the rampant nationalism set in in post-unification Germany, that Marx and his internationalist socialist project became more popular in Germany, and the German working-class party committed to the socialist principles of the International. What these developments showed was that Stein had been right in claiming, as he had first done in 1842, that socialism would first be carried by national movements.

It is needless to say that Stein did not directly engage with the International or the development of different social democratic parties in Germany. Deeply caught up in Austrian affairs and his university work, he was far removed from the activism that was taking shape in Leipzig, Berlin and London. Austria meanwhile did not yet have a social democratic movement to which Stein could have contributed. Austria's first *Arbeiterbildungsverein* was founded in 1867, modelled on Lassalle's ADAV.³⁴ As the Austrian workers' movement faced severed persecution and was banned 1869, an Austrian social democratic party (*SDAPÖ*) was not founded until the end of 1888. When a distinct Austro-Marxist movement took off in the first years of the twentieth century, Stein had long been forgotten. With the exception of a few cases where he had likely provided intellectual inspiration, Stein's role in the political

³² See Roger P. Morgan, *The German social democrats and the First International 1864-1872* (Cambridge, MA, 1965).

³³ Beck, 'Working-class politics', p. 78.

³⁴ See Ludwig Brühl, *Geschichte der österreichischen Sozialdemokratie* (6 vols, Vienna, 1922-25), I: *Vom Vormärz bis zum Wiener Hochverratsprozess, Juli 1870* (1922), 75.

socialist movement that developed in Germany in the 1860s was thus almost non-existent.

Socialist ideas in Stein's *Verwaltungslehre*

Although he was uninvolved in political socialism in the 1860s, socialist theory remained an important concern of Stein's in this period. In the second half of the decade, he published what is often considered his magnum opus, the *Verwaltungslehre*. It was his biggest work, stretching over seven volumes, published between 1865 and 1868. Mostly for this publication, Stein was awarded a knighthood in the 'Order of the Iron Crown' by Emperor Franz Joseph in November 1868.³⁵ In terms of its approach, the *Verwaltungslehre* was closely related to Stein's earlier books such as *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich* and especially *Das System der Staatswissenschaft*, and represented a continuation of his long-standing project of a 'science of society'. The book's goal was to explain how a socialistic agenda could be implemented via the state's manifold administrative channels, thereby allowing the gradual eradication of social tensions.

The *Verwaltungslehre* was dedicated to Rudolf von Gneist, a close friend of Stein's who was also of immense intellectual significance.³⁶ Gneist, a legal scholar from Berlin, was a popular figure who combined a successful academic career with political involvement. A member of the *Verein für das Wohl der arbeitenden Klassen* since the 1850s, he had engaged in important exchanges with fellow member Rodbertus.³⁷ In the early 1850s, Gneist began to study English law and society. His first work on the subject, *Adel und Ritterschaft in England* (1853) was likely inspired by Stein's essay 'Das Wesen des arbeitslosen Einkommens, und sein besonderes

³⁵ Werner Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein: Ein Beitrag zur Biographie, zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins und zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Eckernförde, 1956), p. 73.

³⁶ See Heinz Taschke, *Lorenz von Steins nachgelassene staatsrechtliche und rechtsphilosophische Vorlesungsmanskripte: Zugleich ein Beitrag zu seiner Biographie und zu seinem Persönlichkeitsbegriff* (Heidelberg, 1985), p. 9 on Stein and Gneist's personal contacts.

³⁷ Giles Pope, 'The political ideas of Lorenz Stein and their influence on Rudolf Gneist and Gustav Schmoller' (unpublished DPhil dissertation, University of Oxford, 1985), p. 148.

Verhältniß zu Amt und Adel' from the previous year.³⁸ Gneist in his work pointed to the aristocracy's historic role in state administration, still alive in England at the time, and suggested that this tradition should be used to create a model of 'self-government' in Germany. Gneist argued that the self-confidence of the aristocracy made it act independent of its personal interest, thus enabling it to help close the gap between state and society. Between 1857 and 1863, Gneist extended these ideas into the work *Das heutige englische Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsrecht*, an influential book that was explicitly inspired by Stein's writings on administration.³⁹ The work's positive reception was a confidence boost for Stein that enabled him to overcome the setbacks he had experienced as a result of the attacks on *System der Staatswissenschaft*. Both through his academic work and his involvement in real administrative reform (Gneist later on became involved in the Prussian reforms of local government), von Gneist like no other figure demonstrated the wider significance and relevance of Stein's thought.

Another important intellectual context for Stein's *Verwaltungslehre* was the publication of Johann Caspar Bluntschli's *Geschichte des allgemeinen Staatsrechts und der Politik* in 1864. Originally from Switzerland, Bluntschli had, following a stint in Munich, taken over Robert von Mohl's chair in *Staatswissenschaft* in Heidelberg in 1861. Alongside his academic work, he had also, similarly to Gneist, been involved in administrative reforms in Baden which aimed at decentralization and an improved local bureaucracy.⁴⁰ His 1864 work stressed, very much like Stein had, the importance of comparing the German contribution to *Wissenschaft* to that of other countries.⁴¹ Bluntschli and Stein corresponded in the late 1850s when the former tried to gain Stein as a contributor for his *Deutsches Staatswörterbuch*.⁴²

³⁸ Ibid., p. 157.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 150.

⁴⁰ David F. Lindenfeld, *The practical imagination: the German sciences of state in the nineteenth century* (London, 1997), p. 166.

⁴¹ Johann Kaspar Bluntschli, *Geschichte des allgemeinen Staatsrechts und der Politik* (Munich, 1864), p. xiv.

⁴² See the letter by Bluntschli in Stein's *Nachlass*. Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek, Kiel, *Nachlass Lorenz von Stein*: 4.2:05.

Bluntschli's book, like that of Gneist, raised Stein's confidence in the early 1860s, and inspired him to put forward another theoretical work.

By opening the *Verwaltungslehre* with an appraisal of Gneist, Stein's strategy was thus to anticipate methodological criticisms of the kind he had received for his *System der Staatswissenschaft*. Rejecting once again the reliance on Roman law in German scholarship, a complaint he had voiced repeatedly since the 1830s, Stein pointed to the significance of international comparative studies, such as Gneist's work on England.⁴³ His *Verwaltungslehre* was a contribution to this wider project. It was comparative throughout, and examined political institutions in Germany, France, England (for information on which Stein relied on Gneist), as well as occasionally further countries. Rather than presenting an ideal system, the work addressed existing conditions and tried to make sense of them in terms of a systematic whole.

Austria was notably not a part of Stein's discussion. As he explained, its political and economic nature was too unique to serve as a subject for his academic work. Stein wrote: 'It is its own world, a peculiar organism which cannot be compared with any other one in Europe.'⁴⁴ The problem was that it was marked by an enormous diversity: 'It is a miniature Europe. It contains all peoples, and churches, all types of economic conditions, the legislature of the entire world, all in wonderful proximity and amalgamation.'⁴⁵ Capturing Austria's history and contemporary society was a separate, challenging task which Stein did not plan to approach in this work. Prussia, rather than Austria, thus in many ways remained Stein's model state and society.

Taking to new extremes Stein's previous stylistic tendencies, the structure of the *Verwaltungslehre* was convoluted and confusing. The first volume was

⁴³ Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart 1865-8), I (1865): *Die Lehre von der vollziehenden Gewalt, ihr Recht und ihr Organismus. Mit Vergleichung der Rechtszustände von England, Frankreich und Deutschland*, ix.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. x: 'Es ist eine Welt für sich, ein eigenthümlicher Organismus, mit gar keinem andern Europas, je der Welt vergleichbar.'

⁴⁵ Ibid.: 'Es ist ein Europa im Kleinen. Es enthält alle Völker, alle Kirchen, alle volkswirtschaftlichen Zustände, alle Rechtsbildungen des ganzen Welttheiles in wunderbarer Nähe und Mischung.'

concerned with ‘executive power’ and discussed government, the bureaucracy, as well as local administration and associations.⁴⁶ The second volume, published in 1866, focused on ‘administration’ in more detail.⁴⁷ The third, rather short volume, from 1867, was concerned with healthcare and the various public provisions for it.⁴⁸ Volume four, appearing in the same year, was about the police and its role in society and government.⁴⁹ The last three volumes were all published in 1868. The fifth volume covered education and addressed different types of educational institutions in various European countries.⁵⁰ Volume six discussed education in a broader sense, focusing on the educational function of the press, as well as other public institutions such as libraries and theatres.⁵¹ The final volume addressed *Verwaltung* in the economic sphere, discussing issues such as in which cases expropriation was justified.⁵²

Less than a year after Stein had completed the *Verwaltungslehre*, he already published a revised and condensed version of the entire work. It was restructured and this time consisted of only three volumes. The first volume still focused on executive power. The new second volume was about ‘self-government’, and the third addressed associations.⁵³ This restructuring was probably an attempt to articulate more clearly

⁴⁶ Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre*, I.

⁴⁷ Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart, 1865-68), II (1866): *Die Lehre von der Innern Verwaltung. Einleitung. Die Lehre von Begriff, Inhalt, System und Recht der Verwaltung. Die wirkliche Innere Verwaltung und das Verwaltungsrecht. Erster Theil. Das Bevölkerungswesen und sein Verwaltungsrecht.*

⁴⁸ Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart, 1865-68), III (1867): *Die Innere Verwaltung. Erstes Hauptgebiet. Zweiter Theil. Das öffentliche Gesundheitswesen in Deutschland, England, Frankreich und andern Ländern.*

⁴⁹ Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart, 1865-68), IV (1867): *Innere Verwaltungslehre. Erstes Hauptgebiet. Dritter Theil. Das Polizeirecht. Das Allgemeine Polizeirecht und die Sicherheitspolizei. Anhang. (Vierter Theil.) Das Pflugschaftswesen und sein Recht.*

⁵⁰ Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart, 1865-68), V (1868): *Die Innere Verwaltung. Zweites Hauptgebiet. Das Bildungswesen. Erster Theil. Das Elementar- und Berufsbildungswesen in Deutschland, England, Frankreich und andern Ländern.*

⁵¹ Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart, 1865-68), VI (1868): *Innere Verwaltungslehre. Zweites Hauptgebiet. Zweiter Theil. Die Allgemeine Bildung und die Presse.*

⁵² Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart, 1865-68), VII (1868): *Innere Verwaltungslehre. Drittes Hauptgebiet. Die wirtschaftliche Verwaltung. (Volkswirtschaftspflege.) Erster Theil. Die Entwährung. Grundentlastung, Ablösung, Gemeinheitstheilung, Enteignung und Staatsnothrecht in England, Frankreich und Deutschland.*

⁵³ Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (2nd edn, 3 vols, Stuttgart, 1869).

his conception of the political order and the functions of the state. This message emerged most clearly from another work which Stein again published only one year later, the *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre* (1870), which summarized the content of all seven volumes of the *Verwaltungslehre*.⁵⁴ It is from this 450 page-long work that we can best read Stein's conception of the structure of politics. Opening with an elaboration on the 'organic concept of the state', it proceeded to describe executive power, then the administration, dividing the latter into three distinct spheres of responsibility: the personal, the economic, and the social. The 'personal' area touched by state administration included healthcare, police, and also education. Religion was, as in Stein's previous work, completely absent from the discussion. Economic administration involved fire control and water supply, the mail service, railways, the regulation of credit and other aspect of finance, as well as forestry, agriculture, trade and industry. In the social sphere, one had to distinguish between three distinct spheres, that of 'social freedom', that of 'social misery' which essentially covered charity, and that of 'social development'. This last section, with which the work concluded, discussed the role of associations, among them workers' associations.

⁵⁴ Dr. Lorenz Stein, *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre mit Vergleichung der Literatur und Gesetzgebung von Frankreich, England, Deutschland: Als Grundlage für Vorlesungen* (Stuttgart, 1870).



Figure 5.1. Chart from Lorenz Stein's *Verwaltungslehre*, explaining the different branches of *Verwaltung*

Lorenz Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre* (7 vols, Stuttgart, 1865-68), II (1866): *Die Lehre von der Innern Verwaltung. Einleitung. Die Lehre von Begriff, Inhalt, System und Recht der Verwaltung. Die wirkliche Innere Verwaltung und das Verwaltungsrecht. Erster Theil. Das Bevölkerungswesen und sein Verwaltungsrecht*, p. 56.

A concern with the social was at the centre of the *Verwaltungslehre*. As he wrote in the preface, the work would highlight the all-pervasive force of the social.⁵⁵ Stein still believed that the ‘complete human’ was the ‘ideal of history’, and that this could only be achieved in society.⁵⁶ More specifically, this happened through administrative institutions. Stein described the ethical goal of his work:

Here where we stand, in the work of community for the conditions of free individual development, it [society] is called administration. The administration is thus more than an institution, more than a necessity, more than a right. It is the organism of the life of community in its relation to life and to the higher ethical purpose of the individual. It is thereby a part of the higher life of the world.⁵⁷

Stein’s seemingly dry book thus had a deeply philosophical and ethical core.

Developing ideas introduced in his earlier works on socialism and in *System der Staatswissenschaft*, Stein’s book rested on the realization, cemented over the previous decades, that charity and the social question were two radically distinct things. The latter was a much broader issues, and an important consequence was that rather than a particular department dealing with the social question, the state as a whole had to be pervaded by a ‘social spirit’. Stein wrote:

The nature of social administration lies in that not only one particular area, but the entire administration is in all points pervaded by and acting in the spirit of the principle to offer the working classes all conditions for development of both their physical and mental earning capacity which they cannot themselves create for a lack of capital, while leaving the actual acquisition of capital to them. There is therefore no special system of social administration beyond self-help, but

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. vi: ‘Die folgende Arbeit wird darthun, was wir bisher als das allgemeine Entwicklungsgesetz des Gesamtlebens aufgestellt haben, dass nicht bloß die Verfassung, sondern das auch die Verwaltung und ihr Recht nur durch die Gesellschaftsordnung verständlich werden, aus denen sie ihre Gestalt empfangen, für die sie arbeiten. Es wird keine Verfassungslehre, aber es wird auch keine Verwaltungslehre mehr ihrer Idee entsprechen, ohne die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft.’

⁵⁶ Stein, *Die Verwaltungslehre*, II (1866), v: ‘Das Ideal der Geschichte ist der vollendete Mensch.’

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. vi: ‘Hier, wo wir stehen, in der Arbeit der Gemeinschaft für die Bedingungen der freien individuellen Entwicklung heißt sie Verwaltung. Die Verwaltung ist daher mehr als eine Institution, mehr als eine Nothwendigkeit, mehr als ein Recht. Sie ist der Organismus des Lebens der Gemeinschaft in ihrem Verhältniß zum Leben und zur höchsten sittlichen Bestimmung des Einzelnen. Sie ist damit ein Theil des höheren Weltlebens.’

instead there is a social spirit of the administration: and there is no doubt that we are each day heading towards a higher and clearer evolution of this element.⁵⁸

Stein was in his work describing existing conditions, and by the 1860s the ‘social’ was arguably already ingrained in the structures of civil society and the state. Stein’s summary of how the ‘science of society’ was doing its work is worth citing in full:

Wherever we look, we are confronted with one outstanding fact. In all points, the world is working towards raising the lower classes by imposing on the higher ones a growing measure of sacrifices; and wonderfully, these sacrifices, which the latter make, become in their hands a blessing and a pleasure for them [...] And while we, all individuals, stand hesitantly and doubtful in front of this truth, that truth calmly takes its powerful course, initially addressing the little and immediate things. It builds schools for the lower classes, it establishes hospitals, it endows associations, it demands for them credit and support, it cares for their health, it brightens its houses, it plants its gardens, it gives water, it gives bread, it calls all owners to participate in all that ennobles, educates, lifts, it makes the one class responsible for the calm but certain development and elevation of the other, and what we revere as the highest Christian duty, the active care of one for the other, is initially raised by it, with or without a clearly formulated consciousness, in the name of interest, to a duty of the social order. And the great organism through which it

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 440-41: ‘Das Wesen der socialen Verwaltung besteht darin, daß nicht etwa ein einzelnes bestimmtes Gebiet, sondern daß die ganze Verwaltung auf allen Punkten von dem Princip durchdrungen und durchgeistigt sei, den arbeitenden Classen alle diejenigen Bedingungen der Entwicklung zu bieten, welche sie sich durch den Mangel an Capital sowohl für ihre physischen wie für ihre geistige Erwerbsfähigkeit nicht selbst schaffen können, dagegen den wirklichen Erwerb des Capitals derselben selbst zu überlassen. Es gibt daher kein spezielles System der socialen Verwaltung über die Selbsthülfe hinaus, sondern einen socialen Geist der Verwaltung: und es ist [...] kein Zweifel, daß wir der höheren und klareren Entwicklung dieses Elementes mit jedem Tage mehr entgegen gehen.’

fulfils this duty, and which is ceaselessly active in all its organs, that is the administration.⁵⁹

This was one of the clearest expositions Stein ever provided of how he envisaged the implementation of ‘socialism’.

Stein believed that, because of the changes already in place, the world was headed towards a new mode of social organisation. He wrote: ‘An administration as it is now almost developing under our hands, has never been present in world history before. There is no doubt that a new, fourth shape of the social order will emerge. It will take one or two hundred years, but it will come.’⁶⁰ This was strikingly reminiscent of the predictions Stein had made in the aftermath of 1848. The systematic study of all aspects of state administration was thus clearly connected with Stein’s project of building a ‘science of society’.

It would be impossible to discuss here the work’s argument in its details. What is worth focusing on are the main areas in which Stein’s ideas had evolved, and the parts where the ‘socialistic’ nature of the *Verwaltungslehre* emerged most clearly. The most important innovation Stein had made to his political thought since the 1850s was the addition of associations as a distinct sphere within his, still deeply Hegelian, framework of state and society. This was a broader movement in Germany

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. vii: ‘Wohin wir blicken, tritt uns Eine, alles andere überragende Thatsache entgegen. Auf allen Punkten arbeitet die Welt dahin, die niedere Classe durch ein immer steigendes Maß von Opfern zu heben, die sie den höheren auferlegt; und wunderbar, diese Opfer, die die letztere bringen, werden in ihrer Hand zuletzt zu einem Segen und Genuss für sie selber [...] Und während wir, alle Einzelnen, zaudern und unsicher vor dieser Erkenntnis stehen, geht jede Wahrheit ruhig, im Kleinen und Nächsten zunächst arbeitend, ihren mächtigen Gang. Sie baut Schulen für die niedere Classe, sie errichtet Krankenhäuser, sie stiftet Vereine, sie fordert für sie Kredit und Hülfe, sie sorgt für ihre Gesundheit, sie lichtet ihre Häuser, sie pflanzt ihre Gärten, sie gibt Wasser, sie gibt Brod, sie ruft alle Besitzenden herbei zur Theilnahme an allem Veredelnden, Bildenden, Erhebenden, sie macht die eine Classe verantwortlich für die ruhige aber sicher Entwicklung und Hebung der andern, und was wir als die höchste christliche Pflicht verehren, die thätige Liebe des Einen für den Andern, das erhebt sie mit oder ohne klar formuliertes Bewusstsein zunächst im Namen des Interesses zur Pflicht der gesellschaftlichen Ordnung. Und der große Organismus, durch den sie diese Pflicht erfüllt, und der unablässig thätig ist in allen seinen Organen, das ist die Verwaltung.’

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. vii-viii: ‘Eine Verwaltung, wie sie jetzt nun fast unter unsern Händen entsteht, war niemals da in der Weltgeschichte. Es ist kein Zweifel, dass sich eine neue, vierte Gestalt der Gesellschaftsordnung bilden will. Sie wird hundert oder zweihundert Jahre brauchen, aber kommen wird sie.’

at the time, represented for example by Otto von Gierke's whose work *Das deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht* appeared in several volumes from 1868.⁶¹ The final section of the 1870 *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre*, 'Die Verwaltung und das gesellschaftliche Leben' (administration and social life), is where we can see the clearest exposition of Stein's thought on this subject.

Stein stressed the principle of self-help. While the state was central to the resolution of the social question, Stein argued that it should only begin its work once the individual was unable to help himself.⁶² The 'system of social administration' ('System der gesellschaftlichen Verwaltung') had three subfields. First, legislation and government were responsible for providing 'social freedom', that is the freedom to the social movement to fully express itself free from state interference. The second was the attention to social misery, pure poverty, which *Selbstverwaltung* was responsible for. Third, there was the need for 'social development, the so-called 'aufsteigende Classenbewegung' (ascending movement of classes). This was the area where the *Vereine* were active.⁶³ The *Vereinwesen*, a distinct product of the previous decade, was thus, according to Stein, the main area of creative innovation and progress.

Charting the history of the social question, Stein pointed out that the notion of self-help had been marginal in the socialist writing from the 1840s, at the time expressed only in a vague notion of *Assoziationsrecht* (associational law). It was following the revolution of 1848 that the idea became more central to socialist thinking. As Stein summed up (in notes) the most recent development:

⁶¹ See Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, pp. 259, 265.

⁶² Stein, *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre*, pp. 400-01.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 401-02: 'Das erste ist das der gesellschaftlichen Freiheit, welches die rechtlichen Hindernisse jener Bewegung durch den Staat beseitigt. Das zweite ist die Sorge des Staates für die gesellschaftliche Noth, welche dem Einzelnen die physischen Voraussetzungen der persönlichen Selbstständigkeit gibt. Das dritte endlich ist das der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung, daß sich speciell der aufsteigenden Classenbewegung zuwendet [...] Es ergibt sich nämlich, daß die Herstellung der gesellschaftlichen Freiheit die wesentliche Aufgabe der Gesetzgebung und Regierung, der Kampf mit der gesellschaftlichen Noth die der Selbstverwaltung, und die gesellschaftliche Entwicklung die des Vereinswesens ist.'

Then in the fifties the gradual occurrence of the idea of self-help, primarily through the works of Schulze-Delitzsch, and opposed to him the notion of Lassalle with the principle of state help; correspondingly the development of the Associations de prévoyance and secours mutuels s[ee]. Em. Laurent [...] 1865. The latest development: the organisation of this movement through the emergence of the principle of associational law [*Vereinsrecht*], first in the shape of cooperatives according to the German pattern, then in that of the right of coalitions according to the English example; fight against it; alongside this, however, the systematic development of associations in all its social forms and of the unclear concept of ‘social democracy’. Main result: the social question is definitely part of public life, and will become a permanent subject of administration.⁶⁴

The reason why this was for Stein the only successful variety of ‘socialism’ was that it did not prioritize labour over capital and thereby privilege one class in society over another, a topic he had elaborated on at length in the *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung*.⁶⁵ This had been the mistake of earlier socialist experiments, such as those of the ‘right to work’ programme or the cases where the state provided capital to the workers. Such measures were bound to fail. Stein wrote: ‘This movement occurred in different shapes; first with arms in hand, then as republicanism, then as democracy, then as social democracy, but with the same tendency, and always with the same fate.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 441: ‘Dann aber in den fünfziger Jahren allmähliches Auftreten der Idee der Selbsthülfe, vorzüglich durch die Arbeiten von Schulze-Delitzsch, dem entgegen die Auffassung Lassalles mit dem Principe der Staatshülfe; dem entsprechend Entwicklung der Associations de prévoyance und secours mutuels s[iehe]. Em. Laurent a. a. O.[am angegebenen Orte] 1865. Letzte Wendung: Organisierung dieser Bewegung durch das Hineintreten des Princips des Vereinsrechts, zuerst in der Form der Erwerbsgenossenschaft nach deutschem Muster, dann in der des Coalitionsrechts nach englischem Vorbild; Kampf dagegen; daneben aber systematische Entwicklung des Vereinswesens in allen seinen socialen Formen und des unklaren Begriffes der “Socialdemokratie.” Hauptergebnis: die sociale Frage ist definitiv ein Theil des öffentlichen Lebens, und wird dauernd ein Gegenstand der Verwaltung.’

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 444.

It succumbs.’⁶⁶ Stein listed the most recent developments in relation to the *Vereine*: ‘The abolition of all restrictions of the right to coalitions, following the proposal by Schulze-Delitzsch in the north German *Reichsrat* of 14 October 1867. The draft of a coalitions’ law in the Austrian *Reichsrat* in 1870 also recognized the freedom to coalitions. There is no doubt that the remaining German legislatures will follow this procedure.’⁶⁷ This was the latest, promising, chapter not only in the history of the associations, but also the note on which Stein closed his *Verwaltungslehre*. The emergence of workers’ associations was, in his view, the cutting edge of developments in political theory.

Another major facet of Stein’s thinking on socialism that he discussed in the *Verwaltungslehre* more extensively than ever before was education. Stein believed that creating equal opportunities for members of all social classes was central to overcoming the class tensions that were endemic to the modern state. Education was a crucial facilitator of this principle of social mobility, and had not least played a major role in Stein’s own life. As outlined in the first chapter, state-funded educational opportunities enabled Stein of his academic (and consequently social) achievements. Stein thus firmly believed that education had to be encompassed by state administration and dedicated two entire volumes of the *Verwaltungslehre* to this

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 443–44: ‘Ihr erstes Programm war der Versuch, das “Recht auf Arbeit” zu einem verfassungsmäßigen Rechte der Arbeiter zu machen; ihr zweites dagegen die Herstellung von solchen Staatsanstalten, durch welche der Staat dem Arbeiter ein Capital zur Verfügung stellen sollte; ihr Programm war das der Staatshülfe. In den verschiedene Formen tritt diese Bewegung auf; zuerst mit den Waffen in der Hand, dann als Republikanismus, dann als Demokratie, dann als Socialdemokratismus, aber mit derselben Tendenz, und immer mit demselben Schicksal. Sie unterliegt.’

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 458: ‘Die Aufhebung aller Beschränkungen des Coalitionsrechts nach dem Antrage von Schulze-Delitzsch im norddeutschen Reichsrath vom 14. Okt. 1867. Der Entwurf des Coalitionsgesetzes an den österreichischen Reichsrath 1870 erkennt gleichfalls das freie Coalitionsrecht an. Es ist kein Zweifel, daß die übrigen deutschen Gesetzgebungen diesem Vorgange folgen, oder ihr freies Vereinsrecht werden aufgeben müssen.’

topic.⁶⁸ As Stein wrote, ‘There is no doubt that education is of the highest value for everyone; it is at the same time the condition and consequence of progress’.⁶⁹

Stein charted the progression from a feudal society where education was connected to wealth, to a more centralized educational system in the nineteenth century. What greatly mattered to Stein was that the church’s involvement in education had declined.⁷⁰ While class obstacles were the most severe hindrance, Stein was also against the exclusion of individuals on confessional grounds. Another important development towards a more egalitarian educational system had been, in Stein’s view, the establishment of vocational educational opportunities. This meant that ‘classical’ education, usually restricted to the upper classes, was no longer the only educational and vocational choice that received social recognition. With the state regulating more aspects of education, different vocational choices were recognized as equal.⁷¹

Stein’s conception of education was a markedly broad one. Besides traditional educational institutions, it encompassed the press, theatres and libraries, which Stein deemed responsible for ‘allgemeine Bildung’ [general education]. In this part of his work, Stein argued that the press had become integral to society’s education.⁷² Rather than examining it in its purely negative form, as *Polizei* in the sense of press censorship, its proactive role should be acknowledged.⁷³ The press was, according to Stein, an important instrument of progress and a central part of

⁶⁸ Stein, *Verwaltungslehre*, V (1868): *Die Innere Verwaltung. Zweites Hauptgebiet. Das Bildungswesen. Erster Theil. Das Elementar- und Berufsbildungswesen in Deutschland, England, Frankreich und andern Ländern*; VI (1868): *Innere Verwaltungslehre. Zweites Hauptgebiet. Zweiter Theil. Die Allgemeine Bildung und die Presse*.

⁶⁹ Stein, *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre*, p. 107: ‘Es ist kein Zweifel, daß die Bildung den höchsten Werth für jeden Einzelnen hat; sie ist zugleich die Bedingung und die Consequenz alles Fortschrittes; ihr Maß und ihre Tiefe sind das Maß und der Werth des Einzelnen überhaupt.’

⁷⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 124.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp 126-28.

⁷² On the growing social importance of the press in the decades after 1848 see Christopher Clark, ‘After 1848: the European revolution in government’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, XXII (2012), 171-97 (p. 191).

⁷³ Stein, *Verwaltungslehre*, VI (1868): vi.

Verwaltung.⁷⁴ Through the press, the individual could leave his mark on public *Gesittung*.⁷⁵ In general, Stein encouraged the adoption of a broader conception of *Verwaltung* and its application to cultural spheres.⁷⁶ Later on Stein also wrote an essay on ‘Musik und Staatswissenschaft’ (music and state science) and further explore the role of the state in shaping cultural institutions.⁷⁷

It is finally worth looking deeper into why Stein believed it was *Verwaltungslehre* that would provide answers to the most pressing questions of modern politics. Stein in the second volume of the work returned to a discussion of the history of political thought, specifically a ‘history of administrative science’. Stein there, more explicitly than ever before, put his ideas on a modern ‘welfare state’ in connection with the Cameralist tradition in Germany. As he wrote, recent history was divided into two major epochs, that of the *eudämonischer Staat* or *Wohlfahrtsstaat* (welfare state), and that of the *Rechtsstaat* (state of law).⁷⁸ Stein’s aim was to defend the ideals of the *Wohlfahrtsstaat* and to highlight the shortcomings of the *Rechtsstaat*. As he wrote: ‘The basic concept of the eudaemonian idea of the state is simple. The state exists so that it can, through the power that is united in it, further the wellbeing of all citizens in spiritual and material respects.’⁷⁹ As Stein stated, this idea originated in the thought of Hugo Grotius, and was further developed by Samuel von Pufendorf and especially Christian Wolff in the early eighteenth

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 53.

⁷⁵ Stein, *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre* (1870), pp. 134, 136.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. vii: ‘Uns fehlt nämlich eine wissenschaftliche Behandlung der einzelnen großen allgemeinen Bildungsanstalten, wie z.B. der Sammlungen, namentlich der Theater und Bibliotheken. [...] von dem Standpunkte der Verwaltung – von dem Standpunkte der Frage, in welcher Weise diese Anstalten eben von Seite der Regierungen behandelt worden sind und behandelt werden müssten.’

⁷⁷ Lorenz von Stein, ‘Musik und Staatswissenschaft’, *Nord und Süd: Eine deutsche Monatsschrift*, 25 (183), 73: pp. 76-87; 74: pp. 209-11.

⁷⁸ Stein, *Verwaltungslehre*, II (1866): 11.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 12: ‘Der Grundgedanke der eudämonischen Staatsidee ist einfach. Der Staat ist dazu da, um durch die in ihm vereinigte Macht in geistiger wie in materieller Beziehung die Wohlfahrt aller Staatsangehörigen zu fördern.’

century. According to Stein, it was ‘one of the most respectable occurrences in the history of philosophical and concrete state life’.⁸⁰

Stein also highlighted that it was a distinctly German idea: ‘The eudaemonian idea of the state is a specifically German conception of the state, and we do not hesitate for an instant to claim that among everything that Germany has achieved, it is one the things that has been most of credit to the German spirit.’⁸¹ Stein in the *Verwaltungslehre* thus addressed head on the themes that he had already explored in a more tentative way in the 1840s.

It was from the late eighteenth century onwards, as Stein wrote, that this ‘noble idea’ increasingly came under attack. Johann Heinrich Gottlob Justi and Joseph von Sonnenfels introduced *Polizeiwissenschaft*, a discipline that sought to study state administration. Yet it did so in what was, as Stein believed, a boring and pedantic way. What was missing was the higher ‘abstract ethical justification of the idea of the state’.⁸² Immanuel Kant’s philosophy even more profoundly undermined the eudaemonian idea of the state, and introduced the era of the *Rechtsstaat*. What this meant for the tradition of *Verwaltungswissenschaft* was that it increasingly fell apart into specialized disciplines and lost its holistic spirit. The *Rechtsstaat* movement was characterized by a focus on *Verfassung*. It was less all-encompassing, and had no distinct place for *Verwaltung*.⁸³ Meanwhile, the need to make sense of *Verwaltung* did not disappear, and it began to express itself in a set of individual disciplines, each of which was ultimately deficient.

Stein discussed these alternative disciplines. First, state administrators turned to *Cameralwissenschaft* for guidance on economic policy. This was a purely ‘material’ tendency, Stein wrote, which lacked both a ‘system’ and a higher

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 12: ‘eine der hochachtbarsten Erscheinungen in der Geschichte des geistigen und concreten Staatslebens.’

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 12: Denn jene eudämonische Staatsidee ist eine specifisch deutsche Auffassung des Staats, und wir stehen keinen Augenblick an, zu behaupten, dass dieselbe undter allem dem was Deutschland geleistet hat, dem deutschen Geiste mit am meisten zur Ehre gereicht.’

⁸² Ibid., p. 15: ‘Weglassen der abstrakten ethischen Begründung der Staatsidee’.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 23.

philosophical dimension.⁸⁴ The next field was law. This also represented a departure from the holistic system which was Stein's ideal. Not every facet of state action, he believed, could be explained in legal terms. Yet, one important side-effect was the emergence of a specialized legal literature on a variety of spheres of public life. Stein meant topics such educational institutions, the press, railways, banks, agriculture and so forth, the specialized examination of which was also a feature of Stein's work.⁸⁵ The *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre*, for example, contained sections on topics such as 'sanitary police', mental hospitals, examination systems at secondary schools, public water supply and forestry. The third substitute trend was political economy (*Volkswirtschaftspflege*). Stein pointed out that this represented an adoption of the French physiocratic tradition, which reduced all of *Verwaltung* to economics. The rise of this tendency, and the simultaneous decline of traditional German *Verwaltung*, explained the popularity of Adam Smith and other political economists in Germany in the early nineteenth century.⁸⁶

Stein in his discussion also criticized recent trends in 'state science', and notably attacked Robert von Mohl – formerly his mentor and an authority whose opinion he valued very highly. Following Mohl's harsh verdict on his works in the 1850s, Stein had by the second half of the 1860s become confident enough to distance himself from him, and even attacked him openly. It was Mohl, Stein wrote, who had presented *Polizei* as a sphere that existed separately from the state. Stein by contrast believed that they were deeply entwined.⁸⁷ Mohl was also the main representative of the one-dimensional, purely legal, vision of the *Rechtsstaat* which Stein rejected. Stein wrote: 'This meagre conception of the state belongs to the recent time, and its representative is, as is well-known, Robert Mohl.'⁸⁸ Stein envisaged a *Rechtsstaat* which was more holistic and organic. Having previously followed

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 31-32.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 37.

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 41-42.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 10.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 24: 'Diese ärmliche Auffassung des Staats gehört indeß nur der neuesten Zeit an, und ihr Vertreter ist bekanntlich Robert Mohl.'

Mohl's 'innovation' of *Staatswissenschaft*, he had by late 1860s concluded that the *Rechtsstaat* was an obstacle to progress rather than the embodiment of it.

Stein argued that what was needed was a return to a union of state law and administration – the German tradition that had resisted Hobbes's and Rousseau's contractual tradition of political thinking. As he highlighted, 'the Germans have never been able to understand how one could reduce the state to the good will of the citizens.'⁸⁹ Germans instead had an 'ethical' idea of the state, which was independent of the popular will. The period starting with Kant, and encompassing Fichte, Hegel, Haller and Stahl, was preoccupied with this abstract philosophical idea of the state. This 'dialectical' approach to the concept of the state and of law needed to be reunited with the older eudaemonian tradition, which had been characterized by the all-pervasiveness of *Verwaltung*. As Stein put it, the goal he was working towards was 'to again bring state and administration together in their ethical and logical relation, as the basis of the entire science of administration.'⁹⁰ The resulting continuity from the seventeenth-century tradition to the present was obvious to Stein. When discussing the thought of Wolff, for example, he wrote: 'It is clear at the first glance that the true conclusion of this idea could be nothing but a science of administration that was as complete as possible.'⁹¹

The purpose of Stein's *Verwaltungslehre* was thus to recover a distinct German tradition of political thought that was inherently socialistic. This project connected back to Stein's earliest work, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* from 1842 in which he had claimed that the German academic and intellectual tradition contained the answer to the modern state's central problem, that of class tensions. In the aftermath of 1848, and following several years of intense study of the *Staatswissenschaft* tradition, Stein singled out *Verwaltung* as the sphere

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 25: 'Die Deutschen haben es nie begriffen, wie man den Staat auf den guten Willen der Staatsbürger zurückführen [...] könne.'

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 30: 'Staat und Verwaltung wieder in ihren ethischen und logischen Zusammenhang als Grundlage der ganzen Verwaltungslehre zu bringen.'

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 13: 'Es ist auf den ersten Blick klar, daß der wahre Schlußpunkt dieser Auffassung kein anderer als eine möglichst vollständige Verwaltungslehre sein konnte.'

that would realize such statist socialistic goals. His *System der Staatswissenschaft* from the 1850s was a first attempt to describe this 'holistic' relationship between state and society. By the end of the 1860s, Stein had with the *Verwaltungslehre* completed his magnum opus and, as he believed, provided an answer to the social problems which were at the heart of modern politics.



Figure 5.2. Oil painting of Lorenz Stein, by his son Alwyn Stein, date unknown.

Andrea Boockmann, *Lorenz von Stein (1815-1890): Nachlass, Bibliothek, Biographie* (Kiel, 1980), title page.

In the midst of methodological controversy

Despite publishing with the *Verwaltungslehre* his largest work to date, the 1860s saw Stein's continuing decline as an intellectual authority. The main reason was that several new academic trends emerged in this time. Unlike in the 1850s, when the turn to materialism was a relatively superficial and short-lived phenomenon, this was a more profound shift. The discipline of *Staatswissenschaft*, for example, significantly declined in importance in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁹² While it had been marked by a descriptive and taxonomic approach, in this period there was a growing preference for causal explanation. The new academic trends were also more narrowly focused on making sense of economics, and pushed aside Stein's holistic conception of the state, society and economy. The emergence of legal positivism further supplanted *Staatswissenschaft*.⁹³ The new tendencies ultimately affected how socialism was understood as a concept. While Stein had never abandoned his socialist project, his academic language became so outdated that to most of his contemporaries, Stein was no longer recognizably socialist.

The major rival tendency to Stein's approach came to be the historical school of economics. Its origins lay in the 1840s, when Friedrich List had in his *Das nationale System der politischen Ökonomie* argued that economic developments were rooted in distinct national and historical contexts rather than being governed by abstract laws.⁹⁴ In 1843, Wilhelm Roscher published the *Grundriß zu Vorlesungen über die Staatswirthschaft nach geschichtlicher Methode*, which drew on Savigny's historical method and argued that all economic developments could only be understood in historical context.⁹⁵ Unlike Stein, Roscher was opposed to the idea that it was possible to establish abstract economic laws. His method was in the 1850s and

⁹² Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 161. Cf. Guido Wölky, 'Roscher, Waitz, Bluntschli und Treitschke als Politikwissenschaftler: Spätblüte und Untergang eines klassischen Universitätsfaches in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Bochum, 2006).

⁹³ Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 204.

⁹⁴ See Friedrich List, *Das nationale System der politischen Ökonomie* (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1841).

⁹⁵ Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 154.

1860s further developed by Karl Knies and by Bruno Hildebrand who founded the influential *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik* in 1863.⁹⁶

In the 1860s, Gustav von Schmoller came to be the most prominent representative of the historical school – and one of Stein’s principal rivals. Schmoller had studied *Staatswissenschaft* at Tübingen in the 1850s and thereafter obtained a post in the statistical office of Württemberg. By 1864, his academic publications had earned him a chair at the University of Halle.⁹⁷ Schmoller’s argument was that economic phenomena were highly complex and could not be explained via unitary causes. Personal motivations and wider cultural factors were crucial forces that shaped economics.⁹⁸ From the beginning of his career, Schmoller was also interested in social issues. He lectured on ‘Sozialpolitik’, and later became a leading advocate of social reform. Schmoller had deep intellectual respect for Stein. He corresponded with him in the 1860s, and adopted many of his ideas, like that of the social kingdom. They also shared a belief in the superiority of Prussia’s administrative system. Schmoller later published the multi-volume work *Die Behördenorganisation und die allgemeine Staatsverwaltung Preussens im 18. Jahrhundert* (1894-1922).⁹⁹ It was probably because of the close resemblance of their interests and approaches, that Schmoller became one of Stein’s most important critics in the period.

The growing methodological disagreements between Stein and his contemporaries began to emerge in the course of polemical exchanges in the mid-1860s. In 1864, the Heidelberg professor Karl Dietzel published the book *Die Volkswirtschaft und ihr Verhältniss zu Gesellschaft und Staat*. Stein wrote a hostile review of it and accused Dietzel of having plagiarized his ideas from *System der*

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 174-75.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 217-18.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 235.

⁹⁹ Schmoller also defended Stein in the course of a polemic with Treitschke in the 1870s. See Pope, ‘Political ideas’, pp. 300, 336-37. Gustav von Schmoller, *Die Behördenorganisation und die allgemeine Staatsverwaltung Preussens im 18. Jahrhundert* [Acta Borussica] (16 vols, Berlin, 1894-1982).

Staatswissenschaft.¹⁰⁰ Dietzel wrote a lengthy response in which he refuted Stein's accusation, stating that he disagreed with the methodological approach of his *Gesellschaftslehre*.¹⁰¹ Dietzel pointed out that there were now two contrasting tendencies in the study of political economy: the historical approach promoted by Roscher, and 'the attempts to make sense of political economy in connection with the state' of which Stein was a representative.¹⁰² Echoing the negative reviews of *System der Staatswissenschaft*, it was primarily Stein's Hegelian method which Dietzel attacked.¹⁰³ Moreover, he was offended by Stein's claim to 'own' the field of social science. He remarked polemically:

As Mr Stein considers the question on the nature of society both in general and in its particulars to have achieved a state of completion through his own works, nobody henceforth has the right to work on this area unless they join forces with him. Such arrogance has to be decisively rebutted in the name of all of academia, as it is clear that by recognizing this claim, all further research would have to stop. Nothing is, as is known, easier than, using the Hegelian dialectical thinking process as Mr Stein does, to construct the entire world out of nothing.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Lorenz Stein, 'Die Volkswirtschaft und ihr Verhältniß zu Gesellschaft und Staat. Von Dr. Carl Dietzel, Professor in Heidelberg. Frankfurt, Sauerländer. 1864', in *Oesterreichische Vierteljahrsschrift für Rechts- und Staatswissenschaft (Haimel's Vierteljahrsschrift für Rechtswissenschaft)*, 15 (1865), 10-13.

¹⁰¹ Karl Dietzel, 'Erklärung und Berichtigung (Entgegnung auf L. v. Stein, Nr. 128)', in *Vierteljahrsschrift für Volkswirtschaft und Kulturgeschichte*, 3, 1 (1865), 245-50 (p. 247): 'Aber ich habe mich auch eben so rasch von der vollständigen Verkehrtheit der angewandten Methode und der Unrichtigkeit der aufgestellten Grundlagen überzeugt und mit den Trostgedanken, "es kann Nichts schaden, dass auch die Volkswirtschaft ihren Hegel erlebt hat," das Buch für spätere Jahre zurückgelegt.'

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 246: 'Die Versuche, die Volkswirtschaft im Zusammenhang mit dem Staate zu erfassen'.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 249.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 249: 'Da Hr. Stein die Fragen über das Wesen der Gesellschaft im Allgemeinen wie im Besonderen durch seine Arbeiten als abgeschlossen betrachtet, so hat Niemand mehr das Recht, auf diesem Gebiete zu arbeiten, ohne sich ihm anzuschließen. Diese Anmaßung muss im Namen der ganzen Wissenschaft entschieden zurückgewiesen werden. Denn es ist klar, dass mit der Anerkennung dieses Anspruchs alle Weiterforschung aufhören müsste, da bekanntlich nichts leichter ist, als mittels des Hegel'schen dialektischen Denkprozesses, den Hr. Stein anwendet, aus Nichts die ganze Welt zu konstruieren.'

Stein's dismissive comments on the work of his colleagues allegedly showed an extreme degree of arrogance and self-centredness.¹⁰⁵ As Dietzel suggested, the formerly humble Stein had become overconfident by the 1860s.

An even more profound attack on Stein came two years later from Schmoller himself. His lengthy review of Stein's work was written on the occasion of the publication of the first two volumes of the *Verwaltungslehre*, yet it reflected on Stein's academic oeuvre more broadly. Schmoller's text gave central clues as to Stein's declining reputation. He began by praising Stein's early achievements: 'Stein is decidedly one of the most commendable contemporary German political scholars. In his youth he made his, one is almost tempted to say European, name through his history of socialism and communism and through his History of the social movement that followed soon thereafter.'¹⁰⁶ While Schmoller saw, as was noted in the previous chapter, a range of problems with Stein's *System der Staatswissenschaft*, he believed that his latest book, the *Verwaltungslehre*, was a significant improvement. Yet despite covering an important topic in an intelligent way, Schmoller observed that the *Verwaltungslehre* still failed to make a broader impact: 'As they in many cases told me in person, eminent political writers and scholars, having read a few pages, shrugged and put it away again.'¹⁰⁷

Schmoller considered a range of causes for Stein's lack of success. He wrote: 'it is true that Stein is not an easy writer, and moreover he is diametrically opposed to the practical movement of our time which only values specialist studies for specific

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 250.

¹⁰⁶ Gustav Schmoller, 'Lorenz Stein', in *Preußische Jahrbücher*, 19 (1867), 245-70 (p. 245): 'Stein ist entschieden einer der verdienstvollsten deutschen Staatsgelehrten der Gegenwart. In jungen Jahren hat er sich durch seine Geschichte des Socialismus und Communismus und durch die bald nachher folgende Geschichte der socialen Bewegung einen, möchten wir beinahe sagen, europäischen Namen gemacht.'

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 246: 'Und doch hat auch dieses Buch entfernt nicht als epochemachende Erscheinung gezündet. Bedeutende politische Schriftsteller und Gelehrte haben es, wie sie mir selbst vielfach sagten, mit Achselzucken wieder weg gelegt, nachdem sie einige Seiten gelesen.'

purposes; he is like a writer from a completely different period.’¹⁰⁸ Like Dietzel, Schmoller commented on Stein’s hostility towards his colleagues and his inability to take criticism: ‘Years of being ignored perhaps made him bitter and now prevent him from sufficiently acknowledging others.’¹⁰⁹ Another feature of Stein’s approach that Schmoller criticized was his leaning towards systematization that stemmed from his background in speculative philosophy: ‘Having still come out of our school of speculative philosophy, with his education having its roots in it, he also carries its fetters.’¹¹⁰ Stein’s problems had, according to Schmoller, to do with a wider feature of German scholarship. Since the time of Kant there had been – as Stein had also observed in the *Verwaltungslehre* – a widening gap between the study of ‘state science’ and political economy. The former tended to be teleological, the latter causal.¹¹¹ As Schmoller wrote, Stein had dared make the leap and apply idealistic concepts to political economy. Yet, his mission was not successful. Schmoller complained: ‘he suddenly started asking only about the deeper organic connection of the economic concepts and institutions. He thereby was the first to create a true system, but he had to witness that by far the majority of economists understood as little of his books as if they had been written in Chinese.’¹¹²

Despite these extensive criticisms, Schmoller also praised some aspects of Stein’s work, and notably acknowledged his contribution to the emergence of social democracy and a social state in Germany. His appraisal of Stein’s ‘ethical’ disposition is worth citing in full:

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 246: ‘es ist wahr, Stein ist kein bequemer Schriftsteller, und überdies steht er der praktischen nur exacte Specialuntersuchungen für bestimmte Zwecke schätzenden Richtung unserer Zeit diametral gegenüber; er ist wie ein Schriftsteller aus einer ganz anderen Zeit.’

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 246.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 262: ‘Noch aus der Schule unserer speculative Philosophie hervorgegangen, mit seiner Bildung in ihr wurzelnd, trägt er auch ihre Fesseln.’

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 269: ‘Der Nationalökonom in ihnen berührte den Philosophen gar nicht. Man hat diesen Umstand meines Wissens nach nie gehörig erklärt.’

¹¹² Ibid.: ‘Er fragte plötzlich nur noch nach dem tieferen organischen Zusammenhang der wirtschaftlichen Begriffe und der wirtschaftlichen Organe. Er schaffte damit zum erstenmal ein wahres System, aber er erlebt, daß die weitaus große Mehrzahl der Nationalökonomien seine Bücher so wenig verstehen, als wenn sie chinesisch geschrieben wärn.’

He is always inspiring, full of new and meaningful ideas, he is an ingenious person, who senses and constructs causal connections that have previously been overlooked [...] it does not interest him that something exists, but only that it stands in a greater connection, that it has a function in the harmony of the whole or in the historical development. In this disposition lies his strength, as well as his weakness. Stein is enlivened by the pathos of an ethical worldview; the thought never abandons him that the noblest human arrangements, the highest laws of religion also have the right to rule the practical and political world. He above all examines the ethical justice and injustice in connection to the social classes, he proves the decline of states and peoples through the displacement of basic ethical conditions in the great social body. And ultimately he envisages the dream of a new and better age, albeit one with a socialist colouring.¹¹³

This was a remarkably sensitive assessment of Stein's relationship to 'socialism'. Schmoller also wrote that through his 'ground-breaking studies of the meaning and development of society' Stein had 'became the father of all contemporary social policy.'¹¹⁴ Although Stein played no visible role in the contemporary social democratic movement, Schmoller thus acknowledged Stein's continuing involvement in a socialist project.

Another important figure who challenged Stein in the 1860s was Albert Schäffle. In 1867 he published his *Das gesellschaftliche System der menschlichen Wirtschaft* the novelty of which lay in its introduction of physiological analogies to

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 260: 'Er ist stets anregend, voll neuer bedeutender Gedanken, er ist ein geistreicher Mensch, ahnt und construirt sich Causalzusammenhänge, die bisher übersehen wurden [...] es interessiert ihn nie, daß etwas ist, sondern nur daß es in diesem großartigen Zusammenhang steht, daß es in der Harmonie des Ganzen oder in der geschichtlichen Entwicklung diese Funktion habe. In dieser Richtung liegt seine Stärke, wie seine Schwäche. Es ist das Pathos einer sittlichen Weltanschauung, das Stein beseelt; der Gedanke, daß die edelsten Gefüge der Menschen, die höchsten Gesetze der Religion auch ein Recht haben, die praktische und politische Welt zu regieren, verläßt ihn nie. Er untersucht vor Allem das sittliche Recht und Unrecht im Verhältniß der gesellschaftlichen Klassen zu einander, er weist den Untergang der Staaten und Völker durch die Verrückung der sittlichen Grundverhältnisse in dem großen socialen Körper nach. Und als letztes Ziel schwebt ihm der Traum einer neuen besseren allerdings socialistische gefärbten Zeit vor.'

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 261: 'Seine bahnbrechenden Untersuchungen über die Bedeutung und Entwicklung der Gesellschaft, durch welche er der Vater aller heutigen Socialpolitik wurde'.

the sciences of state.¹¹⁵ Schäffle shared Stein's interest in *Verwaltung* and also in the meaning of socialism.¹¹⁶ He later published the works *Kapitalismus und Sozialismus* (1870) and *Quintessenz des Sozialismus* (1874), and advised Bismarck on the creation of his social policy.¹¹⁷ What is significant is that in 1868 Schäffle was appointed to a chair in political economy at Vienna. As Lindenfeld writes, 'In inviting Schäffle to teach alongside Stein in 1868, the ministry noted that Stein was deficient "in the gift of making practical points of view accessible to students"'.¹¹⁸ Schäffle in turn had a strong influence on Adolf Wagner, another character who would become a leading economic and social thinker as Stein lost in significance. Originally a critic of Lassalle and of Marx, by 1872 Wagner not only declared himself an opponent of capitalism, but also went on to play a central role in the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*.¹¹⁹

Socialism was in the 1860s not only becoming an organised political movement, but was also further explored on a theoretical level. The period saw the publication of a range of new socialist theories. Foremost among them was certainly Marx's economic theory of the inevitable advent of communism. Marx, who remained in London exile until the end of his life, had dedicated the 1850s to an intense study of political economy, and in 1859 published the first fruits of his labour in the short work *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekonomie*.¹²⁰ In it he first attempted to describe the nature of the capitalist economy, the topic of *Kapital*, of which the first volume appeared in 1867. *Kapital*'s account of the labour process and the accumulation of surplus value was meant to offer a 'scientific' explanation for the

¹¹⁵ Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 177, 187. See Albert Schäffle, *Das gesellschaftliche System der menschlichen Wirtschaft* (Leipzig, 1867)

¹¹⁶ Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 200. See also Erwin von Beckerath, 'Stein-Wagner-Schäffle. Das "Dreigestirn der Deutschen Finanzwissenschaft"', in Erwin von Beckerath (ed.), *Lynkeus: Gestalten und Probleme aus Wirtschaft und Politik* (Tübingen, 1962), pp. 75-101.

¹¹⁷ Albert Schäffle, *Kapitalismus und Sozialismus mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Geschäfts- und Vermögensformen: Vorträge zur Versöhnung der Gegensätze von Lohnarbeit und Kapital* (Tübingen, 1870); *Die Quintessenz des Sozialismus* (1874; 25th edn, Gotha, 1920).

¹¹⁸ Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, p. 169.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

¹²⁰ Karl Marx, 'A contribution to the critique of political economy', in MECW, XVI (1980): 465-77.

necessity of a transition to a socialist economy. It drew a picture of a capitalist system that was full of contradictions and flawed mechanisms and could not sustain itself in the long term.¹²¹ Yet, the other two volumes of the work in which Marx planned to explain how exactly the fall of capitalism and the establishment of communism would come about were not completed during his lifetime.¹²² While it was in later decades revered as a prophetic work, *Kapital* did not see many reactions upon publication. Those who did endorse it were mostly members of the historical school who liked Marx's historical analysis of the development of capitalism, yet did not buy into his more abstract economic theories.¹²³

Another contributor to socialist theory in the 1860s was Eugen Dühring, a law lecturer in Berlin who in 1865 published a series of works on socialist topics: *Kapital und Arbeit*, *Der Werth des Lebens* and *Natürliche Dialektik*.¹²⁴ He opposed both Marx and Lassalle, and put forward a so-called 'sozialitäres System', in which different types of production associations co-existed with a free market economy. His ideas on socialism were tainted by strong racism and anti-Semitism. Dühring notably wrote a review of Marx's *Capital* in which he declared it a deeply Hegelian work, and also drew parallels to the writings of Stein:

As far as the application of Hegelian speculation and dialectic to the science of national economy is concerned, the author agrees with Professor L. Stein in Vienna, all of whose works have, as is known, also appeared in the cloak of Hegelian dialectic. But otherwise there is by the way little connection between the above mentioned and the private scholar who theorizes in English exile, as the latter attacks the entire

¹²¹ Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume I*, MECW, XXXV (1996).

¹²² They were published by Friedrich Engels in 1885 and 1894.

¹²³ Jonathan Sperber, *Karl Marx: A nineteenth-century life* (New York, 2013), pp. 458-60.

¹²⁴ Eugen Dühring, *Kapital und Arbeit: Neue Antworten auf alte Fragen* (Berlin, 1865); *Der Werth des Lebens: Eine philosophische Betrachtung* (Breslau, 1865; 2nd edn, Leipzig, 1877); *Natürliche Dialektik: Neue logische Grundlegungen der Wissenschaft und Philosophie* (Berlin, 1865; repr. Frankfurt am Main, 1975).

bourgeois economy, which the formed defends by the same methodological means.¹²⁵

As the rest of the review was sympathetic to *Capital*, it was probably above all the comparison to Stein that enraged Marx and Engels. They exchanged letters about Dühring in early 1868, in one of which Marx commented: ‘But the oddest thing is that he ranks me with Stein, because I pursue the dialectic, and Stein assembles thoughtlessly the greatest trivialities in clumsy hair-splitting, with a few Hegelian category conversions’.¹²⁶ In the second half of the 1870s Dühring became a major polemical target of Marx and Engels’s, with the latter publishing the famous *Anti-Dühring* in 1877-78, the first exposition of dogmatic ‘Marxism’.¹²⁷

A further intellectual force that provided context to Stein’s role in the 1860s was Friedrich Albert Lange. Lange, a teacher and journalist from the Rhineland, joined the *Arbeiterverein* in Leipzig in 1864 where he made it his task to negotiate between those supporting self-help and those favouring help from the state.¹²⁸ In 1865 he published his later-famous *Geschichte des Materialismus*, as well as the books *Die Arbeiterfrage in ihrer Bedeutung für Gegenwart und Zukunft* and *J. St. Mill’s Ansichten über die sociale Frage und die angebliche Umwälzung der Socialwissenschaft durch Carey*.¹²⁹ The latter was a response to the positive

¹²⁵ Eugen Dühring, ‘Marx, Das Kapital’, in *Ergänzungsblätter zur Kenntnis der Gegenwart*, 3, 3 (1868), 182-6 (p. 182): ‘In der Anwendung hegelscher Spekulation und Dialektik auf die Lehre der Nationalökonomie befindet sich der Verfasser in Übereinstimmung mit dem Professor L. Stein in Wien, dessen sämtliche Schriften bekanntlich auch im Gewande hegelscher Dialektik erschienen sind. Übrigens ist aber zwischen dem eben Genannten und dem im englischen Exil theorisierenden Privatgelehrten wenig Verwandtschaft. Denn der letztere greift die gesammte bürgerliche Oekonomie an, die der erstere mit denselben methodischen Mitteln vertheidigt.’

¹²⁶ ‘314. Marx to Engels in Manchester, [London] 8 January 1868’, in MECW, XLII (1987): 512-13 (p. 513).

¹²⁷ Alfred Kruse, ‘Dühring, Eugen Carl’, in NDB, 4 (1959), pp. 157-58 <<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118527797.html>> [accessed 16 August 2014]. See Frederick Engels, ‘Anti-Dühring, Herr Eugen Dühring’s revolution in science’ [1878], in MECW, XXV (1987): 5-312.

¹²⁸ Friedbert Holzer, ‘Lange, Friedrich Albert’, in NDB, 13 (1982), pp. 555-57 <<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118569333.html>> [accessed 16 August 2014].

¹²⁹ Friedrich Albert Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus und Kritik seiner Bedeutung in der Gegenwart* (Iserlohn, 1866 [1865]; 11th edn, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1926); *Die Arbeiterfrage in ihrer Bedeutung für Gegenwart und Zukunft* (Duisburg, 1865); *J. St. Mill’s Ansichten über die sociale Frage und die angebliche Umwälzung der Socialwissenschaft durch Carey* (Duisburg, 1866 [1865]).

assessment of Carey in the work *Carey's Umwälzung der Volkswirtschaftslehre*, published by Dühring earlier in the year.

Carey was an American economist whose work was widely read and discussed in Germany in the 1860s and who was thus central to understanding Stein's declining position. In his early work, *The harmony of interests* (1851), he had rejected Malthus and argued that a natural equilibrium, that did not disadvantage the lower classes or lead to population crises, could be achieved in a free economy.¹³⁰ Carey's mature thought, which moved away from free trade and towards protectionism, came together in his 1858-59 *The principles of social science*, which was translated into German in 1863-64.¹³¹ Dühring had in his work defended Carey's approach as he saw in it the most progressive social theory that was capable of resolving the conflict between self-help and state-help that divided the German labour movement.¹³² Lange rejected such 'optimism' regarding the economy and pointed to John Stuart Mill as a critic of his country's notorious free trade system, the 'British school' of economics. Lange objected more broadly to the contemporary popularity of Carey's work in Germany, criticizing his economic theories as misleading and lamenting the poor state of Germany's economic thinking.¹³³

The debate over Carey was not least important because Stein was in this time frequently compared to him. Schmoller in his 1867 review wrote: 'Stein undoubtedly has an affinity with the American Carey; Carey's power too lies in the holistic conception of things; but he is a dreamer'.¹³⁴ Like Stein, Carey tried to account for every meticulous detail of public life. Stein had read *Principles of Social Science*,

¹³⁰ Henry C. Carey, *The Harmony of Interests, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial* (Philadelphia, PA, 1851).

¹³¹ Henry C. Carey, *Die Grundlagen der Socialwissenschaft*, trans. by Carl Adler, preface by Max Wirth (Munich, 1863-64).

¹³² Eugen Dühring, *Careys Umwälzung der Volkswirtschaftslehre: Zwölf Briefe* (Munich, 1865).

¹³³ Lange, *J. St. Mill's Ansichten über die sociale Frage*, pp. v-vi. Dühring would respond to Lange in *Die Verkleinerung Careys und die Krisis der Nationalökonomie* (1867). See Eugen K. Dühring, *Die Verkleinerer Careys und die Krisis der Nationalökonomie* (Breslau, 1867).

¹³⁴ Schmoller, 'Lorenz Stein', pp. 269-70: 'Mit dem Amerikaner Carey hat Stein eine unzweifelhafte Verwandtschaft; auch Careys Kraft liegt in der Totalauffassung der Dinge; aber er ist ein Phantast.'

which was indeed similar in its holistic ambition to his *System der Staatswissenschaft* and *Verwaltungslehre*.¹³⁵

Stein, however, claimed that he disagreed with Carey. He also felt more widely misunderstood by his contemporaries, as he made clear when he came to defend his methodological convictions in the essay ‘Die organische Auffassung des Lebens der Güterwelt’ in 1868. Stein in it commented on the recent methodological controversies in the study of political economy and complained that, unlike France and England, where Sismondi and Mill had brought innovation by introducing a social dimension, Germany had made no progress.¹³⁶ Carey had, according to Stein, misunderstood Ricardo’s theory of quality of soils.¹³⁷ The German admiration for him, on behalf of people like Dühring, was symptomatic of the underdeveloped state of German political economy, notably the failure to apply German philosophical insights to this field. As Stein wrote: ‘It is characteristic of our time that a German did not know how much further developed German science was than the North American dilettante.’¹³⁸

Stein also responded to his critics in the 1869 edition of the *Verwaltungslehre*. He reflected on the recent attacks his work had received and, for example, mentioned a commentator who had referred to the ‘hair-raising absolutist and superficial constructions of the Steinian *Verwaltungslehre*’.¹³⁹ Stein ridiculed him: ‘I wonder what the man who wrote this looks like when his hair is raised? And yet, according to Hegelian aesthetics, he should have known that the “highest freedom” is found neither in hair, nor in the *Tübinger Vierteljahrsschrift*, but in

¹³⁵ The work was part of his library. See Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek, Kiel: Nachlass Lorenz von Stein, II. 3.

¹³⁶ Dr. L. Stein, ‘Die organische Auffassung des Lebens der Güterwelt’, in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 24, 2 (1868), 215-42 (p. 219).

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 235.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 236: ‘Aber dass ein Deutscher nicht wusste, wie viel weiter die deutsche Wissenschaft als der nordamerikanische Dilettant sei, ist für unsere Zeit zu sehr bezeichnend.’

¹³⁹ Stein, *Verwaltungslehre*, II (1869), vi: ‘Haarsträubenden absolutistischen und oberflächlichen Konstruktion der Stein’schen Verwaltungslehre (1. Band).’

humour.¹⁴⁰ Stein also commented in more neutral terms on the recent developments in his academic field. Instead of seeing a decline, he highlighted the timeliness of *Staatswissenschaft*, and not least of his own pioneering contribution to it.¹⁴¹ He also drew attention to the growing recognition of the separation between the state and administration in the legal sphere. The late 1860s indeed saw the emergence of so-called *Verwaltungsrecht*, administrative law which described the structures of the bureaucracy and was beginning to be systematized in this period – an important project that Stein contributed to.¹⁴²

By the end of the period discussed here, Stein had become a subject worthy of academic study in his own right. A number of accounts were published already before his death that assessed his life's work. The first came from the obscure author Leonhard Freund who compared Stein and Gneist in a short study from 1871. Freund described Stein as an important representative of a tendency towards 'realism' that had emerged in the fields of political philosophy and social policy.¹⁴³ Stein, he wrote, 'had the fate to be used often and appraised rarely; in even rarer cases is the true value of his achievement duly recognized.'¹⁴⁴ Like Schmoller, Freund notably acknowledged Stein's role in the emergence of social policy: 'Through equally imaginative and fruitful studies of the meaning and development of society he has without doubt maintained his place as an assigned leader at the top of today's social politics.'¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. vi: 'Wie der Mann, der das schrieb, wohl aussieht, wenn wir ihm das Haar gestäubt haben? Und doch hätte er nach Hegels Ästhetik wissen müssen, das die "höchste Freiheit" weder im Haar, noch in der Tübinger Vierteljahrsschrift, sondern im Humor bestehe.'

¹⁴¹ Stein, *Verwaltungslehre*, I (1869): xii.

¹⁴² Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, pp. 209, 260.

¹⁴³ Leonhard Freund, *Thaten und Namen: Forschung über Staat und Gesellschaft, mit Rücksicht auf Lorenz Stein und Rudolf Gneist* (1871; Leipzig, 1884), p. 3.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 5: 'Hat das Schicksal, häufig benutzt und selten beurtheilt zu werden; noch seltener anerkennt man nach Gebühr den wirklichen Werth seiner Leistungen'.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 5: 'Durch ebenso ideenreiche, als fruchtbare Untersuchungen über die Bedeutung und Entwicklung der Gesellschaft behauptet er ohne Zweifel als berufener Führer seinen Platz an der Spitze der heutigen Socialpolitik.'

However, Freund was also forced to admit that there were profound problems with Stein's method. Stein, for example, failed to provide proof of the 'higher nature' of the state.¹⁴⁶ His Hegelian tendencies were without doubt the biggest issue. Yet, they were balanced out by the historical dimension of his works, although even there Stein had the tendency to make sweeping generalizations.¹⁴⁷ Like Schmoller, Freund highlighted the intriguing combination of ethical considerations with the concern for extreme systematization in Stein's work.¹⁴⁸ But one major problem with Stein's work remained, namely the reluctance to make clear statements concerning contemporary political issues.¹⁴⁹ A reason for this was his reliance on Hegelian modes of thought which led him to underestimate the contribution which individuals could make, as opposed to broader 'social forces'.¹⁵⁰

This tendency to dismiss Stein for his outdated method further intensified in the last two decades of Stein's life. In the 1870s and 1880s Stein was additionally ostracised in the context of the *Methodenstreit*. Carl Menger, Stein's colleague in Vienna, developed the Austrian school of economics in the 1870s, and clashed with Schmoller on method. The fact that Stein was no longer relevant to either side in this major debate was telling. An empirical sociology also began to emerge in this time. While its proponents such as the Polish-Austrian scholar Ludwig Gumplowitz acknowledged Stein as the discipline's forefather, they were deeply critical of his contemporary work. Gumplowitz for example, in his 1881 *Rechtsstaat und Sozialismus*, claimed that Stein's 1850 *Geschichte der socialen Bewegung* had been a ground-breaking work as far as the study of the social was concerned. He described Stein's approach in the following terms:

There has never been a more curious mix of idealism and realism than in Stein. While in his forms as in his chains of thought he still fully represents idealist philosophy,

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 10: '[Er] unterschätzt [...], auf der Jagt nach Resultaten, in dem Eifer des Generalisirens die Bedeutung dieser inneren Momente.'

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 11-12.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 11.

specifically Hegel's dialectical method, in his content a so-far unknown, implacable realism breaks through. Stein is a realist who comes along in the wide drape of idealism.¹⁵¹

Yet, Gumpłowicz ultimately dismissed many aspects of Stein's assessments as erroneous.¹⁵² Stein and Gumpłowicz corresponded in the late 1880s, and in these letters Gumpłowicz denied the significance of *Verwaltungsrecht* which had become Stein's major project.¹⁵³

There was a clear disjuncture: while to many of his contemporaries it seemed as if Stein had abandoned his preoccupation with socialism by the 1860s, he was as passionate about it as ever. He included another fervent response to his critics in the 1876 edition of the *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre* where he explicitly attacked the tendency towards 'practicality' in scholarship which was accompanied by a rejection of idealism.¹⁵⁴ Stein claimed that the philosophy of Kant, Fichte, and Hegel remained highly relevant. It was, he argued, essential that statesmen were educated in it as it allowed them to see the higher purpose of their position, and to look beyond petty politics. As he dramatically put it: 'Is it rather incredible or rather sad when, in times when our great thinkers, our Kant, Fichte, Hegel, are revered and studied by our neighbours [...], we think it clever or a sign of success if practitioners and even poets mock German philosophy [...]?'¹⁵⁵ Stein defended his idealist approach in the following terms:

That is why I have not been afraid for an instant to begin with abstract philosophy [...] I have no more space for resentment

¹⁵¹ Ludwig Gumpłowicz, *Rechtsstaat und Sozialismus* (Innsbruck, 1881), p. 152: 'Ein selteneres Gemisch von Idealismus und Realismus, wie Stein, hat es nie gegeben. Während er sowohl in seinen Formen wie in seinem Gedankengange noch ganz die idealistische Philosophie, speciell die dialektische Methode Hegels repräsentirt, bricht sich in seinem Inhalt ein bisher unbekannter, unerbittlicher Realismus Bahn. Stein ist ein Realist der im breiten Faltenwurf des Idealismus einherschreitet.'

¹⁵² Ibid., see pp. 170-77: 'Stein's Irrthümer'

¹⁵³ See Taschke, *Vorlesungsmanuskripte*, pp. 19.

¹⁵⁴ Dr. Lorenz von Stein, *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre mit Vergleichung der Literatur und Gesetzgebung von Frankreich, England, Deutschland und Oesterreich* (2nd edn, Stuttgart, 1876), p. iii.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. iv: 'Ist es mehr wunderbar oder mehr traurig, wenn wir in derselben Zeit, wo unsere großen Denker, unser Kant, Fichte, Hegel, mit Verehrung von unsern Nachbarn studirt werden [...] es für geistvoll oder für erfolgreich halten, wenn Praktiker und selbst Poeten die deutsche Philosophie verspotten [...]?'

of those haters of philosophers and fearers of reform to whom every new formation is a malformation, each independent thought a ‘Hegelian’ dialectic, each reckless truth a defamation of the principle of authority.¹⁵⁶

Rather than feeling he had been superseded by new movements, Stein saw himself as a lone fighter at the forefront of radical politics.



Figure 5.3. Lithograph of the older Stein.

Werner Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein: Ein Beitrag zur Biographie, zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins und zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Eckernförde, 1956), [p. 16].

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. v-vi: ‘Darum habe ich mich keinen Augenblick gescheut bei der abstrakten Philosophie zu beginnen [...] ich [habe] keinen Raum mehr für die Empfindung des Unmuthes über jene Philosophenhasser und Reformfürchter, denen jede neue Gestaltung eine Mißgestaltung, jeder selbsteigene Gedanke eine “Hegel’sche” Dialektik, jede rücksichtslose Wahrheit eine Beleidigung des Princips der Autorität ist.’

Stein, Germany, and the world

It was not only methodological changes that transformed Lorenz Stein's relationship to socialism in the 1860s. What was arguably at least as decisive were the political developments, the long-standing German national problem that came to a head in this decade. The question over whether a united Germany should include Austria or be dominated by Prussia had remained unresolved after 1848. The conflict between the two countries intensified again from the late 1850s. Following the Crimean War of 1856 and the war with Italy in 1859, Austria found itself increasingly isolated. It was the renewed outbreak of hostilities in Schleswig-Holstein in 1864 that launched the process that led to unification in 1871. A new Danish constitution in 1864 attempted to again separate Schleswig from Holstein and to integrate it into the Kingdom of Denmark. German nationalists called for the foundation of a new north German state that would comprise the two duchies. Prussia, however, backed the Danes, and also managed to win Austria's support. The two countries occupied Schleswig-Holstein in the beginning of 1864, and by the end of the year turned the territories into an Austro-Prussian condominium.

Yet, this period of cooperation between the two powers lasted only a short time. Over the coming two years Prussia and Austria clashed so severely on the future of Schleswig-Holstein, that they found themselves at war with each other. In June 1866 Prussia invaded Austrian-controlled Holstein. Austria managed to win the support of Bavaria, Württemberg a number of other German states. Prussia in turn used this opportunity to dissolve the German Confederation and invaded Saxony, Hanover and the Electorate of Hessen. When Prussia beat the Austria troops at the battle of Königgrätz, the possibility of a *grossdeutsch* united Germany was buried. A new union of the southern German states was set up, which was ultimately united with Prussia following Bismarck's war with France in 1871. Stein, who had started out his career as an admirer of the Prussian state and had long connected his socialist thought with the aim of a united Germany, was by the early 1870s effectively no longer a German.

An evident source for Stein's views on the political developments in this period are his contributions to the *Allgemeine Zeitung* which he had been writing for continuously since the 1840s. Yet, the extent of his activity for the paper fluctuated, which is in itself a telling fact. While he in the 1864 spoke out on the Schleswig-Holstein question in numerous articles, he almost completely stopped writing after 1865.¹⁵⁷ He entirely abandoned his journalistic writing between 1869 and 1872, and thus did not comment on the war between Austria and Prussia in 1866 or the unification process. He would again be more active for the paper in the late 1870s when he wrote predominantly on Austrian domestic affairs. This clearly reflected Stein's disappointment with the course of the political events.

Stein's allegiance to Austria had begun to make him an outsider in the early 1850s. By the end of the 60s, it was a clear reason to condemn him, which also in part explains his intellectual decline. As Schmoller wrote in his 1867 piece, listing the causes for Stein's failure: 'Besides, he had become an Austrian, spoke out for protective tariffs. That's why his popular revision of political economy did not make a big impression.'¹⁵⁸ Stein was indeed a loyal supporter of his new country. He was close to Austria's political elites, especially to Karl Ludwig von Bruck who was finance minister until 1860, and took a deep interest in his new country's affairs,

¹⁵⁷ See Bodo Richter, *Lorenz von Stein über die deutsche Einheit und die internationalen Aspekte des Schleswig-Holstein-Problems (1843-1890): Mit einem vollständigen Verzeichnis seiner Beiträge zur Allgemeinen* (Neumünster, 1970), pp. 85-86. Stein's article on the Schleswig-Holstein conflict from 1864 were: 'Die Fürstenzusammenkunft in Kissingen und die schleswig-holsteinische Frage' (22 June); 'Der wiederausbrechende Krieg mit Dänemark und dessen Ziele' (30 June); 'Die Bundeskriegsfrage' (17 July); 'Zur Konferenz und zur Herzogthümer-Angelegenheit' (31 July); 'Hr. V. Bismarck und die Friedensverhandlungen. Die Zollfrage. Die bayerische Ministerkrise. Rückblick' (3 August); 'Die Kriegskostenentschädigung. Wien als Sitz der Friedensverhandlungen. Hr. V. Bismarck nach Gastein. Die österreichische Nordseeflotte zurückbeordert' (4 August); 'Oesterreich und der französisch-preußische Handelsvertrag' (3 September); 'Die Entscheidung in der Zollfrage zwischen Oesterreich und Preußen' (8 September); 'Oesterreichs Handelspolitik' (25 September); 'Die Allianz Preußens und Oesterreichs' (10 October); 'Der „Sieg des Zollvereins“' (18 October); 'Zur Handelsvertragsfrage' (20 October). Stein's 1865 articles were: 'Der Zollverein, die Hansestädte und Schleswig-Holstein' (13 February); 'Die Stellung Oesterreichs' (9 March); 'Paragraphierung des Zoll- und Handelsvertrages mit Preußen bevorstehend. Mißstimmung' (11 March).

¹⁵⁸ Schmoller, 'Lorenz von Stein', p. 245: 'Er war überdies Österreicher geworden, sprach sich für Schutzzölle aus; das genügte ihn zu verdammen. So machte auch seine etwas populäre Umarbeitung der Volkswirtschaftslehre keinen großen Eindruck.'

dedicating a number of writings to its political and economic development.¹⁵⁹ In 1863, he also took over editing the journal *Austria: Wochenschrift für Volkswirtschaft und Statistik*, which was known for its defence of Austria's claims for power in Europe and Germany. As the national question was deeply entwined with broader intellectual issues in this period, many of Germany's leading intellectuals – in many cases supporters of Prussia – could not trust Stein any longer.

Yet, Stein's behaviour in the context of the Schleswig-Holstein crisis in 1864 showed that he still cared deeply for his native land. In his pieces for the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, he warned against trusting the alliance between Austria and Prussia.¹⁶⁰ During the crisis Stein made contact with the Austrian foreign minister on behalf of his home duchy, and was also approached for support by Peter Forchhammer, a professor at Kiel.¹⁶¹ In a letter to him, Stein wrote that the current situation reminded him of 1848 – no least as far as the role of Prussia was concerned. He saw signs in the present conflict of 'the same short-sightedness which led us to ruin in the year 1848'.¹⁶² Stein therefore urged Schleswig-Holstein to avoid an association with Prussia which was certain to betray it. Yet, he was also optimistic that Schleswig-Holstein might be able to liberate itself from Danish rule. He wrote: 'Fifteen years ago I had no hope, but now I do. It only needs to be started properly. I may say that I feel as lively and as deeply for Schleswig-Holstein as anyone.'¹⁶³

In the course of the 1860s, it also emerged in other ways that Stein had not completely disassociated himself from Germany. Despite his loyalty to Austria and

¹⁵⁹ See for Lorenz Stein, 'Zur Finanzlage Oesterreichs', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrs-Schrift* (1860), II: 146-70; 'Die Verschiedenen "Fragen" in Oesterreich', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1865), II: 33-57; 'Aus dem inneren Leben Oesterreichs', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift* (1868), I: 1-39. See also Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek, Kiel: Nachlass Lorenz von Stein, 3.6: Documents relating to Stein's support of the economic policies of Karl Ludwig von Bruck.

¹⁶⁰ Dirk Blasius, *Lorenz von Stein: Deutsche Gelehrtenpolitik in der Habsburger Monarchie* (Kiel, 2007), p. 13.

¹⁶¹ Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 72-73.

¹⁶² 'Q 28 [Lorenz Stein to Prof. Forchhammer, 28 February 1864]', in Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 174-75 (p. 175).

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 175: 'Vor fünfzehn Jahren habe ich keine Hoffnung gehabt, jetzt habe ich Hoffnung. Nur soll man es richtig anfangen. Ich darf sagen, daß ich so lebhaft und so tief für Schl.-H. fühle wie irgend einer.'

opposition to Prussia, he made an effort to retain a connection to Germany. As Schmidt writes, he used every opportunity, such as visits of scholars from Germany to Vienna, to keep in contact with Prussia.¹⁶⁴ In the summer of 1868, he visited Schleswig-Holstein, including his home town Eckernförde, for the first time since 1854 and for the final time in his life.¹⁶⁵ This visit must have reminded him how much he missed his country. In 1869, a chair in *Staatswissenschaft* became vacant in Berlin, and Stein considered applying for it, making some preliminary enquiries with Gustav Schmoller.¹⁶⁶ Schmoller's response was disheartening: 'If you were not in Vienna, and if you had not long been considered anti-Prussian, I would have no doubts that given your achievements and your talents in teaching you would be named first [for the post]. Yet given how things are, I do have doubts.'¹⁶⁷ Gneist also promised help, yet even he was forced to admit that Stein's prospects for success were bleak. Despite his academic credentials he was considered a 'persona ingrata' in Prussia.¹⁶⁸ Even after his hopes for a return had been crushed by Prussia's victory in 1870 and the foundation of a *kleindeutsch* German national state, Stein did not completely cut off ties. As Taschke writes, 'through small gifts he made sure the German Emperor and Chancellor remembered him'. Via the German embassy in Vienna he sent them a copy of his 1872 book *Die Lehre vom Heerwesen als Theil der Staatswissenschaft*.¹⁶⁹

What must have motivated Stein to seek a return to Germany, despite his resentment towards Prussia, was the desire to be more involved in 'world historical' developments. In Austria, Stein was relatively isolated. As he had made clear in the *Verwaltungslehre*, Austria was not a suitable subject for his academic study.

¹⁶⁴ Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 72-73.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁶⁶ This correspondence is discussed in Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, pp. 124-26.

¹⁶⁷ Quoted in Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, p. 125: 'Wenn Sie nicht in Wien wären, wenn Sie nicht seit lange, als anti preußisch gälten, so zweifle ich nicht daran daßnach Ihren Leistungen und Ihrem Lehrtalente Sie jedenfalls erst genannt werden. So aber zweifle ich daran.'

¹⁶⁸ Quoted in Blasius, *Gelehrtenpolitik*, p. 125.

¹⁶⁹ Taschke, *Vorlesungsmanuskripte*, p. 15: 'Durch kleine Gaben bringt er sich beim deutschen Kaiser und beim deutschen Reichskanzler in Erinnerung.'

Prussia's process of state formation in the late 1860s by contrast was deeply interesting to Stein, and intellectually he was still very involved with the country that had forced him into exile in the early 1850s. This physical exclusion from the place he was so passionate about intellectually must have been a great source of frustration. One of the earliest and most insightful commentators on Stein, Carl Schmitt, already established that his residence in Vienna made him an outsider: 'The great observer of the European fate of state and society was in Vienna standing outside the lines of force.'¹⁷⁰

The social reformer Hermann Wagener also suggested that Stein's isolated position in Austria explained why he had not become more involved in the German social democratic movement. As he wrote in the late 1870s,

It seems remarkable [...] that it is of all the men who founded the recent social science [...] Lorenz v. Stein who has in recent times abstained from almost all closer intervention in the 'social question' and even in his respective theoretical works ('Das Verwaltungsrecht') has limited himself to very general statements [...] How much of this peculiar reservation by Stein is due to his current official position in Austria, and how much to his recently gained conviction that in the present state of socialism and socialist agitation positive and specific rules can only be recommended and justified under great prudence and difficulty is to be left open.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Carl Schmitt, 'Die Stellung Lorenz von Steins in der Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts', in *Schmollers Jahrbuch*, 64 (1940), 641-46 (p. 645): 'In Wien stand der große Beobachter des europäischen Schicksals von Staat und Gesellschaft abseits des eigentlichen Kraftfelds.'

¹⁷¹ Anon. [Wagener], *Die Lösung der sozialen Frage*, p. 45: 'In dieser Beziehung erscheint es als besonders beachtenswerth, daß gerade der Mann, welcher die neuere Sozial-Wissenschaft begründet und der zuerst den genauen Zusammenhang sowie die Wechselwirkung von Staat und Gesellschaft, von Politik und Volkswirtschaft in überzeugendster Weise dargelegt, Lorenz v. Stein, in neuerer Zeit sich fast alles näheren Eingreifens in die „soziale Frage“ enthalten und auch in seinem neuesten darauf bezüglichen Werke („Das Verwaltungsrecht“) sich theoretisch auf ganz allgemeine Sätze beschränkt, sodass als Quintessenz seiner betreffenden Darlegung das Postulat bezeichnet werden kann: „die gesammte Gesetzgebung des modernen Staates müsse vom sozialen Geiste durchdrungen sein“ und die Monarchie sich zu einem sozialen Königthum umgestalten. Wie viel von dieser eigenthümlichen Zurückhaltung Steins auf dessen gegenwärtige amtliche Stellung in Österreich, und wie viel davon auf die neu gewonnene Überzeugung zu setzen ist, dass in dem gegenwärtigen Stadium des Sozialismus und der sozialistischen Agitation positive Detail-Massregeln nur mit großer Vorsicht und Schwierigkeit empfohlen und gerechtfertigt werden können, man hier dahingestellt bleiben.'

Austria thus played an at least partial role in Stein's failure to become a more active spokesman for German socialism in the decades after 1848. Given their close intellectual affinity, one can speculate whether Stein, had he remained in Germany, might have ended up in a position of influence similar to that of Hermann Wagener under Bismarck.

While his importance in Germany declined, Stein in the later part of his life increasingly gained recognition in other countries. In particular his late work on financial law was highly regarded across Europe.¹⁷² Stein received honorary doctorates from the Universities of Bologna and Klausenburg, was made a member of the *Accademia dei Lincei* in Rome and the *Institut de France* in Paris, as well as the academies in Moscow and St. Petersburg. He was also a member of the Brussels *Institut de droit international*.¹⁷³ Several of Stein's later works were translated into other languages. There were Dutch, Bosnian and Italian translations of his work on the role of women in the economy, *Die Frau auf dem Gebiet der Nationalökonomie* (1875),¹⁷⁴ and Italian and Hungarian translations of parts of the *Verwaltungslehre* and his economic writings.¹⁷⁵

In keeping with these developments, Stein's interests also become more international. He had abandoned his earlier interest in France and did, for example, not comment on the further development of Bonapartist politics. He only briefly referred to the events of the Paris Commune of 1871, writing that they demonstrated

¹⁷² Schmidt, *Lorenz von Stein*, pp. 73-74.

¹⁷³ Stein's international academic honours are listed in the obituary that was published by his family. Reprinted in Heinz Grosseckttler et al. (eds), *Lorenz von Steins „Lehrbuch der Finanzwissenschaft“*. *Vademecum zu einem Klassiker der Staatswissenschaft* (Düsseldorf, 1998), p. 180.

¹⁷⁴ Dutch edition: *De vrouw op het gebied der volkshuishoudkunde: Naan eene voordracht, gehouden in de leeszaal der Duitsche studenten te Weene* (Arnheim, 1875; 2nd edn, Arnheim, 1878). Bosnian edition: *Žena kao domaćica*, trans. by Vukasin J. Petrovič (Belgrade, 1879). Italian editions: *La donna nell' economia della nazione*, trans. by Aug. Roncalli (Parma, 1885); *La donna nella pubblica economia*, trans. by Ida Merzbacher (Florence, 1889); *Az államigazgatás és igazgatási jog alapvonalai* (Budapest, 1890).

¹⁷⁵ Lorenz von Stein, *Il sistema dell' economia politica*, trans. by F. Lambertenghi (Verona, 1879); *La soluzione della questione del credito fondiario*, trans. by Ed. Copuano (Rome, 1886); *Az államigazgatás és igazgatási jog alapvonalai* (Budapest, 1890); *La scienza della pubblica amministrazione*, ed. by A. Brunialti (Turin, 1897).

that no way had yet been found to resolve the social conflict.¹⁷⁶ Instead, Stein in his journalistic writings looked further afield, commenting on the Austrian politics in the Balkans and the Middle and Far East, as well as, one occasion, on Ireland. In his theoretical writings he also increasingly turned to the international dimension, and even developed a theory of international law in the 1880s.¹⁷⁷

Stein undoubtedly had his most significant international impact in Japan. After a new dynasty had come into power in the late 1860s, the Meiji government embarked upon a series of democratic reforms for which it sought inspiration among European nations. Having previously consulted with Rudolf von Gneist in Berlin, Ito Hirubimi and his delegation travelled to Vienna in the summer of 1882 to study with Stein. Stein gave private lectures in English to this delegation, which were later edited by Stein, translated into Japanese and published in Japan.¹⁷⁸ Deeply impressed with Stein's thought, Hirubimi, who became Japan's first prime minister, sent important members of his government to study with Stein. This gave rise to the phenomenon of Stein 'pilgrimages'. In the 1880s, it became essentially obligatory for high-ranking Japanese visitors to Europe, not only nobility and political leaders but also religious figures and entrepreneurs, to visit Stein.¹⁷⁹ In this time, Stein also acted as official advisor to the Japanese ambassador in Vienna and received a generous salary from him. Stein, for his part, showed an interest in the country, asking a Buddhist monk for lessons in Japan's history and religion.¹⁸⁰ He was also invited to

¹⁷⁶ Dr. Lorenz von Stein, *Handbuch der Verwaltungslehre* (3rd edn, 3 vols, Stuttgart, 1887-8), III (1888): *Die Verwaltungslehre und das gesellschaftliche Leben*, 31.

¹⁷⁷ Richter points out that Stein's work on international law was cited by Georg Jellinek and had an impact on the theorist Friedrich von Martens. See Bodo Richter, *Völkerrecht, Außenpolitik und internationale Verwaltung bei Lorenz von Stein* (Hamburg, 1973), p. 210, 217. See for example Stein's article 'Einige Bemerkungen über das internationale Verwaltungsrecht', in *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reich*, 6, 2 (1882), 1-48.

¹⁷⁸ See Wilhelm Brauner, 'Lorenz von Steins Wirken in Wien', in Wilhelm Brauner and Kaname Nishiyama (eds), *Lorenz von Steins "Bemerkungen über Verfassung und Verwaltung" von 1889: Zu den Verfassungsarbeiten in Japan* (Frankfurt am Main, 1992), pp. 17-38 (p. 30).

¹⁷⁹ See Takii Kazuhiro, *The Meiji Constitution: The Japanese experience of the West and the shaping of the modern state*, trans. by David Noble (Tokyo, 2007), pp. 107-08.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

visit the Emperor, but had to decline the journey for health reasons. On his behalf, Stein's son Ernst travelled to Japan in 1887-88.

The Japanese Constitution of 1889 ended up reflected Steinian principles of constitutionalism and administration.¹⁸¹ Japan was thus the only government that ever directly put Stein's political thought into practice. Unlike their contemporaries in Germany, the Japanese saw practical value in Stein's ideas. As one member of Hirobumi's delegation reported back to the Japanese government: 'Having had the opportunity to meet with the great Dr. Stein a number of times, and listening carefully to his teachings, there were many points I felt were both pragmatic and full of the wisdom of experience.'¹⁸²

Epilogue: The foundation of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* and rest of Stein's life

In October 1872, a group of German professors, united by their interest in social issues and their opposition to the social democratic movement, founded the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* – an institution that was in many ways a realization of Stein's long-standing ambitions, yet from which he was entirely excluded. Modelled on a similar organization in Britain, the British National Association for the Promotion of Social Science (established in 1857), the *Verein* had as its goal to promote social reform and to fight both economic liberalism and revolutionary Marxism. Among the founding members were Gustav Schmoller, Adolph Wagner and Heinrich von Treitschke. Gneist became its first president. In a book from the same year, the writer and philosopher Heinrich Bernhard Oppenheimer coined the term *Kathedersozialismus* – loosely translatable as 'professorial socialism' – to describe the activity of these academic social reformers.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Kaname Nishiyama, 'Lorenz von Stein's influence on Japan's Meiji constitution of 1889', in Brauner and Nishiyama (eds), *Lorenz von Steins "Bemerkungen über Verfassung und Verwaltung" von 1889*, pp. 39-59 (pp. 57-58).

¹⁸² Kazuhiro, *The Meiji Constitution*, p. 71.

¹⁸³ See H. B. Oppenheim, *Der Kathedersozialismus* (Berlin, 1872).

Over the following decade, the *Verein* grew into an important lobbying organisation for social legislation in Germany. Experts were consulted on issues relating to social organisation and welfare, and based on their reports, the *Verein* sent petitions to the German *Reichstag*.¹⁸⁴ It is difficult to establish the exact role the *Verein* played in bringing about the social legislation of the 1880s, which were to a large extent Bismarck's initiative. The period after unification had seen a swift rise in influence of the social democratic party in Germany. The two rival parties, the ADAV and the SDAP, were united in 1875 and formed the *Soziale Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands* (SAPD, later shortened to SPD). Bismarck's government sought to undermine its increasingly revolutionary ambitions with the 1878 'law against the public endeavours of social democracy' which effectively banned the party until 1890. In the meantime, hoping to undermine socialist agitation by responding to some of the workers' grievances, Bismarck passed the medial insurance law in 1883, followed in 1884 by the accident insurance law, and in 1889 old age and disability insurance. While Stein had no input into Bismarck's legislation, many of those he had encountered in the course of his career were involved: Gneist, Treischke, Mohl, and above all, Adolph Wagner and Schäffle were consulted in some capacity.¹⁸⁵

How did Stein fare in this time? In the 1870s and 80s, he continued to lecture and to publish prolifically, mostly new editions of his older works.¹⁸⁶ His wife Dorothea died in 1877 and he later married his former housekeeper, Therese Ruhland. The late 1870s were for Stein overshadowed by financial problems which also led to tensions with his three sons. Following some unwise investments, Stein had to declare bankruptcy in 1879, lost most of his fortune (a situation that was ameliorated when he began to receive a salary from the Japanese ambassador) and

¹⁸⁴ Lindenfeld, *Practical imagination*, pp. 227-28.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

¹⁸⁶ The more than twenty books which Stein published after 1872 are listed in the bibliography.

was forced to temporarily move in with his son.¹⁸⁷ Stein gave his last lectures in the summer semester of 1885, and after that, retired to his country house in Weidlingau.

Stein remained interested in socialism until his death. He for example revisited socialist ideas in his 1880 book *Die Frau auf dem socialen Gebiete* where he argued that women had a distinct contribution to make to the solution of the social question and called for the establishment of associations dedicated specifically to women's needs.¹⁸⁸ The book contained a powerful restatement of Stein's vision of the development towards state socialism. He wrote:

We see it make laws about housing and charity, freeing both from local interest, recognizing as the duty of the great community what was otherwise only demanded by Christianity as the duty of the individual. We see communities build their schools and provide lessons independent of wealth to the lowest classes; we see it take the child out of the cradle and raise it in the homes for the requirement of civilization; we see the associations working on all points, savings banks being created, insurances, protection against accident at work, the busy doctor of the poor, the helpful women, the factory owner who builds schools and hospitals, the rich man who provides foundations.¹⁸⁹

This was a vivid account of the range of measures which Stein considered 'socialistic'.

¹⁸⁷ Andrea Boockmann, *Lorenz von Stein (1815-1890): Nachlass, Bibliothek, Biographie* (Kiel, 1980), p. 11.

¹⁸⁸ Lorenz von Stein, *Die Frau auf dem socialen Gebiete* (Stuttgart, 1880), p. 103.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 70: 'Wir sehn sie Gesetze über Heimathswesen und Armenwesen geben und, beides von dem örtlichen Interesse befreiend, als Pflicht der großen Gemeinschaft anerkennen was sonst nur als Pflicht der Einzelnen vom Christenthum gefordert ward. Wir sehen die Gemeinden ihre Schulen bauen und den Unterricht vom Vermögen unabhängig der niedersten Classe ertheilen; wir sehen sie das Kind aus der Wiege nehmen und es in den Bewahrungsanstalten zu den Bedürfnissen der Gesittung heranziehen; wir sehen das Vereinswesen auf allen Punkten arbeiten, Sparkassen entstehen, Versicherungen, Schutz gegen den Unfall in der Arbeit, den thätigen Armenarzt, die hülffreichen Frauen, den Fabrikherrn der Schulen und Krankenhäuser erbaut, den Reichen, der Stiftungen hergiebt.'

Stein later in life also published an essay on socialism and communism in America.¹⁹⁰ Attacking the contemporary social democrats who remained convinced by ‘traditional’ socialist themes such as communal property and organisation of labour, Stein pointed out that all attempts to implement these measures in real life in experimental communities in America had failed.¹⁹¹ Stein therefore hoped that the next generation would finally see the advent of ‘true’ socialism, in the shape of his science of social harmony: ‘The old communism and socialism have accomplished their great negative task in Europe’s history. The true idea of society – no, let us better say the true task and labour of society – will, carried in equal measure by wisdom and live, follow as the content of the twentieth century upon the content of the nineteenth century.’¹⁹² As we know, Stein’s hopes regarding the shape of socialism in the twentieth century were disappointed.

Stein died in 1890. He was honoured by obituaries in all the Viennese newspapers, and with several memorial services. A national memorial service was also held in Japan.¹⁹³ A commemorative bust was soon erected in the *Ruhmeshalle* of the University of Vienna. The numerous obituaries painted a mixed picture, and hinted at why Stein’s importance had begun to decline. Carl Menger’s *Nachruf*, for example, commented on Stein’s immense ambition, which resulted in the incomplete nature of his work. Outlining his approach, Menger wrote: ‘Stein was a taxonomist,

¹⁹⁰ Lorenz Stein, ‘Der amerikanische Socialismus und Communismus’, in *Nord und Süd. Eine deutsche Monatsschrift*, 15 (1880), 43: 87-101, 44: 191-217. Stein’s discussion was based on John Humphrey Noyes, *History of American Socialism* (Philadelphia, PA, 1870) and Stein also referred to a number of other recent books on the subject, showing that he retained a keen interest in the development of socialism up to the end of his life. See also Silke Lehmann, ‘Lorenz von Stein über den amerikanischen Sozialismus und Kommunismus’, in Norbert Finzsch and Hermann Wellenreuther (eds), *Liberalitas. Festschrift für Erich Angermann* (Stuttgart, 1992), pp. 207-22.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 89: ‘Der alte Communismus und Socialismus hat seine große negative Funktion in der Geschichte Europa’s vollbracht. Die wahre Idee der Gesellschaft – nein, sagen wir die wahre Aufgabe und Arbeit der Gesellschaft, von Klugheit und Liebe zugleich getragen, wird als Inhalt des zwanzigsten dem Inhalte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts folgen.’

¹⁹³ Kazuhiro Takii (ed.), *Lorenz von Steins Arbeiten für Japan: Österreichisch-japanische Rechtsbeziehungen II [Rechts- und sozialwissenschaftliche Reihe, 20]* (Frankfurt am Main, New York, 1998), p. 19.

not a theorist'.¹⁹⁴ Menger also commented on Stein as a lecturer. Although he was a gifted public speaker and managed to inspire his students, Menger argued that Stein failed to create a school of followers. This was not for a lack of originality, but because Stein was an impatient listener who found it difficult to follow others' ideas.¹⁹⁵ His written work was too peculiar, marked by his distinct writing style, to serve as a foundation for further development. In the end, Menger wrote, Stein died 'a lonely and in many ways disappointed man'.¹⁹⁶

Other reviews echoed this binary assessment. The economist Karl Diehl wrote that 'his work is to-day one of the best that we have on socialism, and the more recent historians have contented themselves usually in simply copying Stein'.¹⁹⁷ He further praise that Stein's 'far-seeing eye enabled him to predict fifty years ago the era of monarchical social reform'.¹⁹⁸ Yet, turning to the 'weak points', Diehl was forced to observe that 'Stein is a blind adherent of Hegelian dialectics'.¹⁹⁹

This remained the general view of Stein into the twentieth century. To conclude, it is worth returning to the work on German 'state socialism' cited at the beginning of this chapter which declared Stein as nothing but a 'precursor' of this phenomenon. The author added that it had been Stein's philosophical confusion, the complexity of his own thought that ultimately paralysed him: 'His fate was to have been a facilitator and to pave ways which others would walk after him [...] He marked the starting point of German state socialism. But only those whose theories did not get lost in the hopeless dialectical game could actually walk the path'.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁴ Carl Menger, 'Lorenz von Stein. † 23. September 1890', in *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, 3 (1891), 193-209 (p. 201): 'Stein war ein Systematiker, indes kein Theoretiker'.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 203.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 205: 'Ein einsamer und vielfach enttäuschter Mann'.

¹⁹⁷ Karl Diehl, 'Personal Notes. Austria [obituary of Lorenz von Stein]', in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 1 (January 1891), 472-79 (p. 473).

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 474.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 473. Other major obituaries which are not discussed here were A. v. Miaskowski, 'Lorenz von Stein (1815-1890)', in *Unsere Zeit. Deutsche Revue der Gegenwart* (1890), 449-60; Gustav Marchet, 'Über die Bedeutung Lorenz von Steins in der Wissenschaft', in *Österreichische Zeitung für Verwaltung*, 23 (1890), 223-32.

²⁰⁰ Thier, *Rodbertus, Lassalle, Adolph Wagner*, p. 14.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this dissertation has been to examine how Lorenz Stein's intellectual trajectory and his writings on socialism elucidate our understanding of the history of socialist thought in the nineteenth century. It has shown that Stein represented an influential vision of a socialist state that was rooted in the German traditions of Cameralism and *Staatswissenschaft*. A major implication of this is that there was a significant degree of continuity across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as far as the emergence of socialism is concerned. By unlocking this dimension of socialist thought in Germany, the aim of this work has been to add to a departure from a simplistic image of socialism as a movement that came into existence rather abruptly in the late nineteenth century and was created by solitary visionary figures like Karl Marx and Ferdinand Lassalle.

This thesis has, however, also sought to explain why Lorenz Stein's insights into the history, meaning and potential of socialism did not earn him a more prominent place in the history of political thought, and why he was so easily forgotten. By examining both instances where Stein's work was well received and widely adopted, and cases where his ideas were rejected and ridiculed, I have sought to highlight the strong element of contingency in the evolution of socialist ideas. A striking dualism of success and failure, for example, marked Stein's trajectory throughout. His first book, *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* (1842), as I argued in chapter 1, produced a sophisticated argument that had an important impact on the German relationship to radical political theory. The work was shaped both by Stein's loyalty to the state, engrained in him from an early age, and his nationalist sentiments. As chapter 2 showed, the reception of this work was mixed. On the one hand, Stein's book was responsible for introducing many Germans to French socialist and communist ideas. Stein's work and its messages were widely discussed and absorbed in the 1840s. The many cases of plagiarism are a testament to the book's significance. On the other hand, the book was also

interpreted as a conservative political statement, which had decisive consequences for Stein's public image. This misreading of his work forced Stein to clarify his position by elaborating his social theory. The ideas about the social dynamic and the role of the state vis à vis classes in society, which he formulated in the second edition of *Der Socialismus und Communismus* in 1848, were controversial, yet formed the core of the 'sociology' which he would be famous for.

The experience of 1848 was again profoundly divided for Stein. On the one hand, the nature of the revolutions, especially in France, confirmed many of the ideas Stein had formulated on the class dynamic in the 1840s. Because he had this advanced understanding, Stein was able to produce an extremely detailed and sophisticated analysis of the revolutions of 1848. He came to argue that socialism should henceforth focus on an administrative reform of the state – a prediction that the following decades largely lived up to. On the other hand, 1848 was a time of disaster and disappointment for Stein. First, he failed as a political leader on behalf of Schleswig-Holstein. Second, he grew disillusioned with his former model state Prussia whose political actions also had dramatic personal consequences for Stein, forcing him into exile in the 1850s.

Yet, Stein was not silenced during the *Nachmärz*. Instead of giving up on his socialist project, he was able to adjust it to the changed political environment. The transformations in European political culture in the post-revolutionary decade were in tune with the predictions about the political future of socialism that Stein had made in his book *Geschichte der sozialen Bewegung in Frankreich* in the aftermath of 1848. As a result, Stein was in a position to see the deeper meaning of the, superficially reactionary but in fact pragmatic, political measures taken by European governments in the 1850s. However, this time too was for Stein overshadowed by failure. His attempt to create a 'science of society' as a part of holistic political system in his books from the 1850s was not well received. This was because many of Stein's contemporaries had interpreted 1848 in a different way to him. While Stein believed that he owed his major insights to Hegelian ideas and therefore continued to

draw on these explanatory categories, it was a widely held belief in the 1850s that Hegel's idealism was to blame for the failure of the revolutions. As many of his contemporaries turned against Hegel, Stein's convictions profoundly clashed with the wider cultural climate.

This trend continued in the 1860s. Yet, even this decade also saw some triumphs for Stein. His long-standing call for the state to address social issues, based on 'scientific' insights, was starting to be implemented in Germany, first with the rise of associations, then the emergence of *Kathedersozialismus* and ultimately Bismarck's social legislation. Stein was also proven correct in his prediction that the lack of national unity would present an obstacle for Germany's socialist movement. Although Stein did not play a part in these political movements, and was also increasingly ostracised in academic circles, he retained a deep interest in the development of socialism. In his largest work to date, the *Verwaltungslehre*, he made a powerful case for the pervasiveness of social forces in the modern state and the continued relevance of the Cameralist tradition to modern politics. It was ultimately national issues that affected Stein in the most dramatic way in the course of the 1860s. The escalating conflict between Prussia and Austria and eventually Austria's exclusion from a united Germany in 1871 not only disappointed Stein's life-long political hopes, but also compromised him as an intellectual. A major reason why his ideas on socialism were no longer taken seriously was that, as Schmoller put it, 'he had become an Austrian'. By contrast, Stein was in his late years elevated to the status of a national icon in Japan.

These cases of extreme success and failure, often rooted in personal attributes or contingent historical conditions, explain why Stein's work cannot be interpreted in separation from his biography. Stein's personal anxieties and dilemmas were strongly reflected in his work. If one were to pin down one major reason why Stein was not more successful, it would probably be his incessant use of Hegelian concepts. The reason Stein held on to Hegelianism so passionately was that it had in his early work allowed him to reach truly brilliant insights. Stein's greatest strength

was thus simultaneously his greatest weakness. Having reached crucial insights into the social and political conditions of his time through his unique diagnostic method, Stein held on to these ideas desperately, repeating them over and over again, until his audience grew tired of him. Stein's detached perspective on socialism allowed him to see this phenomenon in broader historical perspective, and this is a major reason why his work remains interesting. Yet in his own time this approach earned Stein many enemies. Most of his contemporaries who were interested in socialism wanted 'real' change, and saw Stein's historical perspective as a statement in favour of the established political order, and thus an obstacle to change.

Because of his many failings, already diagnosed by his contemporaries, it would be futile to look to Stein's writings on socialism for a political blueprint. Although many commentators in the twentieth century used Stein as a spokesman for their ideological purposes, he never became firmly equated with one movement in particular. The fact that he has been appropriated by radically divergent political movements ultimately proves the contingency of Stein's vision, and the resulting impossibility to classify him.

Yet, there is nevertheless a lot that contemporary political theorists can arguably learn from Lorenz Stein. The central feature that stands out about him is that, unlike many others in his time and in our, he took socialism seriously. With its polarizing tendencies, socialist thought has commonly provoked one of two reactions: it has either been dismissed as radical and dangerous (or alternatively as immature and utopian) and not given any serious attention; alternatively those who have embraced socialism, have typically done so in a dogmatic and uncompromising manner, inevitable for a movement seeking to win others over to its political cause. Stein, by contrast, simply recognized that socialism was an important historical phenomenon, and spent many decades of his life deliberating how to respond to it. If Stein's work thus contains a 'timeless' message, it is that socialism needs to be taken seriously, and that it has to be understood in the context of its time. Stein can thus offer some important inspiration as far as viable approach to socialism is concerned.

In the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union the ‘death of socialism’ has been loudly proclaimed. Yet the recent financial crisis called into question the triumph of capitalism. A common response has been that it is time to move beyond left and right, and to embrace more pragmatic, progressive politics. This resonates strongly with what Stein advised his contemporaries in the aftermath of the revolutions of 1848. If Stein were to opine on the contemporary political situation, he would probably above all urge to take socialism seriously, to recognize its deep roots in the European intellectual tradition, and to acknowledge that its ideas will not easily go away. Stein would also suggest looking at socialism’s possibilities in the present context; not to aim for a radical and spontaneous all-round transformation, but to merely deduce the next natural step that needs to be taken in order to incrementally move closer to a more harmonious and virtuous society.

APPENDIX

German socialist publications in the 1840s

Based on the bibliographical appendix in Lorenz Stein's *Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* (2nd edn, 1848). The place of publication has been added.

* indicates the work was also part of the library Stein owned at the time of his death

** indicates the work is not mentioned in the 1848 bibliography, but was included in Stein's library

^ indicates the work is neither mentioned in Stein's 1848 bibliography, nor included in his library, but was frequently referred to in other contemporary socialist literature

Year	Title
1840	A.L. Churoa [August Ludwig von Rochau], <i>Kritische Darstellung der Socialtheorie Fourier's</i> (Braunschweig) Wilhelm Obermüller, <i>Das Gütergleichgewicht: Idee einer Progressivsteuer, nach dem Einkommen steigend. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der socialistischen Systeme, die jedoch nur sehr kurz dargestellt sind</i> (Constance)
1841	Wilhelm Weitling, <i>Hilferuf der deutschen Jugend</i> . Ein Monatsblatt. No. 1 (Bern)
1842	Lorenz Stein, <i>Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs</i> (Leipzig) Wilhelm Weitling, <i>Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit</i> (Hamburg)
1843	[Anon.], <i>Rückerinnerungen an den in Zürich entdeckten Schweizer Communismus</i> (St. Gallen and Bern) [Anon.], <i>Der Kommunismus in seiner praktischen Anwendung auf das sociale Leben. Nebst einem Anhang: Die Kommunisten in der Schweiz, ein Beitrag zur genauern Kenntniss der jetzigen Parteiverhältnisse im Kanton Zürich</i> (Schaffhausen)

	<p>[Anon.], <i>Ueber den Communismus in der Schweiz: Eine Beleuchtung des Kommissionalberichts des Herrn Dr. Bluntschli über die Kommunisten in der Schweiz [angeblich!] nach den bei Weitling vorgefundenen Papieren</i> (Bern)</p> <p>Johann Kaspar Bluntschli, ed., <i>Die Kommunisten in der Schweiz nach den bei Weitling vorgefundenen Papieren</i> (Zürich)</p> <p>Georg Herwegh, ed., <i>Einundzwanzig Bogen aus der Schweiz</i> (Zürich)</p> <p>H. W. Kaiser, <i>Die Persönlichkeit des Eigenthums in Bezug auf den Socialismus und Communismus im heutigen Frankreich</i> (Bremen)</p> <p>Arnold Ruge, <i>Anekdoten zur neuesten deutschen Philosophie und Publicistik von Bruno Bauer, Ludwig Feuerbach, Friedrich Köppen, Karl Nauwerck, Arnold Ruge und einigen Ungenannten</i> (Zürich) ^</p> <p>[Sebastian Seiler], <i>Der Schriftsteller Wilhelm Weitling und der Kommunistenlärm in Zürich: Eine Vertheidigungsschrift, die bereits gesetzt, aber vom Walliser Staatsrath unterdrueckt, jetzt hier dem Publicum geboten wird</i> (Bern)*</p> <p>August Theodor Woeniger, <i>Publicistische Abhandlungen. Erste Abhandlung: Die Gründe des wachsenden Pauperismus</i> (Berlin)</p>
1844	<p>[Anon.], <i>Ueber den vierten Stand und die socialen Reformen</i> (Magdeburg)</p> <p>Constantin Franz, <i>Versuch über die Verfassung der Familie: Ein Mittel gegen den Pauperismus</i> (Berlin)</p> <p>Friedrich Harkort, <i>Bemerkungen ueber die Hindernisse der Civilisation und Emancipation der unteren Classen</i> (Elberfeld)</p> <p>Alexander Jung, <i>Vorlesungen über sociales Leben und höhere Geselligkeit</i> (Danzig)</p> <p>Theodor Mundt, <i>Die Geschichte der Gesellschaft in ihren neueren Entwicklungen und Problemen</i> (Berlin)</p> <p>Theodor Oelckers, <i>Die Bewegung des Socialismus und Communismus</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>Arnold Ruge and Karl Marx, eds, <i>Deutsch-französische Jahrbücher</i> (1844)</p>

	<p>S. R. Schneider, <i>Das Problem der Zeit und dessen Lösung durch die Association</i> (Gotha)¹</p> <p>Lorenz Stein, 'Blicke auf den Socialismus und Communismus in Deutschland, und ihre Zukunft', in <i>Deutsche Vierteljahrs Schrift</i></p> <p>Max Stirner, <i>Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>Franz Stromeier, <i>Abhülfe der Arbeiternoth durch Organisation der Arbeit</i> (Belle-Vue/Constance)</p>
1845	<p>[Anon.], <i>Die sittliche Hebung der unteren Volksklassen: Mit besonderer Rücksicht auf das Landsvolk und die Mässigkeitsvereine</i> (Königsberg)</p> <p>[Anon.], <i>Offenes Sendschreiben an den Central-Verein für das Wohl der arbeitenden Classen</i> (Berlin)</p> <p>[Anon.], <i>Sendschreiben an den verehrlichen Handwerkerstand Deutschlands über den Pauperismus</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>A. Z., <i>Ursachen und Heilung der Arbeiternoth: Dem Berliner Ortverein gewidmet</i> (Berlin)</p> <p>Friedrich Engels, <i>Die Lage der arbeitenden Classe in England: Nach eigener Anschauung und authentischen Quellen</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>Karl Grün, <i>Neue Anekdoten</i> (Darmstadt)</p> <p>Karl Grün, <i>Die sociale Bewegung in Frankreich und Belgien: Briefe und Studien</i> (Darmstadt)</p> <p>Moses Hess, ed., <i>Der Gesellschaftsspiegel</i> (Elberfeld)</p> <p>Otto Lüning, <i>Dies Buch gehört dem Volke</i> (Bielefeld)</p> <p>Robert von Mohl, 'Die Staatsromane. Ein Beitrag zur Literaturgeschichte der Staatswissenschaft', in <i>Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft</i></p> <p>Hermann Püttmann, ed., <i>Rheinische Jahrbücher zur Gesellschaftlichen Reform</i> (Darmstadt)</p> <p>Hermann Püttmann, ed., <i>Deutsches Bürgerbuch für 1845</i> (Darmstadt)</p>

¹ The work's cover states that it was published in 1834, but Stein attributes it to 1844.

	<p>Dr W. Adolf Schmidt, <i>Die Zukunft der arbeitenden Classen und die Vereine für ihr Wohl: Eine Mahnung an die Zeitgenossen</i> (Berlin)</p> <p>Lorenz Stein, '[review essay] Socialismus und Communismus. 1. Die Geschichte der Gesellschaft in ihren neueren Entwicklung und Problemen. Von Th. Mundt. Berlin, Simion, 1844. 2. Die Bewegung des Socialismus und Communismus. Von Th. Oelkers. Leipzig, Fest, 1844', in <i>Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung</i></p> <p>Wilhelm Weitling, <i>Das Evangelium des armen Sünders</i> (Bern)</p>
1846	<p>Julius Berends, <i>Wie ist der Noth der arbeitenden Classen abzuhelpfen?</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>Karl Biedermann, 'Socialistische Bestrebungen in Deutschland', in Karl Bierdermann, ed., <i>Unsere Gegenwart und Zukunft</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>K. Bürger, <i>Das Verstandesthum und das Individuum</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>K. Bürger, <i>Liebesbriefe ohne Liebe</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>Augustin Favre and Charles-Louis Lardy, <i>Generalbericht an den Staatsrath von Neuchatel über die geheime deutsche Propaganda</i> (Zürich)</p> <p>R. Grieb, <i>Abbruch und Neubau</i> (Stuttgart)</p> <p>Franz Hermann Hegewisch, <i>Eigenthum und Vielkinderei: Hauptquelle des Glücks und des Unglücks der Völker</i> (Kiel)</p> <p>Moses Hess, ed., <i>Die gesellschaftlichen Zustände der civilisirten Welt</i> (Elberfeld and Iserloh)</p> <p>Heinrich Lintz, <i>Entwurf einer Geschichte der Rechtsphilosophie, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Socialismus und Communismus</i> (Danzig)</p> <p>W. Marr, <i>Das junge Deutschland in der Schweiz: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der geheimen Verbindungen unsere Tage</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p><i>Neue Stimmen aus Frankreich über Politik und sociales Leben</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>Hermann Püttmann, ed., <i>Rheinischen Jahrbücher zur gesellschaftlichen Reform: Zweiter Band</i> (Belle-Vue/Constance)</p> <p>Hermann Püttmann, ed., <i>Deutsche Bürgerbuch für 1846</i> (Darmstadt)</p> <p>Arnold Ruge, <i>Zwei Jahre in Paris</i> (Leipzig) ^</p>

	<p>L. Stein, 'Der Begriff der Arbeit und die Principien des Arbeitslohnes in ihrem Verhältniß zum Socialismus und Communismus', <i>Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft</i></p> <p>F. Villegardelle, <i>Geschichte der socialen Ideen vor der französischen Revolution, oder: Die alten Denker und Philosophen, die Vorläufer der neueren Socialisten. Nebst Beweisstellen</i>, trans. by Ludwig Köppen (Berlin) **</p>
1847	<p>H. W. Bensen, <i>Die Proletarier: Eine historische Denkschrift</i> (Stuttgart)</p> <p>Karl Biedermann, <i>Vorlesungen über den Socialismus und sociale Fragen</i> (Leipzig)</p> <p>J. J. Dittrich, <i>Unsere Uebergangszeit, betreffend die Erlösung des Proletariats durch die Organisation der Arbeit und des Armenwesens und durch die Concentration der Hülfe des Staats, der Gemeinde, der Vereine und der Proletarier selbst</i> (Breslau)</p> <p>J. Fallati, 'Zur Verständigung über Begriff und Wesen des Socialismus und Communismus', <i>Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft</i></p> <p>Theodor Hilgard der Aeltere, <i>Zwölf Paragraphen über den Pauperismus und die Mittel, ihn zu steuern</i> (Heidelberg)</p> <p>Karl Marx, <i>Misère de la philosophie: Réponse à la philosophie de misère de M. Proudhon</i> (Paris and Brussels)</p> <p>Freiherr von Reden, <i>Erwerbsmangel, Massen-Verarmung, Massen-Verderbniß, deren Ursache und Hilfsmittel</i> (Berlin)</p> <p>Emil Ottokar Weller, <i>Die französische Volksliteratur seit 1833</i> (Leipzig) **</p>
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1.7:06 Excerpts from the works of Robert von Mohl, Nikolaus Falck, Johann Gottfried Herder, Alexis de Tocqueville, François Guizot, Eduard Gans and others (written around 1850)

3.6 Documents relating to Stein's support of the economic policies of Karl Ludwig von Bruck

4.2:05 Letters

II. Lorenz Stein's library (*Die Bibliothek Lorenz von Steins*)

3. Works by individual authors

4.5 Collection of works by early German socialists, including Wilhelm Weitling, Friedrich Harkort and Ferdinand Lassalle

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