

Oded Heilbronner

From Popular Liberalism To Radical Nazism

The case of Greater Swabia

From early 1860s-early 1930s

1. Introduction

In this paper, I shall introduce the term “Popular Liberalism” within the context of German Liberalism and the German Bourgeoisie for the first time.¹ I shall focus on political, social and cultural patterns in Germany up to the early 1930s. I argue that popular-radical liberal bourgeois pressure-groups and parties persistently focussed their criticism on the need to move the political system of the German Second Reich and the Weimar Republic in a more radical direction. By studying this political and cultural formation, I believe I can prove the existence of German Popular Liberalism in a specific region: Greater Swabia (*Groß-Schwaben*) in South Germany. In this region the local bourgeoisie (artisans, rich farmers, small businessmen, civil servants, small entrepreneurs) and members in Liberal movements, fought hard to retain their constituents' loyalty. With varying degrees of success, they opened up the party leadership to new voices, evolved new organizational forms, and sought to placate their electorate by aggressive defense of local industrial interests. In Greater Swabia, local Liberals (mostly members of the National-Liberal Party and peasants organisations) were proudly conscious of their radical identity and strongly determined to survive as an electoral and social force. It can even be said that in some southern regions Popular Liberalism dominated the school, the pub, the local voluntary association (*Verein*) and the Old Catholic church.

¹ By the term Popular Liberalism I mean an English originated political and cultural mass- phenomenon from the second half of the 19th Century characterized by six main elements: 1. Support for a liberal economy (in England mainly free trade. In South Germany, a moderate support for free trade). 2. Political populism expressed in an encouragement of freedom and liberty (particularly constitutional liberty), egalitarianism (in the form of anti-elitist, anti-Junkerish sentiments), and republicanism (in the form of the desire for the common good and the preservation of the community). 3. A religious identity based on Nonconformity, anti-clericalism (in South Germany) and anti-Anglicanism (in England). 4. Advocacy of a nationalist-imperialist foreign policy. 5. The view that politics was underpinned by the notion of a “community” (*Gemeinschaft*) or a “people” rather than a class or the state. 6. Disestablishmentarianism. Here I rely mainly on Eugenio F. Biagini: *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone. 1860-1880*, Cambridge 2004, p.6; Jane Vickers: *Pressure group politics, class and popular liberalism: the campaign for Parliamentary reform in the north-west, 1864-1868*, Manchester 1996, pp. 38ff.

Together with the popular Catholics, the Popular Liberals were the movers and shakers of the local political culture. In short, the existence of a long tradition of plebeian radicalism and its cultural and institutional expression are undoubtedly of great significance.

The major goal of my article is to offer a new explanation for the success of National Socialism before 1933 in certain regions in South Germany: one connected with the fact that there was a substantial continuity in Popular Liberalism throughout the second half of the 19th and the first third of the 20th century.

One of the difficulties about discussing the linkages between German Bourgeoisie, German Liberalism and National Socialism is that it is a subject we seem to know so well that we are unable to reconsider its historical roots. In my study, I wish to re-examine the relations between Popular Liberalism and National Socialism, in the hope that a different viewpoint will produce a deeper understanding of the discourse of the German Bourgeoisie with relation to the Nazi success before 1933. My argument is based on the continuity of radical-liberal bourgeois politics, which in this period continued to be dominant in many parties, pressure-groups and bourgeois associations. According to this interpretation, the post 1920s National Socialism drew from a variety of cultural sources and, especially before 1933, reacted pragmatically to changing circumstances. It is further argued that National Socialist thoughts and actions did not just emerge from within the Nazi Party itself, but also developed autonomously and concurrently within the various subcultures and regions of Weimar Germany with predominantly rural liberal traditions. A fresh look should be taken at the relationship between local-regional identities and national politics, which is illustrated by the fact that a rural Liberalism with a radical legacy existed in certain regions where the Nazi Party won massive electoral successes. In contrast to prevailing beliefs, I suggest that this local-regional radical identity (which will be discussed below as a radical liberal subculture) was not submerged by the Nazi Party, but changed its form of representation.² Here, I should like to follow the advice of the German political historian Karl Rohe: "One is in a better position to estimate the Nazi Party's regional strength if one knows not only the social composition of

² I have developed those ideas in *Oded Heilbronner: From Popular Liberalism to National Socialism*, New-York/London 2015.

the regional electorate but its voting behaviour in the Kaiserreich, that is to say its political-cultural composition”.³

The people and associations of this subculture believed that the Nazi Party could fulfil their radical-liberal vision, rooted in the local democratic and liberal traditions that stretched from 1848 to the early 20th century. Until the late 1920s, liberal and peasants parties, bourgeois organisations and bourgeois associations were the socio-political representatives of this vision and culture. From the late 1920s to the beginning of the 1930s the representatives of these organisations formed the Nazi Party chapters in many villages and towns. By 1932, at least in south Germany and as a result of the Strasser-Himmler-Goebbels organisational reforms within the Nazi party,⁴ this unique Radical-Liberal legacy within the Nazi Party had started to disintegrate and to lose its radical appeal.

This article is divided into three parts. In the first part, I shall describe the unique radical-liberal subculture in Greater Swabia. In the second part, I shall describe the principal stages in the development of Popular Liberalism in South Germany from the mid-19th century to the final years of the Weimar Republic. Finally, I will try to describe how this unique radical-liberal subculture changed its form of representation.

2. The Radical-Liberal Infrastructure

Both in the period of the German Second Reich and in the Weimar period, the radical liberals in Greater Swabia built their success on special traditions and a special infrastructure.⁵ Side by side with the accepted image of South Germany as an Ultramontane domain where liberalism (mainly its political force, The National Liberal Party) failed after the 1870s, we must consider the case of Greater Swabia, which constituted a definite radical-liberal subculture with agents who carried the popular-liberal culture beyond the end of the 19th century.

I would like to dwell briefly on the long-term reasons for the strong support for the radical liberals in Greater Swabia. Greater Swabia was an unusual area in South Germany.⁶ It did not

³ Karl Rohe: *Elections, Parties and Political Traditions*, Oxford 1990, p.16.

⁴ Detlef Mühlberger: „Central Control versus Regional Autonomy: A Case Study of Nazi Propaganda in Westphalia 1925-1932“, in: Thomas Childers (ed.): *The Formation of the Nazi Constituency 1919-1933*, London 1986, pp. 64-103.

⁵ Heilbronner, *Popular Liberalism*; Martina Steber: *Ethnische Gewissheiten: Die Ordnung des Regionalen im bayerischen Schwaben vom Kaiserreich bis zum NS-Regime*, Göttingen 2010.

⁶ I adopted the term “Greater Swabia” (Groß-Schwaben) from Stefan Heinze: *Die Region Bayerisch-Schwaben*:

form part of the political landscape (*politische Landschaft*) of the states of Bavaria, Württemberg and Baden in the first half of the 19th century. Most of the towns and villages in Greater Swabia had a tradition of self-administration (*Selbstverwaltung*) which was contrary to the political culture of some of the areas to the north of Greater Swabia, which from the 17th century were under a centralized rule, whether a regional ruler or the Habsburg emperor. During the process of state-building at the beginning of the 19th century, Greater Swabia developed hostile feelings towards the new post-Napoleonic central authorities. Until the 1820s, the areas of Lake Constance, Hohenzollern and South Baden formed part of the archdiocese of Constance, known for its tolerant liberal attitude, which both religiously and politically was in opposition to the archdiocese of Strasbourg and from the 1820s to the archdiocese of Freiburg and the Baden central government in Karlsruhe. Even before the year 1848 and especially in that year, the area was a focus of social and political protest against the Baden government. In Prussian Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, there was resentment against the Prussian government from 1850 onwards, when the area was annexed to Prussia.

In the 1860s, the cultural strategies were forged which typified the radical-liberal subculture in the area until the eve of the First World War: i.e., a fierce struggle against Ultramontanism, and opposition, which sometimes took the form of physical protest, to any form of central government organization. This opposition was accompanied by the development of organizational, cultural and linguistic tools of expression and the formation of social groups which stressed a tradition of freedom, anti-elitism and an awareness of the special quality of the locality and region (*Heimatgefühl*). Among those groups were, e. g., The National Liberal Party, Young Liberals Associations (*Jungliberale Vereine*), the local liberal newspapers, the bourgeois cultural Voluntary Associations (*Vereine*) which cultivated sport, music, culture and local folklore, and the local schools which even after the 1860s were under the control of the liberals. Finally, the local bourgeoisie – many of them anticlerical in their religious beliefs – concentrated around the Old Catholic Church in towns like Kempten, Lindenberg, Lindau, Constance, Messkirch and Donaueschingen. This subculture was based on a partial

Studien zum schwäbischen Regionalismus im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, Augsburg 1995; Jürgen, Klöckler: Reichsreformdiskussion, Grossschwabenpläne und Alemannentum im Spiegel der südwestdeutschen Publizistik der frühen Weimarer Republik: "Der Schwäbische Bund" 1919-1922, in: Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte 60 (2001), S. 306-312.

opposition, or rather reaction, to the two hegemonic cultures, or – it would be more accurate to say – a reaction to the *image* of the two hegemonic cultures. One was the hegemonic political culture which originated north of the River Main, which stood for a Prussian-German nationhood, bureaucracy, a strong state, militarism and Protestantism, and which was to be found both in Berlin and in the regional governmental Protestant centres of South Germany: Karlsruhe, Stuttgart and Frankfurt. The other was the culture associated with the Catholic-ultramontane hegemony in South Germany and its religious centres in Freiburg, Augsburg and Munich. The response and partial opposition to these two cultures created a radical-liberal subculture characterized by protest and reaction. During certain periods in the second half of the 19th century and even in the Weimar period, the liberal Prussians and even Bismarck served as temporary models for many of the cultural elites in the area, especially in Hohenzollern. Still, the republican traditions of the early modern period, the memory of the frequent rebellions against the central government in the 17th and 18th centuries and the strong hatred for the Catholic Church, especially in its Ultramontane form, fuelled radical-liberal activity during most of the period until the First World War and also afterwards.⁷

In addition, a great deal was said about a constitution being the basis of all governmental actions and about the importance of the concept of freedom and the liberty of the individual. This was not the accepted model of the German idea of freedom, in which the *Obrigkeit* (the authority of the state) determined the degree and limits of freedom. But here it was a freedom determined by a local authority, voluntary bodies, and which existed in a narrower framework – whether it was the *Heimat*, the village, the place of residence or the “community” (*Gemeinschaft*) – to which all who shared the same belief in a vision of freedom deeply rooted in the local culture belonged. The idea of self-administration as a protection for the freedom of the individual and the community against the encroachments of the state and the central authority was extremely popular and continued to be influential in the Weimar period.

⁷ Oded Heilbronner: „In Search of the Catholic (rural) Bourgeoisie: The Peculiarities of the South German Bürgertum“, in: *Central European History* 29 2 (1996), pp. 175-200; Oded Heilbronner: „Regionale Aspekte zum katholischen Bürgertum. Oder: Die Besonderheit des katholischen Bürgertums im ländlichen Süddeutschland“, in: *Blätter für Deutsche Landesgeschichte*, 131 (1995), S. 223-259.

The economic infrastructure provided a strong support for economic liberalism, which in turn provided a basis for popular liberalism. The economic structure of Greater Swabia was unique in South Germany. In addition to many backward farms and villages, there were also large, prosperous farms covering more than twenty acres. As a result of this, an economy with agrarian-capitalist characteristics had developed in the area. A large and visible segment of Catholic bourgeoisie, wealthy farmers, prosperous artisans and owners of workshops had existed in the region since the 18th century. Representatives or supporters of the liberals, most of whom were anticlerical Catholics, directed the main economic institutions of the region: agricultural institutions like the Agricultural Association, the Co-operative and Further-Education Association and the Cattle Insurance Association.⁸

This unique infrastructure relied on four major cultural institutions that were of great assistance to the liberal cultural elites of the region. The first was the National-Liberal party and its Associations like the Young Liberal Associations, which enjoyed a position of unique strength. During the Kaiserreich, an electoral survey of Greater Swabia showed a definite, unusual attraction towards liberal groups and associations and movements. It seems correct to characterize the party as a People's Party (*Volkspartei*) which united citizens of all regions, beliefs and social background. The second has already been mentioned, and that was the Old Catholic Church, which until the end of the 19th century provided the moral support for popular liberalism. The third was the local pro-liberal (and in early 1930s, pro-Nazi) press, which played a key role in the formation of local and radical-national sentiment. The fourth institution which helped to preserve the bourgeois-national anticlerical hegemony in the region and disseminated radical ideas were the bourgeois voluntary associations and clubs. From the 1860s onwards, Voluntary Associations like the Gymnastics Association, the Veterans Association, the Sharpshooters Association, the Choral Association, the Museum- and Theatre Association, or the Historical Association and many others disseminated the idea of radical-liberal ideas in their meetings and events. In the Weimar period, many of them turned towards the nationalist-folkish ideology, stressing the values of direct democracy

⁸ Karl Lindner (Hg.): Geschichte der Allgäuer Milchwirtschaft, Kempten 1955; Joseph Schelbert: Das Landvolk des Allgäu in seinem Thun und Treiben, Kempten 1983, S. 27-29, 30-31; Detlef Herbner: Auf der Baar, für die Baar. 150 Jahre Bezirkssparkasse Donaueschingen, Stuttgart 1989.

without the intervention of parties, and the freedom of the individual within a “people’s community” (*Volksgemeinschaft*).⁹

Thus, the main pillars of Popular Liberalism in Greater Swabia were

1. local traditions and memories, concentrated mainly around self-administration, freedom, independence and disestablishmentarianism,
2. the local bourgeoisie and anti-clerical activists,
3. the economic infrastructure which permitted capitalist activity and encouraged enterprise and free trade,
4. Liberal associations
5. the radical press and, finally,
6. the bourgeois associations.

3. The Politics of the Subculture: 1860s–1930

Between the 1860s – the period of the birth of popular liberalism in the region – and the beginning of the 1930s, with the ascendancy of dogmatic national-socialism, five stages in the development of the radical-popular liberal subculture in South Germany may be discerned.

3.1 The end of the 1860s and the beginning of the 1870s

This was the period when the radical-liberal subculture emerged. Its guiding principles were opposition to Ultramontane tendencies in the Catholic Church, the call for a free-trade economy and the struggle for a united Germany in which the southern regions would find their independent position. The struggle against the Ultramontanes was the most prominent factor at that period, but there were also other matters which preoccupied the south Ger-

⁹ Heilbronner, Popular Liberalism; Oded Heilbronner: "Reichstagswahlkämpfe im Allgäu 1871-1932: Ein abweichende Fall?", in: Zeitschrift für Bayerische Landesgeschichte 97 (1997), S. 297-326.; Jonathan Sperber: The Kaiser's Voters. Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany, Cambridge 1997, p. 145; Oded Heilbronner: „The German Bourgeois Club as a Political and Social Structure Towards the End of the 19th Century and the Beginning of the 20th Century“, Continuity and Change, 27.3.1998, pp. 443-473; Oded Heilbronner: „Der verlassene Stammtisch. Vom Verfall der bürgerlichen Infrastruktur und dem Aufstieg der NSDAP am Beispiel der Region Schwarzwald“, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 19, 2 (1993), 178-201.; Oded Heilbronner: "Die NSDAP – Ein bürgerlicher Verein?", in: Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für Deutsche Geschichte, XXIII, 1994, S. 65-79.

⁹ Donaueschinger Wochenblatt, 8.8.1866.

man liberals. Among those were the demand for far-reaching reforms in schools and in the administrative bureaucracy, together with a demand for equal opportunities for every man, whatever his status or origin, to realize his abilities in the economy and in social life.¹⁰ This demand was not only part of local tradition and the heritage of 1848 but was also influenced by the radical struggle around the Second Reform Act in England in 1866-67. At that period it merged with a struggle for a liberal economy and with opposition to the Prussian aristocracy and bureaucracy and also, to a lesser degree, to those of Bavaria and Baden.

All these aspirations found expression in the struggle against the Ultramontane Catholic Church (the *Kulturkampf*), which was basically a struggle for the future character of Germany.¹¹ Only twenty years had passed from the glorious year 1848-1849, which in Greater Swabia was a revolutionary year in which republican-democratic ideas played a central role. Already in the elections to the Customs Parliament (*Zollparlament-Wahlen*), and all the more at the beginning of the 1870s, the radical liberals put forward a programme which was an almost exact copy of that of 1848. The priests, the senior officials, the Junkers and the local aristocracy were to give way to the educated and democratic bourgeoisie and the productive class of artisans and skilled workers. The new society that emerged would be more egalitarian, and every citizen would be free to hold whatever religious beliefs he wished. As a result of the economic freedom, there would be an economic prosperity which would not only benefit the middle classes but also the workers. The *Kulturkampf* was a pretext for obtaining a new socio-political arrangement exactly as the question of slavery and the Civil War in the United States a few years before, or the struggle over the Second Reform Act in England in the same years had been a pretext for creating a new society.¹²

3.2 The final decade of the 19th century

During the final years of the 19th century the radical-liberal subculture entered a new phase. The reasons for this were the increasing conservatism of the National Liberal Party in the regions northern of the river of Main, the participation of a younger generation in politics on

¹⁰ Staatsarchiv Augsburg, Regierung, 8831, "Wahlaufwurf"; *Kemptner Zeitung*, 18.1.1868 "Offener Brief des Oberländer Bauern".

¹¹ Lothar Gall: "Die Partei und sozialgeschichtliche Problematik des badischen Kulturkampf", in: *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, 113 (1965), 151-196.

¹² David Blackbourn: "Progress and Piety: Liberals, Catholics and the State in Bismarck's Germany", in: *Populists and Patricians. Essays in Modern German History*, London 1987, pp.143-167; Margaret L. Anderson: "The Kulturkampf and the Course of German History", in: *Central European History* 19 (1986), pp. 82-115.

a local level, and social and religious changes caused by economic conditions in Germany (which was emerging from a period of economic depression), the modern consumer culture and growing nationalization of the masses. In Swabia and Bavaria the liberals were weakened and the hegemony passed to their temporary successors, the Bavarian Peasants' Association (*Bayerischer Bauernbund*), which operated chiefly in Lower Bavaria but also had influence in a few regions of Swabia. Although the Bavarian Peasants' Association (in Swabia sometimes called the Swabian Peasants' Association) did not have equal success in all areas, and the organization contained a variety of elements – democratic, liberal, nationalist, conservative – it often engaged in a struggle against the *Obrigkeit*, the government representatives and the Catholic Church which resembled the radical-liberal activities of the 1860s and 1870s.¹³

In Swabia many members of the Peasants' Association were farmers and artisans, former activists of the National Liberal Party. Some of them left the liberal chapters and established liberal-democratic societies before joining the Peasants' Association. The radicalism of the Swabian liberal farmers in their former party, the National Liberals, was now expressed in the Swabian Peasants' Association, especially in the Mindelheim-Günzburg region. In this region, the Peasants' War of 1525 was seen as the model for a struggle for freedom which still had to be waged at the beginning of the 20th century. The "rebellious peasants" of that period devoted their efforts to the struggle against clericalism, opposition to the aristocracy, bureaucracy and urbanization, and championship of the needs and rights of the individual, especially the small farmer and the agricultural labourer.¹⁴

The end of the 19th century is a period which is regarded as both a low-point in the history of German liberalism and as a period in which North German liberalism was attempting to decide on the path to take in the future. It seems that in Greater Swabia as well as in other regions a special German model of a radical democratic movement came into being. Much has been written about the rise of the democratic and antisemitic movements in Hessen and Saxony, the newly-established Catholic mass-organizations and the extension of the scope of

¹³ Anton Hochberger: (1991): *Der bayerische Bauernbund 1893-1914*, München 1991; Alois Hundhammer: *Geschichte des Bayerischen Bauernbunds*, München 1924; Ian Farr: "Peasants Protest in the Empire. The Bavarian Example", in: Robert Moeller (ed.): *Peasants and Lords in Modern Germany*, London 1986, pp. 23-44.

¹⁴ Staatsarchiv Augsburg, BA Memmingen, 6205 („Aufruf“); BA Memmingen, 6181, 12.2.1895, 10.3.1898.

socialist activities throughout Germany. The expression “politics in a new key”¹⁵ is a good description of these developments. In South Germany, together with the struggle against the priesthood, the aristocracy and officialdom, there now came into existence for the first time since the 1860s a form of radical liberalism combining national-liberal imperialist patriotism with economic policies based on a compromise between tariff policies (*Schutzzölle*) and a free market (*Freiandel*) of industrial products. Other elements of this model were a stress on individualism, an opposition to the traditional elites, a demand for freedom for workers and peasants under a constitution which would assure the intervention and assistance of the state in social legislation, and of course the traditional anticlericalism. The heritage of the republican-democratic period 1848-49 continued to be felt. Throughout the elections of 1893, and, even more, 1898 – in which the liberals throughout Germany were supposed to (but did not) celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the revolutionary year 1848 – the radical liberals of Greater Swabia continually praised the heritage of 1848. They especially evoked the revolt of the peasants and artisans in that revolutionary year against the priests and the local aristocracy. In the spirit of 1848 they raised the slogan “Long live Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Dynamite”.¹⁶

3.3 The years before the First World War

Another and very significant change in the radical-liberal subculture took place on the eve of the First World War. In this period, there was a strengthening of the electoral base of liberalism, which had been weakened (especially in Greater Swabia for the reason we have mentioned) after the *Kulturkampf*, and popular liberalism acquired new characteristics. This was part of a general process of a strengthening of German liberalism. The decade before the First World War was marked throughout Germany by a consolidation of the National Liberal Party and the leftist liberal parties.¹⁷ South Germany was no exception, apart from the fact that there a unique form of Liberalism, Popular Liberalism, formed part of the process.

¹⁵ Carl Schorske: "Politics in a New Key: An Austrian Triptych", in: *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 39 No. 4 (1967), pp. 343-386.

¹⁶ "Es lebe die Freiheit, Gleichheit, Brüderlichkeit und der Dynamit" - Prozess Dr. Wassmannsdorff Oberamtmann in Bonndorf gegen 1. Redakteur Heinrich H. Müller ("Freiburger Bote") und Redakteur Friedrich Lanz ("Oberbadisches Volksblatt"), Oktober 1895, p. 16.

¹⁷ Alistair Thompson: *Left Liberals the State, and Popular Politics in Wilhelmine Germany*, Oxford 2000; Jan Palmowski: *Mediating the Nation: Liberalism and the Polity in Nineteenth-century Germany*, in: *German History*, Vol.19 (2001), pp. 573-598; Eric Kurlander: *The Price of Exclusion. Ethnicity, National Identity, and the De-*

There were some outstanding features of the radical-liberal subculture in Greater Swabia. The first was the establishment of the Young Liberal Associations with a radical character. Another outstanding feature of Popular Liberalism in the South of Germany at that period was the establishment (or sometimes re-establishment) of liberal *Vereine* representing the National Liberal Party and/or the leftist liberals (not connected to the Young Liberals). From the beginning of the century, many of them drew up new statutes in which the words “freedom” and “democracy” featured prominently, as a few examples from southern Swabia demonstrate: the liberal *Verein* in Sonthofen reformulated its principles in 1911, and called for “the encouragement of free thought and democratic opinion in the *Fatherland* regions.” In the village of Altusried, the liberal *Verein* declared that its aim was to encourage liberal as well as social activities. In the village of Bayersried, it said that its aim was to educate the public to “popular-free national principles” (*volkstümlich-freiheitliche, nationale Grundsätze*).¹⁸

Attention should be given to the language used by the radical liberals on the eve of the First World War, since later part of it was discernable in the radical-liberals’ post-war subculture. The language was usually directed against the priesthood and the *Zentrum* party. It was accompanied by verbal and physical violence. The violent language which had been so noticeable from the time of the *Kulturkampf* now re-emerged stronger than ever. It was sometimes used by liberal personalities who were revealed as being violent in their private lives and public activities as well. Expressions like the description of the struggle against the *Zentrum* as a *Vernichtung* (extermination) and the election as a *Krieg* (war), a *Schlacht* (battle) or a *Feldzug* (military campaign) recurred again and again. The liberals assailed the priests as “spiritual terrorists” (purveyors of *geistlichen Terrorismus*) or “robbers.”¹⁹ The liberal activists themselves were described as “liberal troops” (*Liberale Truppen*) engaged in a “crusade” against the Church. In southern Swabia, the liberals were described as warriors

cline of German Liberalism, 1898-1933, New York 2001.

¹⁸ The liberal *Verein* in Immenstadt in 1899 revised the first paragraph of its Statutes which were originally written in 1881, replacing the sentence “Aim of the *Verein*... to support the political direction of the Reich” with the sentence “Aim of the *Verein*... to develop the liberal direction of the Reich”. See, Staatsarchiv Augsburg, BZ Sonthofen, 3684, Statuten des liberalen Vereins [...], 1881, 1899); 3687, Statuten [...] 1911, Regierung, BZ Kempten, 9756 – 30.1.1909; BZ Markt Oberdorf, 108b – *Mitgliedkarte und Satzungen* des Liberalen Vereins Bayersried 1911; BZ Sonthofen 3691 – *Liberale Vereinigung Hindelang* 1912.

¹⁹ These observations are based on pamphlets in the Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe- Nationalliberale Partei S. 69/87, 96,103.

marching forth to war (needless to say, against the priesthood) “with a calm expression, cold blood and confident steps.” This language was apparently not unique to South German liberalism: in Kassel (Hessen), the representative of the Young Liberals in 1907 expressed himself as follows: “For us National Liberals there is a clear duty: struggle against the *Zentrum* and the Antisemites until their elimination.”²⁰

Thus, the continued frequent usage of expressions like “Freedom”, “Democracy”, “Liberation from Slavery”, “Struggle”, “War”, “Constitution”, “*Gemeinschaft*”, “*Vaterland*”, “*Heimat*” alongside expressions of opposition to the state, the establishment, the bureaucracy and the aristocracy, as well as the verbal violence we have described show remarkable continuity. This is at least the case in the culture and political language of Greater Swabia, despite the difference of atmosphere between the 1860s and the decade preceding the First World War. This continuity undoubtedly illustrates the special character of South Germany: the combination of aggressiveness with liberal-democratic-republican principles that gives a unique colouring to South German liberalism on the eve of the First World War, something which perhaps facilitated its adaptation to the protest movements after the war and finally to National-Socialism.

4. The First World War and the First decade of the Weimar Republic. Discontinuity and Currents of continuity

The deep discontinuity between the pre-war and the post-war periods caused by the First World War and the post-war German crisis and inflation is well documented. But, despite these upheavals, there are some cases where a continuity is also well documented.²¹ There is no doubt that Greater Swabia suffered like all regions in Germany from the war, but in spite of the intervening upheavals, on the whole, continuity prevailed over change. Truly, the war effort damaged the handful of industries that constituted the economic backbone of Greater Swabia. Most branches of local economy were harnessed to the need of war production and agriculture, the most important source of livelihood for local population, had been placed under state control in 1915. By then, the nationalistic enthusiasm which had

²⁰ “Für uns Nationalliberale ergibt sich eine unzweideutige politische Aufgabe: Kampf gegen Zentrum und Antisemiten bis zur Vernichtung.” quoted in Gerhard Sunkel: Nationalliberal. Ansprache an die nationalliberale Jugend Cassels, Cassel 1907, S. 27.

²¹ See the same argument in Benjamin Ziemann: Front und Heimat: Ländliche Kriegserfahrungen im südlichen Bayern 1914-1923, München 1999, S. 470.

swept parts of the region's population in August 1914 had disappeared without trace. In this regard, the Greater Swabia inhabitants shared the experience of German society at large from 1916. However, their plight was further exacerbated by the economic and social periphery position of the region which rendered them more vulnerable to administrative intervention.

The revolutions of 1918-1919 in all parts of Germany, including Greater Swabia, affected the radical-liberal subculture. The events of 1918 had divergent impacts in various parts of Greater Swabia. Also the revolutions of 1918 in Greater Swabia was experienced differently, as the new hatred and fear of Socialism and mainly Communism was something new to the political culture of the region. On the other hand, currents of continuity in radical-liberalism were noticeable and I will come to them later. But together with them, some components of the radical liberal subculture began to disintegrate. Popular liberalism split into a number of different liberal and agrarian groups which from the beginning of the 1920s fought against each other as well as engaging in the traditional struggle against the state and the Catholic Church. In addition to this organizational fragmentation, new radical elements – anti-Marxism and an intensified anti-Socialism, hitherto unknown elements to the region's political culture, contributed to a change in the modes of action of South German popular liberalism, and of course (despite continuity in many spheres) to changes in the radical-liberal rhetoric of the liberal movements which existed in Greater Swabia before the war.

But before describing these changes, one must note the elements of continuity. The traditional liberal parties, under new names, continued to operate and to win considerable sympathy after 1918 in the majority of towns and villages in which they had been strong previous to the war. In southern Swabia, chapters of the National Liberal Party continued to operate under the name *Deutsche Volkspartei (DVP)-Nationalliberale* at least until 1928, and in a large number of important towns and villages like Lindenberg, Walterhofen, Immenstadt and Oberstdorf they had considerable electoral success. In Central Swabia, the liberals, and especially the German Democratic Party (the DDP), succeeded in putting forward a radical-liberal platform focused on fear of communism and state intervention in the economic sphere. The use of these motifs against the background of the leftist and rightist revolutions in Munich and Bavaria at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919 was effective with the dairy-farmers and the representatives of the light industries in the area until at least 1920.

From the mid-1920s, there was an increasing collaboration between the liberals and the branches of the Bavarian Peasant Association (the *Bayrische Bauernbund*, after 1919 called the *Bauern- und Mittelstandspartei*) in the whole of Bavaria and in southern Swabia. In this co-operation, the peasants' movements set the tone. In southern Baden, an independent peasants' movement was set up for the first time: The Baden Agrarian Association (*Der Badische Landbund*). It grew out of the post-war peasants' councils (*Bauernräte*), and had many radical-liberal members.²² But here one finds continuity, too: in the Constance region, the new liberal parties founded liberal associations in accordance with the traditions that existed before the First World War. In the elections to the National Assembly and the Reichstag in 1919 and in 1920, the liberals won wide support in their traditional strongholds: Constance, Messkirch, Waldshut, St. Blasien, Lenskirch, Bonndorf and many other towns and villages.²³

The traditional attitudes of desire for freedom and opposition to the aristocracy were also strongly expressed in the referendum on the expropriation of the princes (*Volksbegehren und Volksentscheid zur Enteignung der Fürstenvermögen*) which took place in 1926. A majority of local farmers and artisans in small towns and villages supported the expropriation solution. In addition to this anti-establishment tendency, there was a continuity of support for a liberal economy among liberal groups and peasants' organizations.²⁴

Of course, hostility to the Catholic Church and to political Catholicism remained one of the cornerstones of the organizational activities of the farmers, and especially of the *Badische Landbund*, after the war as well. The call for freedom, for the right of the farmer and the artisan to live as they pleased and to practice religion as they wanted, and a rejection of the dictates of the priests in the schools, demonstrate a continuity in popular liberalism from the period of the Empire to the time of the Weimar Republic. Attacks on priests were a routine affair in the Baar region in South Baden after 1920, and farmers' tales of their sufferings and their exploitation by the priests from the time of the Peasants' War in the 16th century, including their experiences during the Saltpetre rebellions in the 18th century, and the tradi-

²² Emil Bleibtreu: Die Bauernbewegung im Bezirk Bonndorf 1919-1922, Bonndorf 1922.

²³ Oded Heilbronner: "The Impact and Consequences of the First World War in a Catholic Rural Area", in: German History Vol.11 (1993), pp. 20-36.

²⁴ „Für die Sicherheit des Privateigentums, insbesondere auch des Privateigentums an Grund und Boden“, *Schwarzwälder Zeitung*, 3.1.1922.

tional descriptions of the oppression of the workers by the monastery of St. Blasien, were recycled after the war and disseminated throughout southern Baden.²⁵

Currents of continuity are reflected in the post-war careers of radical liberals. Immediately after the war, many of them gave their support to the DVP or the DDP. During the first years of the republic, they were engaged in many interest groups while leaving the liberal parties. So, many of them found their way into peasant organizations and parties such as the *Ba-dische Landbund*, *Allgäuer Bauernverband*, or the *Bayerische Bauernbund*. The Merk, Weishaar and Frank families – all large-scale farmers or prosperous artisans – joined the *Ba-dische Bauernbund*, and later the Nazi Party. Together with these, local notables such as mayors of towns, heads of villages and many schoolteachers (especially teachers in primary schools –*Volksschullehrer*) emerged, as in the days of the Empire, as a radical, anticlerical element. They were all disappointed about the collaboration between the old liberal parties and the old-new regime established after the 1920 elections to the *Reichstag*, which was mainly composed of representatives of the old Prussian and local elites.

There was also in South Germany a certain continuity in the activities of those cornerstones of German liberalism, the bourgeois *Vereine*. Despite the crisis that hit many of them during the war and immediately after, from the beginning of the 1920s most of them acted on behalf of the unique Swabian culture in the best pre-war liberal cultural tradition, although now they did not specifically declare their commitment to popular liberalism. Together with these activities, there was a nationalist and anti-socialist extremism in the actions of the *Vereine* that had not been so noticeable before the war. This extremism was generally accompanied by anticlerical activity under the slogan “*Volksstum gegen die Bayerische Volkspartei*”.²⁶ In addition to their activities on behalf of the *Heimat*, the *Vereine* saw themselves as defenders of the *Vaterland* against its external enemies – at that time, the socialists and the communists. Prestigious *Vereine* like the *Turnvereine* and the *Männergesangvereine* saw themselves as representing the true will of the people divided by opposing party loyalties. Calls for a democracy that would rise above class and political differences appeared increasingly in the pronouncements of the *Vereine*. Together with the *Vereine* activity, the

²⁵ Bleibtreu, *Bauernbewegung*, S. 10; Emil Bleibtreu: *Landbund. Sein Auftreten und sein Wirken im Bezirk Bonndorf 1922-1924*, Karlsruhe 1924.

²⁶ *Allgäuer Tagblatt*, 20.7.1924; more details Heilbronner, German.

aggressive language, the violent rhetoric and the physical violence that had existed before the war, were now exacerbated by the events of the war, the rightist and leftist revolutions experienced in a number of regions of Bavarian Swabia and the economic distress and the climate of violence experienced by the people of the period. For example, there was the (new and frequent) use of the terms “communists” and “bolshevists” to describe government officials visiting the villages of the Baar in southern Baden in order to apply some law or other. The use of the word “extermination” (*Vernichtung*) which had already occurred before the war, was now more frequent, and it was accompanied by an atmosphere of violence that reflected the violence that existed in reality. In Immenstadt in southern Swabia and Lindau on the shores of Lake Constance, liberal activists and folkish and right-wing groups (a new phenomenon on the local scene) used violent language and made power demonstrations in the streets.²⁷

But the break that took place was as noticeable as the continuity. The clearest sign of the weakening and finally the disintegration of the radical-liberal subculture in Greater Swabia was the disintegration of the bourgeois *Vereine*, especially from the mid-1920s onwards. Popular Liberalism also lost its newspapers. Many newspapers that had supported the liberals before the war began immediately after the war to support the peasants’ organizations, and from 1930 on, they moved in an increasingly anti-republican and finally National-Socialist direction. Support for anti-Marxist actions and fear of the bolshevist menace became quite central to the decisions of liberal voters, supporters and activists. Such behaviour represents maybe more than anything else the rupture with the radical-liberal tradition.

The liberal parties also experienced a profound crisis from the end of the 1920s. It is true that immediately after 1918 the liberal sympathisers, mainly farmers and artisans, supported them in rural communities with a liberal electoral past. But from 1921, many of them di-

²⁷ Here it is important to mention Thomas Childers important work; Thomas Childers: “The Social Language of Politics in Germany. The Sociology of Political Discourse in the Weimar Republic”, in: American Historical Review 2 (1990), pp. 331-358. Childers stresses in his work the centrality of occupation in the social vocabulary of Weimar political discourse with strong connotations of estate (*Stand*) and occupation-estate (*Berufsstand*) in it. Since his work concentrates on political activity in mainly urban centers, his conclusions do not reflect the situation in agrarian regions where religion, local traditions and of course, economic problems played a crucial role in the social vocabulary. For Greater Swabia see Paul Hoser: “Die Revolution von 1918/19 in Memmingen-Verlauf, Ursachen, Folgen”, in: Reinhard Baumann (Hg.): Die Revolution von 1918-19 in der Provinz, Constance 1996, S. 83-101; Staatsarchiv Augsburg, Regierung, 18224-Wochenberichte, Halbmonatsberichte, 8.7.1922; Bezirksämter, Lindau, 3611- Krieger und Veteranenvereine im BZ Lindau, 17.7.1929; Stadtarchiv Immenstadt, Chronik Glötze

rected their support to the local peasants' organizations: in Swabia and Bavaria the Bavarian (and Allgäu) Peasant Association and in Baden the local Agrarian Association.²⁸ They in turn grew weaker towards the end of the 1920s and suffered from internal disputes which centered around the attitude toward the Weimar republican institutions, the liberal economic policy, local economic- administrative independence and finally the attitude to strong government intervention.²⁹ In South Baden, some of the former members of the Agrarian Association joined the DVP, which under the leadership of Stresemann supported the Weimar Republic, while others joined the newly founded Baden Agrarian Association (*Badischer Landbund*), and later joined the Nazi Party that had just begun to operate in South Baden from 1928.

5. The re-emergence of popular-radical Liberalism.

In view of the processes of fragmentation and disintegration and the weakness of the former radical-liberal subculture, many of those who had belonged to it in the past now sought a cultural alternative which would restore their vigour and provide a real promise of regeneration for the disintegrating subculture. Many flocked to the National Socialist chapters in Greater Swabia. They came from many different political and cultural backgrounds. In the ranks of the Nazi Party and among its voters there were both Catholics and Protestants, and of course people from many different social strata. The social composition of the Nazi Party in Greater Swabia after 1930 could undoubtedly have reminded many people from both the Catholic clerical camp (who would have regarded it with deep suspicion) and from the radical-liberal camp (who would have been encouraged by it) of another, similar "people's party" (*Volkspartei*): the National Liberal Party in the days of the *Kulturkampf*, and especially the southern radical-liberal fraction within it. Thus, together with some former socialists and communists, with antisemites and conservative liberals, the radical-liberal fraction was one of the constituent elements of the chapters of the National Socialist movement in Greater Swabia.³⁰

²⁸ Oded Heilbronner: *Catholicism, Political Culture, and the Countryside. A Social History of the Nazi Party in South Germany*, Michigan 1998; Heilbronner, *Reichstagswahlkämpfe*.

²⁹ Larry Eugene Jones: 'Crisis and Realignment: Agrarian Splinter Parties in the Late Weimar Republic', in: Robert G. Moeller (ed.): *Peasants and Lords in Modern Germany*, Boston 1986, pp. 210-224, p. 214.

³⁰ Heilbronner, *Catholicism*.

From 1929 on, a growing number of priests began to notice a disturbing resemblance between the pre-war radical-liberal movement and the Nazi movement in Southern Germany. By 1931 the uneasiness had extended to many conservative bourgeois citizens who viewed the radicalism of the new movement with alarm. Both the priests and conservative bourgeois were aware of the points of continuity between pre-war radical liberalism and the Nazi movement, i.e, the revived idea of a "people's community" (*Volksgemeinschaft*) and the Nazis' opposition to the *Obrigkeit* and the Catholic Church. Along with their call for equality and direct democracy, this reflected the radical-liberals' dream of returning to the "lost world" prior to the war. Unlike these two groups, some segments of the local society were attracted to the National Socialists' violent use of anticlerical motifs while others were drawn to the movement's anti-institutional, anti-system image, as it was reminiscent of the Young Liberals' preoccupations just before the war. Still others believed the vigorous actions against the left in the cities of Northern and Western Germany were the National Socialists' most important contribution.

In a large number of villages, it was well known that many of those who began to support the Nazis in the late 1920s were the same persons and descendants of families and individuals who had professed radical-liberal beliefs or had supported Popular Liberalism before 1914 or during the Weimar period.

Among radical liberals, support for the National Socialist movement followed three patterns:

1. Radical-liberals who set up chapters (*Ortsgruppe*) became members and disseminated National Socialist propaganda with a radical-liberal flavor in the various regions of Greater Swabia.
2. Another group, consisting of former farmers, artisans and notables (*Honoratioren*), tended to see National Socialism as the continuation of their radical path before the war. They or their parents had been members of the liberal or peasants' movements in the past and after 1928 joined the chapters of the National Socialist movement, worked on its behalf, but did not become members out of fear for their jobs and position.
3. And, finally, there were liberal figures who, while still active in their old parties (the DDP or the DVP), publicly endorsed the Nazi movement or some of its ideas.

The rituals and ceremonies of the new movement and those of pre-war radical-liberals displayed several similarities. There was the role of the "travelling speaker" or the local poet in the activity of both movements, the very strong affiliation between the bourgeois *Verein* and the Nazi movement, and the same tavern which was chosen as the meeting place for both radical-liberals in the past and members of the Nazi movement in the early 1930s.³¹

Similarities could equally be found in both movements' narratives: the narrative of inclusion and exclusion, the narrative of struggle (*Kampf*), the narrative of freedom (*Freiheit*), the narrative of a "people's community" (*Volksgemeinschaft*). And, lastly, both groups were democratic in their commitment to a "government for the people": e.g., Popular Liberalism before 1914 and National Socialism, at least in Greater Swabia until 1931-32, were marked by a strong emphasis on pragmatism and an acceptance of both constitutional methods (elections, elected government) and the already existing aspirations of the people.³² The resilience of these attitudes in a variety of political contexts can be explained by their very deep historical roots, which can be traced back to 1848 or even earlier.

It may be assumed that the capacity of Nazi chapters in Greater Swabia to assimilate time-honoured traditions congenial to pre-war liberal activists, activists of the peasants' movements and supporters of the Weimar liberal parties created a radical-liberal current side by side with the social-leftist and folkish-rightist currents within the chapters of the local National Socialist movement in that part of Germany.³³

The radical-liberal activists, now members or supporters of the National Socialist movement, were dealing with a public that had partly retained the characteristics of the "world of yesterday" – the period before the First World War. Until 1931-32 they did not fear to express in meetings of the movement or in internal discussions ideas similar to those they had expressed on the eve of the war or earlier. Many speeches featured the familiar themes of the Swabian *Heimat* in opposition to Prussia, the monarchy and the Junker aristocracy and called for the abolition of the republican-democratic system, the practice of a nationalistic foreign

³¹ Heilbronner, Stammtisch; Heilbronner, NSDAP.

³² In Greater Swabia, the notion of People (*Volk*) had, at least until mid 1930s more Liberal-Democratic meaning based on past memories and pre-1914 traditions than the Nazi-Racist meaning, which was widespread in the eastern part of Sot German and of course in other regions in Germany. On this topic see recently Jill Stephenson: 'The *Volksgemeinschaft* and the Problems of Permeability: The Persistence of Traditional Attitudes in Württemberg Villages', in: *German History* vol. 34 1 (2016), pp. 54-87.

³³ Many examples can be found in Heilbronner, *Popular Liberalism*, pp.172-175.

policy and the creation of an anticlerical, democratic-egalitarian *Volksgemeinschaft* without class differences, where freedom would prevail and individuals could find happiness and pursue their self-development. At least until 1932, no one among the folkish or the semi-socialist National Socialists would have opposed the activities of radical-liberals in the Nazi Party's chapters in the regions of Greater Swabia.³⁴

6. Conclusion: the peculiarity of southern German liberalism

By early 1930, the Nazi movement in Germany contained many different propagandist and ideological elements. Some, like racial antisemitism, lost their propagandist power by that time, and some voters mistakenly assumed that Nazi antisemitism was no longer a central feature for the party leadership. At the same time, the radical-liberal factor also lost some of its power in the movement's chapters in Greater Swabia. The worsening of the political and economic crisis, the ever-increasing violence, the fear of bolshevism and the strengthening of the communist party, together with internal processes within the Nazi Party such as the rise of the cult of the *Führer* at the beginning of 1932, the transference of the movement's centre of activity to the corridors of power in Berlin and the policy-shift of the party headquarters in Berlin and Munich in a more totalitarian, anti-liberal direction (as we saw in Greater Swabia and among ex-radical-liberal groups expressed by the imposition of centralization and ideological control) influenced the activities of the movement in the provinces³⁵ and made things difficult for those who felt uncomfortable with the new atmosphere in Germany as reflected in the party's chapters. In South Germany, these were chiefly the former radical-liberal activists. It was more difficult for them than for others to realize their vision in the chapters of the National Socialist movement in South Germany.³⁶

But that does not mean that many of them went back to supporting their former liberal parties and the peasant movements or took refuge in political indifference. Some of them became more extreme in their attitudes and from 1932 on supported the new radical Nazi line with its more anti-liberal, folkish and extremist tone. Most of the elements of the traditional slogan of the radical liberals in Greater Swabia - "Long live Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and

³⁴ Heilbronner, Catholicism.

³⁵ Mühlberger, Central Control.

³⁶ Heilbronner, Catholicism, pp. 91-97.

Dynamite" ("Es lebe die Freiheit, Gleichheit, Brüderlichkeit und der Dynamit")³⁷ – had now been abandoned due to the strengthening of the extreme left and the impasse reached by the regime, and only the *Dynamite* remained. The radical liberals in South Germany like many other Germans wanted a solution that would bring order and stability, and if it was necessary to use force in order to achieve this, it was better to do so before a communist revolution broke out.

The year 1932 may perhaps have reminded elderly radical liberals and their families and children in South Germany of another, similar period: the 1860s and the 1870s. The atmosphere of that period had been perceived at the time as posing a threat to their existence. Ultramontanism was viewed by the liberals as a threat to freedom of the individual, to a liberal economy, to the right of the Germans to live in a nation-state. This was the background to the rise of the Old Catholics and the democratic liberal movements. In addition to this struggle, the radical liberals also launched their campaign against enemies like the aristocracy and the bureaucracy whom they regarded as corrupt. The struggle against the bolsheviks and communists and the popular claims against the German elites was seen by quite a number of former radical liberals in 1932 as resembling the struggle against Ultramontanism in the period of the *Kulturkampf*.

But there were also definite differences which caused the radical liberals at the beginning of the 1930s to behave differently and to end their careers in a different way from their counterparts in the 1870s. From the mid-19th century until the 1880s, the liberals had the cultural hegemony in Germany.³⁸ Most Germans saw their culture as unquestionably bourgeois-liberal. This culture went together with a successful liberal economy, a bourgeois legal code, universal values of justice and freedom of the individual, and – in most German states – a political majority in the local legislative bodies. That Germany was able to permit the liberals to dictate the nature of the struggle against the Catholic Church and the aristocracy.³⁹ Similarly, in South Germany, popular liberalism was able to develop, within the dominant Catholic culture, a style of its own and its own forms of reaction and struggle against Ultramonta-

³⁷ See n.16.

³⁸ Eley Geoff: "Bismarckian Germany", in: Gordon Martel (ed.): *Modern Germany Reconsidered: 1870-1945*, New York/London 1996, pp. 7-17; Palmowski, *Mediating*.

³⁹ Blackbourn, *Progress*; Margaret L. Anderson: *Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany*, Princeton 2000, pp. 260-265.

nism, the state and the aristocracy. The special character of South Germany was expressed in the liberal subculture, which had lasting-power and prolonged success.

But after the First World War and especially at the beginning of the 1930s, the German power-structures and culture, including those in South Germany, were entirely different. The liberal forces were weakened and tired, the liberal economy was in deep crisis and the liberal political culture was no longer hegemonic but fragmented, violent and very frightened of the extreme left. The only force on which the radical liberals who had come into existence in Greater Swabia felt they could rely to protect their interests and allow them to act freely were the chapters of the National Socialist movement in Greater Swabia. Some of these chapters had been founded by liberals, and they closely resembled those of the radical liberals and their successors, the peasant movements. For some time it seemed that the radical-liberal subculture might be resurrected. But the more the German crisis intensified, the more extreme the National Socialist movement and the German population became, the hope of the radical liberals dwindled. From being radical liberals they now moved on to become national socialists.

Table

**The National-Liberal (NL) / The National Socialist Party (NS) connection in Great Swabia
Election results (%) to the Reichstag in selected districts and towns**

| Year | 1871 | 1907 | 1912 | 1928 | 1930 | 1932 (July) |
|----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------------|
| Party | NL * | NL | NL | NS | NS | NS |
| National Average | 30.1 | 14.5 | 13.6 | 2.6 | 18.3 | 37.3 |
| County of Freiburg (South Baden) | 40 | 33 | 37 | 2.5 | 21 | 40.3 |

Liberalismus und Nationalsozialismus – eine Beziehungsgeschichte

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|
| District of Bonndorf (South Baden)** | 80.5 | 50.1 | 49 | 7.6 | 25.6 | 38.3 |
| District of Donaueschingen (South Baden) | 56 | 51.5 | 51.7 | 2.3 | 21.3 | 49 |
| District of Lindau (Allgäu) | 66 | 40 | 53 | 6.6 | 24.6 | 37.9 |
| District of Neustadt (South Baden) | 62 | 28.6 | 26.1 | 2.9 | 21 | 39 |
| District of Sonthofen (Allgäu) | 70.1 | 46,1 | 51.6 | 2.7 | 21.2 | 41.4 |
| Lindenberg (Allgäu) | 67 | 50.6 | 54.7 | 5 | 30.1 | 41.3 |
| Martinszell (Allgäu) | 59 | 65.4 | 57.3 | 9 | 35 | 45.1 |
| Schlatt (South Baden) | 40.3 | 36.7 | 50 | 6.3 | 36.1 | 70.4 |
| Seppenhofen (South Baden) | 50.6 | 48 | 40.6 | 54.4 | 32.5 | 56.2 |
| Sigmaringen (Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen) *** | 58.3 **** | 26.3 | 27.3 | 3.1 | 19 | 37.8 |
| Triberg (South Baden) | 70.2 | 32.1 | 30 | 8.6 | 29.5 | 39.1 |
| Wollmatingen (South Baden) | 87 | 34 | 43.1 | 4.3 | 25.3 | 38.5 |

*In some counties and districts the party appeared under the name Liberale Reichspartei

** From 1928 the results apply only to the town of Bonndorf

*** The Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was a Prussian province in Great Swabia. In 1912 the NL Cooperate with "The Progressive People's Party" (Fortschrittliche Volkspartei)

**** In the district of (Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen) the Liberal camp won 99.3 % of the voters

Data used from: Tag und Anzeigebblatt für Kempten und das Allgäu, 8.3.1871, 30.1.1907; 20.1.1912; Hochwächter auf dem Schwarzwald (Neustadt), 26.3.1871; 30.1.1907; 20.1.1912 Donaueschinger Wochenblatt, 9.3.187; Vierteljahrshefte zur Statistik des Deutschen Reichs, 14,1912; Statistik des Deutschen Reiches, Vol. 382, Die Wahlen zum Reichstag am 14.9.1930, Vol. 434, Die Wahlen zum Reichstag am 31.7.1932; Allgäuer Zeitung 26.1.1907, 12.1. 1912; Württembergische Jahrbücher für Statistik und Landeskunde, 1907,1912, 1932; Badisches Statistisches Landesamt (Hg.): Karlsruhe, Statistische Mitteilungen über das Großherzogtum Baden, XXIV (1907), Neue Folge Band V (1912), Neue Folge Band VII (1914), Wahlen zum Reichstag am 20.5.1928, 14.9.1930, 31.7.1932; Fritz Kallenberg (Hg.): Hohenzollern (Schrif-

ten zur politischen Landeskunde Baden-Württembergs), Bd. 23, Stuttgart 1993, S. 282.

Map

The historical border of Greater Swabia ca. 1900



X X X = Greater Swabia Template: <https://www.mapsofworld.com/deutsch/deutschland/>

ZITATION:

Oded Heilbronner: From Popular Liberalism To Radical Nazism. The case of Greater Swabia. From early 1860s-early 1930s, in: Heuss-Forum, Theodor-Heuss-Kolloquium 2017, URL: www.stiftung-heuss-haus.de/heuss-forum_thk2017_heilbronner.