

Saxons into Germans: The Progress of the National Idea in Saxony after 1866

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I. Region and Nation: Approaches and Dilemmas

Before German unification in 1871 and for some time thereafter, regional identities were viewed as particularistic and therefore incompatible with a sense of national identity. German states such as Bavaria and Württemberg had invested an enormous amount of energy in reforming their societies and administrations after the Napoleonic period. They were fairly successful in generating loyalty to the dynasties and the states, which were in some cases composed of hundreds of older historical regional units. At the center of their reform efforts stood the churches, the military, and the educational system. At the same time, older allegiances to subregional communities continued to play an important role.¹ Consequently, two forms of political regionalism affected the political culture of nineteenth-century Germany: the interstate regionalism of the territorial states themselves, and the intrastate regionalism of territories that were swallowed up by the newly constituted states after 1803. Intrastate regionalism had its stronghold in southern Germany, with its long tradition of imperial cities: it often took the form of localism.² Research on the relationship between region and nation must

1. Cf. Helmut Berding, "Staatliche Identität, nationale Integration und politischer Regionalismus," in idem, *Aufklären durch Geschichte: Ausgewählte Aufsätze* (Göttingen, 1990), 284–309; Hans Gollwitzer, "Die politische Landschaft in der deutschen Geschichte des 19./20. Jahrhunderts: Eine Skizze zum deutschen Regionalismus," *Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte* 27 (1964): 523–52.

2. Cf. Wolfgang Hardtwig, "Nationalismus – Regionalismus – Lokalismus: Aspekte der Erinnerungskultur im Spiegel von Publizistik und Denkmal," in *Lieux de mémoire, Erinnerungsorte*, ed. Etienne François, Cahier no. 6 (Berlin, 1996), 91–104; idem,

therefore address different territorial levels: the national, the regional, and the local.

Whereas up to 1871 German nationalism conveyed a sense of antagonism between regional and national identities, this changed in subsequent decades with the declining influence of the monarchies. Previously, monarchies had provided the symbolic backbone of particularistic identities. But as Wolfgang Hardtwig has written: "With the shriveling of the monarchical functions in the German Empire, the rivalry between the nation and the states diminished in significance. It seems to be more important that national consciousness came to be based on particularistic identities; the supportive aspect overshadowed the rivalry. You were German because you were a Berliner, a Catholic Rhinelander, or a Protestant Nuremberger. National pride derived more and more from regional and local pride."³ The turning point in this process lay in the period between 1866 and 1890, when the exclusionary logic of region and nation turned inclusionary.

This transformation is the focus of two recent studies that analyze regional and national identities in Germany. Both take as their starting point the idea of *Heimat*. Alon Confino has examined the *Heimat* concept in Württemberg as a way to connect local and national identities. Methodologically he suggests "expanding the notion of national memory . . . with the aid of the notion of imagined community so that memory can tell us not only what people remember of the past, but also how they internalize an impersonal world by putting it in familiar and intelligible categories. . . . By combining the notions of national memory and imagined community we can understand how people construct a common denominator between local and national memory."⁴ Empirically Confino finds *Heimat* in diverse vehicles of memory, including *Heimat* books (*Heimatlübcher*), *Heimat* studies (*Heimatkunde*), *Heimat* museums, beautification societies (*Verschönerungsvereine*), regional *Heimat* associations, and—from 1904 onward—the German League for Heimat Protection (Deutscher Bund Heimatschutz). He identifies distinct aspects of the concept of *Heimat*: history, nature and folklore, and ethnography.⁵

The *Heimat* idea represented the impersonal concept of the nation

"Nation – Region – Stadt: Strukturmerkmale des deutschen Nationalismus und lokale Denkmalskulturen," in *Das Kyffhäuser-Denkmal, 1896–1996: Ein nationales Monument im europäischen Kontext*, ed. Gunther Mai (Weimar, 1997), 53–84.

3. Hardtwig, "Nationalismus," 101.

4. Alon Confino, "The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Heimat, National Memory, and the German Empire, 1871–1918," *History and Memory* 5 (1993): 45; see also idem, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871–1918* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1997).

5. See Confino, "Nation," 50.

in an understandable and communicable way and in a local context. Its impact on nation-building after 1871 can be seen in at least three ways: First, *Heimat* was closely related to family values. According to contemporary gender role models, *Heimat* reaffirmed the role of women through a rhetoric that established linkages between *Heimat*, home, coziness, and women. The nationalization of women in the *Kaiserreich* seems at a certain stage to have been closely related to the *Heimat* discourse. Second, the *Heimat* idea provided a means to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas, insofar as it gave the rural population access to the national discourse. This access was by no means restricted to the written word: for example, it encompassed the invention of traditional costumes (*Trachten*). By reaffirming rural identities, the *Heimat* discourse was socially attractive, since it underpinned rural identities in a new political environment. Third, the *Heimat* idea provided an opportunity, both semantic and real, to communicate the national text within local contexts, not least by sidestepping the dichotomy of "nation" or "region." *Heimat* conveyed a sense of national equality — every German had a *Heimat* — but also local diversity. Diversity, in short, could exist within a concept of nationalism that was nominally egalitarian. Thus *Heimat* made the processes of standardization palatable, not only in the economic and political realms but also to a certain degree in the idioms and customs that accompanied the implementation of the nation-state.

A few years earlier, Celia Applegate came to similar conclusions in her study of the *Heimat* idea in the Palatinate.⁶ Applegate emphasized the mediating function of *Heimat* between national and local identities. Her case study — the Bavarian Palatinate, on the west bank of the Rhine — was a complete anomaly within Bavarian state-building after 1815: it was distinct from the Bavarian "mainland" confessionally and, more important still, territorially. Herein lay the seeds of German nationalism locally, because the population of the Palatinate could not look to Munich or the Bavarian state to address its economic grievances. From the local population's point of view, improvement could come only from a new German nation-state. Thus localism and nationalism coexisted comfortably in the Palatinate: the people would ensure national unification by themselves, not with the help of the state or the bureaucracy. Indeed, the local Pfälzer — inhabitants of the Palatinate — drew rather radical consequences from this. As the Forty-eighter Carl Schurz put it,

6. Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley, CA, 1990); idem, "Localism and the German Bourgeoisie: The 'Heimat' Movement in the Rhenish Palatinate before 1914," in *The German Bourgeoisie: Essays on the Social History of the German Middle Class from the Late Eighteenth to the Early Twentieth Century*, ed. David Blackburn and Richard J. Evans (London, 1991), 224–54.

"it is understood by the Pfälzer themselves that if the King of Bavaria does not want to be German, then the Palatinate must cease to be Bavarian."⁷

The special relationship of the Bavarian Palatinate to the German nation-state was underlined with the rise of the *Heimat* movement in the 1880s. The ensuing cult of Pfälzer peculiarities did not contradict national enthusiasm. As Applegate wrote: "Identification with the nation did not, in other words, require that all peasants, hometowners, and other unregenerate localists shed themselves of their premodern burden of provincial culture. Nationalism could embrace their smaller worlds; Germanness could encompass their diversity."⁸

Building on Applegate's pioneering work, Confino goes a step further in his analysis. For him, *Heimat* is not only the mediation between nation and localism, but a metaphor for the nation itself, an "interchangeable representation of the local, the regional and the national community."⁹ Not only is the nation represented in local contexts, but the nation itself is portrayed in the imagery of *Heimat*. Put another way, *Heimat* works as an emotional part of the national discourse itself. Thus *Heimat* is commonly addressed through use of the second person singular, *Du*, in German, so that the reader, too, becomes part of the *Heimat* narration.

Nevertheless, we should not generalize too quickly from these conclusions. The analytical payoff promised by this new approach may be more limited than we have imagined. In particular it may be applicable only to industrial latecomer regions such as those investigated by Applegate and Confino. Several other cautionary observations may also be introduced.

The *Heimat* idea seems to have had historical force mainly in areas originally lacking the homogenizing force of industrialization. This is not to argue that industrialization took place in the same way everywhere in Germany, but rather that similar experiences of uprootedness, migration, and proletarianization went along with a growing economy, underpinning the need for secondary integration through forms of organization and ideology. Furthermore, the *Heimat* movement paid special attention to the hardships and anxieties stemming from migration, depopulation, and the problems of underdevelopment. It often did so through a harsh critique of industrialization and in the form of agrarian romanticism. *Heimat* referred not to a social entity as the focal point for common

7. Carl Schurz, *Vormärz in Deutschland*, ed. Herbert Pönicke (reprint, Munich, 1948), cited in Applegate, *Nation of Provincials*, 28.

8. Applegate, *Nation of Provincials*, 13.

9. Confino, "Nation," 50.

memories and social cohesion, but to nature and a pastoral landscape, especially after 1890, when Germany made its transition from an agrarian to an industrial society. Thus, as Hardtwig has observed, "[A]s time went on, the 'Heimat' concept on the one hand tended increasingly to bridge the gap between region and nation, but on the other hand it deepened the friction in German society between the critics and the supporters of modernity. Thereby it undermined its own original integrative effort."¹⁰

We have enough evidence from other studies to conclude with confidence that rapid industrialization transformed the connection between local and national identities in a range of ways.¹¹ We should not underestimate the impact of mass migration, population growth, and increasingly similar patterns in the formation of social identities, all of which changed local identities and realigned social groups in ways other than strictly territorial ones. *Heimat* may be most useful, therefore, as an analytical tool to study underdeveloped areas and to investigate the period before Germany's transformation to an industrial society.

Heimat is a concept or a mental pattern (*Bewußtseinsfigur*). Its strength derives from its capacity to translate characteristics of the nation-state into local concepts. Nevertheless, ideas are rarely generated by other ideas in isolation from experience. Concepts such as "*Heimat*" or "*region*" both emerge from and define ways of experiencing. *Heimat* is a valuable concept if it is understood as part of a dialectic of experience and consciousness. Therefore, in order to evaluate concepts such as "*Heimat*," "*nation*," and "*region*," we have to take into account not only regional and national consciousness, but also the *experience* of the region and the nation.¹²

Moreover, the inclusion of the region into the nation essentially comes down to the dialectic of establishing equality on a national level and thereby legitimizing diversity or inequality in the regions and subregions. Thus equality between co-nationals not only tolerates but can actually legitimize inequality between different regions within one nation. From this situation arose a competition among regions—for example, between Prussia and Saxony—to determine whose citizens were "*most German*." Whereas Prussia could always point to its leading role in German unification, Saxons were anything but shy in 1889 when they used the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the House of Wettin to

argue that their *Ost* was much older than the Hohenzollern one and, therefore, more deeply embedded in German history.¹³

We can trace this trajectory from exclusion to inclusion on a number of levels: for instance, as it was reflected in politics, constitutional debates, elections, and political culture;¹⁴ through the emergence of new networks of mass communication (newspaper subscriptions, printed matter, mass transportation);¹⁵ and by means of the representation of the nation and the region in elementary school lessons.¹⁶ Nevertheless, we should not overemphasize the linearity of this process, as though there were no alternatives. Until the outbreak of the First World War, the inclusionary logic of the nation-state could not overcome certain limitations, most evidently in Alsace-Lorraine, but also in Polish territories in the east. The nationalization of the region never fully succeeded where regionalism was underpinned by counternationalism. Therefore, we should not rely on a false Hegelian teleology, as if the nation were negated, suspended, and elevated in the nation state ("sublation"). When analyzing these processes we would do better to look for shifting balances and bipolar identities.

The next section of this essay offers some hypotheses about the interplay of the region and the nation in Saxony in the political and electoral process: Saxony is an extremely revealing subject for research on these matters—and not just because it has been the focus of so much pioneering regional history in the 1990s. Unlike Bavaria and Württemberg, regional identity in Saxony was so strongly developed before 1866 that the state was willing to fight a war against its northern neighbor, Prussia. Yet Saxony also provides examples of German radical nationalism as early as 1878–79.¹⁷ In Saxony, therefore, we can follow in chronologically foreshortened form an important development that took much

13. Cf. Hermann Ferdinand Criegern, *Der Leumund der Sachsen: Festschrift zur Jubelfeier der 800jährigen Regierung des Hauses Wettin über das gegenwärtige Königreich Sachsen* (Leipzig, 1889).

14. See also Peter Steinbach, "Politisierung und Nationalisierung der Region im 19. Jahrhundert: Regionalspezifische Politikrezeption im Spiegel historischer Wahlforschung," in *Probleme politischer Partizipation im Modernisierungsprozeß*, ed. idem (Stuttgart, 1982), 321–49.

15. Compare Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationalism*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, MA, 1966); and Peter Katzenstein, *Disjoined Partners: Austria and Prussia since 1815* (Berkeley, CA, 1976).

16. Alfred Kelly, "The Franco-Prussian War and Unification in German History Schoolbooks," in *1870/71–1989/90: German Unifications and the Change of Literary Discourse*, ed. Walter Pape (Berlin, 1993), 37–60.

17. See also Heinrich A. Winkler, "Vom linken zum rechten Nationalismus: Der deutsche Liberalismus in der Krise von 1878/79," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 4 (1978): 5–28; compare Ludwig Bamberger, "National," in *Nation*, 22 Sept. 1888, reprint in idem, *Politische Schriften*, 5 vols. (Berlin, 1897), 5:203–37.

10. Hardtwig, "Nationalismus," 57.

11. For example, Dieter K. Buse, "Urban and National Identity: Bremen, 1860–1920," *Journal of Social History* 26 (1993): 521–37.

12. For this general argument, see Reinhart Koselleck, "'Erfahrungsraum' und 'Erwartungshorizont' – zwei historische Kategorien," in idem, *Vergangene Zukunft*, 3d ed. (Frankfurt a. M., 1984), 349–75. Cf. idem, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA, 1985).

longer in other parts of the German Empire: the transformation from an exclusively regional and local identity into a vibrant German nationalism.

II. Regional and National Politics in Saxony after 1866

In contrast to Rudy Koshar's description of Marburg, Saxony did not wear different faces for different audiences, as a good actor should.¹⁸ Saxony's long-standing reputation for fierce political regionalism was invigorated in 1866 after it fought with Austria on the losing side in the Austro-Prussian War. The onerous Prussian occupation in the autumn and winter of 1866–67 provided more fuel for the particularistic fire.¹⁹ Earlier differences between conservatives and liberals on the one hand, and between liberals and socialists on the other, were overshadowed for a time by common anti-Prussian resentment. Politics and election campaigns took on the form of referenda, based on plebiscitary yes-or-no alternatives. Two questions became particularly prominent.

In the first few months after the defeat at Königgrätz, political debate in Saxony presented Saxons with the choice between outright Prussian annexation (as had been the fate of Hanover, Electoral Hesse, Nassau, and the free city of Frankfurt) and Saxony's continued independence. The annexationist cause was by no means limited to Prussian occupiers. National Liberals in Leipzig joined forces with colleagues outside Saxony to demand an end to Saxony's outdated particularism. The Saxon-born Heinrich von Treitschke, who held a professorship in Leipzig before relocating northward, was uncompromising in stating his vision of Saxony's future: "These three dynasties (Hanover, Saxony, and Electoral Hesse) are ready — more than ready — for their rightful annihilation; their reestablishment would be a threat to the security of the new German Confederation, a sin against national morality."²⁰

After the territorial integrity of Saxony was narrowly preserved in the treaties of Nikolsburg (26 July 1866) and Prague (23 August 1866), another political alternative was posed: for or against active participation in the North German Reichstag. Once again voices from the bour-

geoisie spoke clearly in favor of an active role for Saxons in the North German Confederation. They feared that if such a role were not taken up, Saxony would lose economic privileges derived from the Prussian-led Zollverein. One commentator accused the Saxon government of betraying its own people: "The Saxon government finds it easy to subject its country to such an ordeal and make it drain the bitter cup of particularistic syphilis to the last drop. If a people such as the Saxons wish to uphold the glory of its dynasty for reasons of loyalty and submissiveness, thereby defying reason and their own national interest, we consider this either foolish or shameful."²¹ As a scenario to be avoided at all costs, critics of Saxon particularism pointed to the legacy of the American Civil War and the fight over states' rights in the postwar United States. It is striking how well-informed even Saxons living in small villages were about the American war and its aftermath.²²

In both of these plebiscitary debates, self-proclaimed Saxon "patriots" emphasized the need to defend Saxony's independence. In a flood of pamphlets, they directed their venom against National Liberals, who advocated annexation. Nevertheless, they cautiously accepted the principle of participation in the North German Reichstag — but only if this served Saxony's own interests and strengthened the rights of the federal states. After the Nikolsburg agreement was signed, and then again some months later when the king returned to Dresden (October 1866), Saxony's political camps (*Lager*) were realigned. In the summer and autumn of 1866, Saxon identity still underpinned a sense of political unity. In fact the group of Saxon loyalists grew larger as the constitutional debates in the North German Confederation approached. Anti-Prussian feeling created a coalition that went far beyond the boundaries of particularistic feelings: it included conservative patriots organized in the Saxon Electoral Committee (Sächsisches Wahlcomité), left-liberal democrats (known as *Fortschritler*), and the *großdeutsch* socialists newly organized in the Saxon People's Party (SVP) led by August Bebel.

The common element binding together this very heterogeneous group was a defense of the principle of "equality" in the emerging Germany. The members of the group gave "equality" a range of meanings, some of which merged with the related terms "parity" and "equality." The later Federalist-Constitutionalists (Bundesstaatlich-Konstitutionelle) feared that the military imbalance of power in the Prussian-led Confederation would only increase, further disadvantaging Saxony in its attempt to defend its remaining sovereignty. These Federalists were afraid of a growing disparity among members of the Confederation. The

21. Eduard Löwenthal, *Deutschlands neuestes Schmerzenskind* (Dresden, 1866), 5.

22. See, for example, reports in the *Buddissiner Nachrichten*, *passim*.

18. Cf. Rudy Koshar, *Social Life, Local Politics, and Nazism: Marburg, 1880–1935* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1986), 23. For the following, see Siegfried Weichlein, "Sachsen zwischen Landesbewußtsein und Nationsbildung, 1866–1871," in *Sachsen im Kaiserreich: Politik, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Umbruch*, ed. Simone Lässig and Karl Heinrich Pohl (Dresden, 1997), 241–70; and James Retallack, "Why Can't a Saxon Be More Like a Prussian?" *Regional Identities and the Birth of Modern Political Culture in Germany, 1866–67*, *Canadian Journal of History* 32 (1997): 26–55.

19. Richard Dietrich, "Preußen als Besatzungsmacht im Königreich Sachsen, 1866–1868," *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands* 5 (1956): 273–93.

20. Heinrich von Treitschke, *Die Zukunft der norddeutschen Mittelstaaten* (Berlin, 1866), 8.

großdeutsch democrats feared both the authoritarian character of the Prussian military state and forced separation from the south German states and Austria. Like the conservatives and the Federalist-Constitutionalists — groups that cannot be neatly separated — the *großdeutsch* democrats in Saxony opposed any element of disparity among the member states of the Confederation or, for that matter, between the states already integrated into the Confederation and those remaining outside. But they went further in stressing equal individual rights, especially rights of political participation, such as those that had been granted during the revolution. The Forty-eighter and left-liberal candidate Franz Wigard embodied this position. Like his colleague Emil Roßmäßler, Wigard at first declined to become a candidate in 1867 on the grounds that his mandate from 1848 had not expired.²³ August Bebel's Saxon People's Party emphasized even more strongly the importance of Austria's participation in the national state. By including Austria, the socialists wanted to counterbalance Prussian influence. Their key strategic goal was not to guarantee state rights, but to destroy Prussian-based militarism and to secure individual rights. Left-liberal candidates who subscribed to this platform were supported by Bebel's party.

The dominance of these issues is shown by the rift they created in the ranks of the working-class parties. The Saxon People's Party was unwilling to join forces with the Saxon Lassalleans, whose ranks were dominated by the Hatzfeldtian branch of the movement. The Lassalleans accepted the outcome of the Austro-Prussian War.²⁴ But even their *kleindeutsch* outlook was not sufficient to facilitate cooperation with the pro-Prussian National Liberals, who in turn found no common ground with the *großdeutsch* left liberals.²⁵

Fragile as this coalition of anti-Prussian forces was, it was remarkably successful in Reichstag elections and by-elections held between 1867 and 1869. In the elections to the Constituent North German Reichstag held on 12 February 1867, anti-Prussian candidates won all twenty-three seats in Saxony. Fourteen fell to the conservatives, seven to the left liberals, and two to the Saxon People's Party. The latter two deputies were by far the fiercest opponents of Prussian domination in the North German Confederation.

In those elections of February 1867, Saxon voters were generally presented with only two options: they could cast a vote either for or against a North German Confederation under Prussian hegemony. Vot-

ers had to choose among three candidates when both wings of the workers' movement — the Lassalleans and the SVP — contested a seat, or when a democratic committee fielded a local candidate. Only in Leipzig was there a contest among four parties: the National Liberals, the conservatives, the *großdeutsch* democrats, and the candidate of the Saxon People's Party. In the runoff ballot, law professor Carl Wächter of the conservatives won with the help of the democrats and the socialists. His National Liberal opponent, Leipzig's deputy mayor Eduard Stephani, had captured an astounding 48.4 percent of the vote in the first round of balloting, but he narrowly missed winning an absolute majority in the runoff elections.²⁶

The high voter turnout in the elections of February 1867 suggests the extraordinary politicization of Saxony after 1866. Seven of ten eligible voters went to the polls — a percentage not surpassed until the *Karrell* elections of 1887.²⁷ Voter turnout in Saxony was higher than the average in the North German Confederation and in Prussia, where 64.9 percent of the eligible voters cast ballots. Only Prussian constituencies with a large ethnic Polish population showed a comparable turnout. There the enfranchisement of a national minority was used to create a highly visible national representation.²⁸ High participation worked in Saxony in favor of the conservatives. In general one can say that the higher the turnout in a constituency, the greater the likelihood that a conservative would be elected.

There was an important institutional aspect to the changing relationship between regional and national politics in the late 1860s. Issues of particular importance for Saxony's sovereignty were hotly debated in the local and regional press. Broad communication networks served as institutional backbones for all major players: for conservative particularists, for Progressives, and for National Liberals striving to achieve a unitary state (*Einheitsstaat*). High diplomacy dealt with these questions, but the most important institutional mediation between region and nation was provided by the democratically elected constitutional assembly, the North German Reichstag. It was here that staunch Saxon particularists made peace with the new state, joining forces with other regionalists in the Federalist Constitutional Union (Bundesstaatlich-Constitutionelle Vereinigung).

26. Pollmann, *Parlamentarismus*, 137, 151.

27. Albert Richter, "Die öffentliche Meinung in Sachsen vom Friedenschlusse 1866 bis zur Reichsgründung" (Ph.D. diss., University of Leipzig, 1922), 75; Gerhard A. Ritter with Merith Niehuss, *Wahlgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch: Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreiches, 1871–1918* (Munich, 1980), 89.

28. In the Prussian province of Poznan, voter turnout in February 1867 was 86.6 percent; Pollmann, *Parlamentarismus*, 529.

23. See also Christian Jansen's contribution to this volume.

24. See the Lassallean platform in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 25 July 1866.

25. Klaus-Erich Pollmann, *Parlamentarismus im Norddeutschen Bund, 1867–1870*

(Düsseldorf, 1985), 113; *Nationalzeitung*, no. 597, 19 Dec. 1866; *Vossische Zeitung*, no. 7,

9 Jan. 1867.

It was mainly the federal structure of the North German Confederation that calmed many of the conservatives' fears. Antagonism became skepticism. The constitution not only secured Saxony's state rights but had certain attractive features for the average Saxon voter. The third article of the constitution established freedom of movement and the unrestricted right to settle anywhere in the North German Confederation. Before the promulgation of the constitution, Saxon residents had been prevented by local restrictions (*Heimatrecht*) from exercising such rights even in Saxony, much less in the entire area of the North German Confederation. This was especially important to individuals who chose, or were forced, to seek work outside their hometowns. The civic rights of Saxon Jews were also enhanced: previously, Jews were permitted to settle only in Dresden or Leipzig.

On the other hand, these constitutional changes also gave Germans from outside Saxony the right to move to Saxony, to take jobs there, and to receive public support in case of impoverishment. National standards were developed for compulsory secondary training (*Berufsschule*), for university diplomas, and — not to be underestimated in an age of mass migration — to determine which local community had to provide welfare for persons on relief (*Unterstützungswohnsitz*). Of particular interest was the debate whether Saxony had to accept theologians with a theology diploma from neighboring Reuß and give them pulpits in the kingdom.²⁹ The regulations on free movement also had to be brought into line with compulsory military service requirements. Since Saxony was a net importer of labor, these provisions had an explosive character for the working classes. Up to the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in the summer of 1870, the Saxon public hotly debated these thorny questions concerning military service and welfare requirements.³⁰

Modernizing reform efforts went well beyond the level of the newly founded North German Confederation; they could be felt on the local level too. Saxony introduced a new suffrage law for the lower house of the Saxon *Landtag* and restructured the state administration.³¹ Until 1868 the lower house had a suffrage based on occupational estates.³² The suffrage reform bill of 1868 lowered the census to an affordable 1 *Thaler* (3 marks) and redivided the constituencies along urban (45 consti-

ties) and rural (35) lines. To secure legislative continuity, one-third of the *Landtag's* deputies were to be elected every two years.

Prussia honored Saxony's independence in the Franco-Prussian War and gave its army significant responsibilities in the campaign of 1870–71. Regional pride in the Saxon army focused on their victory at St. Privat. This battle was central for the Saxon memory of the war, more than Sedan or Weißenburg. Ceremonies in public squares, schools, and town meetings continually reiterated Saxony's military contribution to the victory over France, reaffirming Saxons' military pride in the German nation-state and thereby compensating for its defeat in 1866. Dresden and other Saxon cities welcomed their troops back home with a *via triumphalis*, as did Munich and Stuttgart.³³ Conversely, though, Saxon newspapers took little notice of the coronation of the German Kaiser on 18 January 1871. Saxons' collective memory of the war of 1870–71 emphasized instead Saxony's glory and pride within (not outside of) the common victory over an exaggerated "evil enemy." Thus Saxony's glory shone all the brighter. Indeed, Saxons entered a kind of competition with other states to decide who had contributed the most to German unification: Bavarians, Prussians, or Saxons? A language of exclusion had given way to an inclusionary one, though one that had no place for Bebel's socialists, who had disavowed the German war effort after the victory at Sedan. Whereas the democrats switched sides, socialists in the Saxon People's Party stayed firm in their belief that only Großdeutschland could legitimately address the questions of freedom and equality.

National elections in March 1871 reflected this change in mood. Candidates of the National Liberal Party (Nationalliberale Partei) captured a quarter of all votes cast in Saxony, gaining seven seats to the Reichstag. The Progressives, who by now had reconciled themselves to the national state, won eight seats. Thus the supporters of unification won a clear mandate from Saxon voters. The strongest opponents of unification, the socialists, held just two seats. Elections in 1874 showed once again that two strong political camps had emerged in Saxony's political culture. Between 1866 and 1869, elections had been plebiscites between pro- and anti-Prussian forces, with the socialists in the anti-Prussian camp. Socialists' votes were decisive in several hotly contested runoff elections, where their support helped tip the balance toward conservatives (as in Leipzig) or left liberals. After unification, however, this camp disintegrated at the same time that the socialist party grew. In 1874, socialists won 35.4 percent of all votes cast in Saxony, eclipsing the overall vote for any other party for the first time. Six socialists repre-

29. "Der Norddeutsche Bund und seine Angehörigen," *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, no. 151, 2 July 1867.

30. SächsHStA Dresden, Ministerium des Innern Nr. 9599, *Verfassung des Deutschen Reiches*, 1867–1917, passim.

31. Cf. Richard Dietrich, "Die Verwaltungsreform in Sachsen, 1869–1873," *Neues Archiv für Sächsische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 61 (1940): 49–85.

32. See also James Retallack's contribution to this volume.

33. See the reports of the *via triumphalis* in the *Constitutionelle Zeitung*, 13 July 1871.

sented Saxony in the Reichstag. As a general rule, high voter turnout now worked to the advantage of the socialists, whereas seven years earlier it had benefited the Saxon conservatives.³⁴ By the mid-1870s, election campaigns had become essentially a two-party competition between a governmental and a revolutionary party (*Ordnungspartei* versus *Revolutionspartei*). In the runoff ballots, the establishment parties usually combined forces, defeating the socialists.

For the establishment of a nationalist camp in Saxony, two developments were decisive. First, earlier than in other parts of Germany, the Saxon conservatives sided with the governmental parties. They had definitively switched sides as early as April 1877. The program of the Conservative State Association (Conservativer Landesverein) called for a coalition of all antisocialist forces.³⁵ In order to maintain their political influence in parliament under the existing suffrages in Saxony and the Reich, conservatives joined forces with the other nonsocialist parties, thus forging antisocialist solidarity. The Saxon antisocialist *Kartell* also found allies outside the kingdom, since its governmental orientation worked on the national as well as on the regional level. Second, the Saxon socialists were able to establish a monopoly over the long tradition of *großdeutsch* nationalism, which dated back to the campaign for an Imperial Constitution in 1849. The political shift of left liberals in Saxony over to the government side proved to be ambivalent. Saxon Progressives soon entered an informal coalition with the National Liberals (leaving the Social Democrats to fill the vacuum on the left). The Progressives' dramatic move to the right was harshly criticized by their national leader Eugen Richter, who referred to the Saxon branch of left liberalism scornfully as the *Kammerfortschritt*.

One result of this division of the political landscape into two antagonistic camps was that the government parties—which soon entered a formal agreement regarding the running of candidates—showed a tendency to become both more governmental and more nationalist over time. These features became a fundamental element of their electoral profile. For much the same reason, the socialist party became virtually the sole critic of the national state. For a good portion of the population of Saxony, an anti-Prussian consensus had been transformed into an antisocialist one. This bipolar structure of politics in Saxony was distinct-

34. See also Wolfgang Schröder's contribution to this volume; and idem, "Wahlkämpfe und Parteienentwicklung: Zur Bedeutung der Reichstagswahlen für die Formierung der Sozialdemokratie zur politischen Massenpartei (Sachsen, 1867–1881)," *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für die Erforschung der europäischen Arbeiterbewegung*, no. 20 (1998): 1–66.

35. *Leipziger Zeitung*, 16 Apr. 1877; Wolfgang Schröder, "Die Genese des 'Conservativen Landesvereins für das Königreich Sachsen,'" in *Sachsen im Kaiserreich*, ed. Lässig and Pohl, 149–74.

tive. For in most other parts of Germany, the presence of a substantial Catholic population—of which at least a portion was also stigmatized as an "enemy of the Reich"—prevented the socialists from becoming isolated as the sole representatives of anti-Prussian sentiment. It is hard to overestimate the impact of a relatively homogeneous Lutheran population for the development of the Saxon party system, where socialists were the only fundamental critics of the newly founded nation-state. This distinguished the Saxon case from regional party systems in the Rhineland or in Silesia.

III. Conclusions: Negative Integration and Antisocialism

The relationship between regional and national consciousness in Saxony, as in the other small- and medium-sized German states, cannot be seen as simply a matter of one mental pattern (nationalism) displacing another (regionalism). Saxon patriotism did not have to diminish as a new national consciousness grew. In fact a strong regional patriotism often was accompanied by strong national feeling. Saxon patriotism was not destroyed by the defeat of 1866, but rather strengthened. The plebsitary nature of the 1867 Reichstag elections, as well as the high level of grassroots politicization, favored those in the anti-Prussian camp. The more anti-Prussian one was, in fact, the more "Saxon" one felt. The early growth of the Social Democratic Party in Saxony was due in large measure to its uncompromising anti-Prussian position.

How, then, did Saxons become Germans? While the concept of negative integration has generally been used to characterize the position of Social Democrats in Wilhelmine Germany,³⁶ the concept fittingly describes the position of the governmental parties in Saxony after 1871. It was through their increasingly strident antisocialism that these parties came to be integrated into Bismarck's new Reich, which otherwise seemed so distasteful to them. To defend Saxony's sovereignty with increasing vehemence and consistency meant to oppose the "forces of revolution" in the same ways. As a result, Saxon antisocialists discovered a strong affinity with antisocialists in Prussia and other German states. Thus antisocialism became a defining element of German nation-building—not only after passage of antisocialist legislation in 1878, but well before.

36. See Dieter Groh, *Negative Integration und revolutionärer Attentismus: Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Frankfurt a. M., 1973).