Defining the ‹social question› and making ‹society› in the long nineteenth century

Defining the ‹Social Question› and making ‹society› in the long nineteenth century

Julia Moses and Martin Lengwiler

Zusammenfassung/Abstract

Der Beitrag untersucht in diskursanalytischer Perspektive die Entwicklung der «Sozialen Frage» in Westeuropa während des 19. Jahrhunderts. In den 1830er-Jahren geriet die «Soziale Frage» in den westeuropäischen Staaten auf die politische Agenda. Der Kulminations- und gleichzeitige Endpunkt dieser Debatten fiel mit dem Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs zusammen, als eine neue internationale Ordnung geschaffen wurde, die explizit der Wahrung des sozialen Friedens dienen sollte. Die «Soziale Frage» erhielt im Verlauf des 19. Jahrhunderts je nach Kontext unterschiedliche Bedeutungen. Einige sahen in ihr eine Frage des humanitären Gewissens. Andere ein Vehikel, um die gesellschaftliche Ordnung aufrechtzuerhalten. Diese Positionen wurden durch spezifische Gesellschaftsbilder noch akzentuiert, je nachdem ob die Gesellschaft als ökonomische oder zivilgesellschaftliche Einheit verstanden wurde. In der «Sozialen Frage» kamen ökonomisches Denken, sozialphilosophische Traditionen, politische Debatten und der Blick der Regenbogenpresse zusammen, getrieben von unmittelbaren Ängsten vor Hungerkrisen und den Schatten des Fabrikwesens. Der Begriff fiel auch deshalb auf fruchtbaren Boden, weil er verbreiteten Unsicherheiten über den gesellschaftlichen Wandel und die Rolle von Gesellschaft für die Definition individueller Lebensentwürfe einen Ausdruck verlieh.

This article traces the discursive framing of the ‹social question› in Western Europe over the long nineteenth century. The ‹social question› sprang onto the political map across industrialising Europe in the 1830s. Debates about the concept found both their swansong and culmination in the establishment, following the First World War, of a new international order that consciously sought to ensure ‹social peace›. The ‹social question› evoked different understandings in different contexts over the course of the century. For some, it was an issue of humanitarian sensibilities. For others, it was about maintaining social order. Underscoring these deliberations were differing views about the meaning of society, as an economic unit, on the one hand, and as a form of community, on the other. Bridging economic thought, social philosophy, political debate and the popular press,

the ‹social question› transcended immediate anxieties about factory reform and mass hunger. The concept spoke to a broader concern about changing social structures and the role of ‹society› in shaping the lives of individuals.

Introduction

This chapter traces the discursive framing of the ‹social question› in Western Europe over the long nineteenth century, from the outbreak of the revolution in France in 1789 through to the end of the First World War. The ‹social question› sprang onto the political map across industrialising Europe in the 1830s and came to a climax amidst the wave of industrial rest that beset much of the continent from the 1880s to the 1910s. Debates about the concept saw their swansong during the First World War, as domestic worries about poverty and ill health elided with new concerns about preserving both national and international order. Across interwar Europe, language shifted towards an emphasis on maintaining the ‹social peace› that the League of Nations had seemed to promise in 1919. Within national contexts, from depression-era Britain to National Socialist Germany and Soviet Russia, meanwhile, the ‹social question› had been replaced by new conceptions about the role of the individual in what had come to be seen, more than ever, as *nation*-states. Within this context, the ‹social question› lost significance. On the one hand, the nation and national obligations came to replace society as a point of reference. On the other, international and humanitarian obligations, embodied in new languages of universal norms and human rights, had replaced a narrow focus on ‹the social›.[1] The long nineteenth century, therefore, was unique in conceptualising *society* as a locus that could be characterised by common standards of living to be upheld through the collaborative work of civil society, individuals, families and the state.

To be sure, the ‹social question› had evoked various understandings over the course of the long nineteenth century. For some, it was an issue of humanitarian sensibilities that cut across confessional and class divides. For others, and especially in the aftermath of the revolutions that had swept across Europe in 1848, the question was about maintaining social order. Underscoring these deliberations were differing views about the meaning

---

[1] Moses, Julia: Social Policy, Social Welfare and Social Identities (1900–1950). In: Doumanis, Nicholas (Ed.): The Oxford Handbook of Early Twentieth-Century Europe. Oxford 2015.

of society, as an economic unit and as a form of community. Bridging economic thought, social philosophy, political debate and the popular press, the ‹social question› transcended immediate anxieties about factory reform and mass hunger. The concept spoke to a broader concern about changing social structures and the role of ‹society› in shaping the lives of individuals. Despite these differences, concerns about the ‹social question› were widespread across much of Europe over most of the century and served as a powerful motor for the creation and modernization of social policies. As Holly Case has recently observed, the phrase ‹possessed above all a structuring tendency› that seemed to require its user to make a choice about how to act.[2] This chapter aims to shed light on the tension between the universality and the particularity of the ‹social question› as both a concept and a heuristic mechanism for social reform across Europe during the long nineteenth century. The success of the concept of the social question was based on addressing ostensibly universal problems and values. At the same time, the ‹social question› took on specific semantics in different contexts. This chapter focuses primarily on Western Europe and analyses transfers of ideas, and shared experiences of ‹social problems›, yet it also considers how social policy debates differed across Europe. With this comparative and transnational perspective, we aim to shed light on some of the broader conceptual trends that informed social policy in Europe during the long nineteenth century, offering an intellectual backdrop to Glarus’ pathbreaking Factory Act of 1864.

Our chapter is structured thematically and chronologically, linking specific political and economic moments in nineteenth-century European history with distinct but connected themes in the development of the ‹social question›. Due to space constraints, we have decided to focus on Britain, Germany and Switzerland, though we have attempted to situate these examples within a broader European context. Each of these countries provides an illuminating optic into understandings of the social question during this period. On the one hand, each country saw – in different ways – a dramatic upsurge in industrialization and urbanization. On the other hand, these countries not only differed in terms of their religious make-up. They also differed in terms of how the state interacted with confessional groups, as well as other philanthropic groups and local and regional governments in addressing social problems. These complex and unique experiences, we suggest, contributed to different ways of conceiving the ‹social question›. Nonetheless, we show

---

[2] Case, Holly: The Social Question. 1820–1920. In: Modern Intellectual History, First-View Article (2015), pp. 1–29, here at p. 3.

that there was a great deal of commonality across Western Europe, in part, because commentators were keen observers of developments abroad.

With this broad comparative and transnational perspective, we seek to shed new light on the classic narrative about the rise and treatment of social problems in the long nineteenth century. In particular, we intend to go beyond the classic view from social history which situates the ‹social question› as a political struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie, or between socialist and liberal or conservative parties.[3] Instead, we would like to consider aspects which have been less reflected in research: the confessional (often, but not exclusively, conservative) roots of the debates on the social question, the role of academic discourse; and international or global transfers of concepts and policies. Whereas major classic studies primarily took the perspective of intellectual history (or *Begriffsgeschichte*), we will also look beyond the realm of ideas and reflect on the significance of institutions and actors in the history of framing the ‹social question›. In this way, we embrace a revisionist strand of recent welfare history that has emphasised the fluidity of concepts, complex connections between civil society and political institution and the international flows of ideas.[4] With this perspective, we also question the traditional ‹finality› of the social question that offers a teleology charting the transformation of nineteenth-century social policies into twentieth-century welfare states. That is, our argument de-socializes the ‹social question› by highlighting hidden strands that were fundamental for its various conceptions and have remained criti-

---

[3] For the German context: Grebing, Helga (Ed.): Geschichte der Sozialen Ideen in Deutschland. Sozialismus – katholische Soziallehre – protestantische Sozialethik. Wiesbaden 2005. vom Bruch, Rüdiger (Ed.): «Weder Kommunismus noch Kapitalismus». Bürgerliche Sozialreform in Deutschland vom Vormärz bis zur Ära Adenauer. München 1985. Grimmer-Solem, Erik: The Rise of Historical Economics and Social Reform in Germany. 1864-1894. Oxford 2003. Schieder, Wolfgang: «Sozialismus» in: Brunner, Otto; Conze, Werner; Koselleck, Reinhart (Eds.): Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland. Stuttgart 2004. On Britain, see for example Bruce, Maurice: The Coming of the Welfare State. New York 1966. To be sure, this view was common amongst social commentators at the time. See, for example: Goldman, Lawrence: The Life of R. H. Tawney. Socialism and History. London 2013, pp. 21, 29.

[4] For example van Kersbergen, Kees; Manow, Philip (Eds.): Religion, Class Coalitions and Welfare States. Cambridge/New York 2009. Kott, Sandrine; Droux, Joëlle (Eds.): Globalizing Social Rights. The International Labour Organization and Beyond. Basingstoke 2013. Rosental, Paul-André (Ed.): Dust to Dust. A Global History of Silicosis. Baltimore (forthcoming). An impetus for much of this recent literature: Baldwin, Peter: The Politics of Social Solidarity. Class Bases of the European Welfare State. 1875–1975. Cambridge 1990.

cal for its reformulation into the twentieth century and beyond. By offering a broad sketch of rather unknown traditions in thinking about social problems, we hope to shed new light on some of the ideas that helped to shape the modern welfare state.

With this broad focus, we seek to assess why the ‹social question› has preoccupied wider national publics in many Western countries – and beyond – for such a long time. It is not obvious why the concept of the ‹social question› and the debate surrounding it rose rather quickly, in the 1830s and 1840s, rapidly spreading across Europe, and remaining at the forefront of public debate up to the beginning of the First World War (with a peak around 1900). It is not possible to locate a single factor for the enduring concern with the social question – say, the rise of mass socialist parties in the 1870s–90s or the sharp increase in poverty amidst economic downturn and famine in the 1840s. Nonetheless, we suggest that the ‹social question› proved so intractable because it offered a locus for debate and consensus building in the face of political and social upheaval throughout the century. Through the ‹social question›, diverse groups could unite to define ‹society› and share their visions for its future while cutting across confessional, ideological and social divides. Drawing on political and reform tracts, parliamentary debates, newspaper articles, work in the social sciences and legislation, we show the broad lines of continuity that resulted from this process of consensus building. To be sure, the languages behind the social question varied, with confessional reformers in the early nineteenth century citing ‹evils› to be overcome, while social scientists at the turn of the twentieth century looked to industrial unrest and called for the harnessing of market forces. These diverse languages suggest that the causal understanding behind the ‹social question› varied greatly, with some highlighting the hand of fortune or injustice, while others looked to statistical probabilities and natural law. Nonetheless, through broad public debate, a great deal of agreement emerged about the ‹social question›, as these various understandings and languages blended together, cutting across political factions, geographical divides and what historians have often seen as distinct periods of time. That is, through the ‹social question›, participants in these discussions could, regardless of their disagreements, attempt to participate in – and structure – the societies in which they lived.

Our argument will proceed in three steps. First, we will trace the emergence of an explicit ‹social question› that was framed as a problem for humanitarian philanthropic and confessional social reform movements, especially in the early to mid-nineteenth century. We will then chart how the social

question was seen in the period before the 1848 revolutions as a problem that connected poverty with political unrest and new democratic claims. The final section examines changing understandings of the social question amidst the rise of modern labour movements, on the one hand, and new social scientific understandings of poverty and unemployment, on the other. The conclusion sheds light on a topic that merits further exploration in future research: the export of the social question – and answers to that question – across the globe at the height of European imperialism at the turn of the twentieth century, which would continue in a new form into the interwar era and beyond under the aegis of internationalism and guided by the various new international organisations that have come to mark social politics to the present.[5]

Humanitarianism, Religion and the Social Question

The concept of a ‹social question› emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century, in the context of Christian welfare traditions. The distinction drawn between the ‹social question› and the ‹political question› was a common theme in socio-political debates in the first half of the nineteenth century. The social question seemed to evoke natural law and a universal code of morality and ‹humanitarianism›, while the political question was seen as a corporal, almost profane aspect of daily life, associated with masculine pushes for the vote and labour reform. In this context, the ‹social question› could be used as a tool for Christian milieux to present a direct alternative to the political claims of liberal and radical movements like the French radicals surrounding Charles Fourier and Henri de Saint-Simon, the circle in the German lands around Karl Marx and Ferdinand Lassalle or the British Chartists. Many Christian communities across Europe also saw themselves challenged by the rise of liberalism and secularism, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. For some, new forms of religiosity were a way forward, such as the rise of Methodism in Britain. For others, a way to deal with new political and cultural trends was raising the profile of Christianity in civil life through creating new social reform organizations.

---

[5] On the imperial to international connection in this regard, see, for example, Maul, Daniel: Human Rights. Development and Decolonization. The International Labour Organization. 1940–70. Basingstoke 2012.

This was perhaps most evident in the rise of the temperance movement that campaigned against alcohol in Britain, but could be seen in various campaigns from advocacy groups to protect child and women workers to organisations focused on poverty amidst the famine that swept across Europe during the 1840s.[6]

In Britain, for many, the ‹social question› was synonymous with Christianity in the early nineteenth century. As the Reverend William M'Call claimed in a sermon in Bradford, a boomtown for the woollen textile industry, Britain had yet to become a ‹virtuous country›. To do so, it needed to offer ‹regular employment, cheap food, and little inequality of condition›. ‹There is little hope for the moral and religious welfare of England›, he claimed,

> ‹till it assumes something of [this] physical aspect. This, my friends, is not a political question; if it were such, I would not introduce it; it is a great social question – a great Christian question. If Christianity consists in reverencing the paternity of God, and in promoting the brotherhood of man, we can neither reverence the one nor promote the other whilst the community is divided into hostile sections, with opposing interests and clashing privileges …›[7]

The implication for M'Call was that industrialisation had brought new hardships, evidenced by unemployment and hunger. The main problem, though, was that it had brought social divisions. To unite society, cutting across class divides and new forms of inequality, the ‹social question› needed to be answered. That is, precisely because of its economic nature, the ‹social question› had eroded the communal bonds of society. A remedy could therefore be found in Christianity – and, in particular, in Evangelicalism, rather than in financial or legislative reforms alone. In this view, M'Call was joined by a broad range of fellow travellers, including advocates of ‹Tory paternalism› in parliament such as Lord Ashley, an advocate for a ‹Ten Hours› Bill to limit the workday for women and children in 1844. Christian language was ubiquitous in British political debate during this

---

[6] On this general problematic, see van Kersbergen/Manow: Religion. For information on specific movements, see for example: Harrison, Brian: Drink and the Victorians, the Temperance Question in England. 1815–1872. London 1971. Frie, Ewald: Caritas und soziale Verantwortung im gesellschaftlichen Wandel. In: Jahrbuch für Christliche Sozialwissenschaften 38 (1997), pp. 21–42.

[7] ‹Extract from a Sermon›, The Bradford Observer, 17 September 1840.

period about groups that were perceived to be vulnerable, but it is important to bear in mind that Evangelical thought on these issues was varied.[8] As Boyd Hilton has observed, market downturns, inequitable labour contracts and workplace accidents could just as easily be seen as manifestations of divine providence.[9] With this view in mind, many Christian reformers in 1830s and 1840s Britain argued against interfering in God's will – unless, perhaps, women and children were adversely affected. Thus, Lord Ashley called women's factory work an ‹evil› to be avoided, yet also campaigned for the limitation of work hours in general on the ground that it would increase productivity.[10]

London matchmakers at work (1905); Streichholz-Arbeiter in London (1905). (Robert H. Sherard's Child Slaves of Britain. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1905, p. 52)

[8] Grey, Robert: The Factory Question and Industrial England. 1830–1860. Cambridge 1996, p. 57.
[9] Hilton, Boyd: The Age of Atonement. The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought. 1795–1865. Oxford 1988.
[10] Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Ashley, later took on the title Lord Shaftesbury and continued his plight for further social reforms into the late nineteenth century. House of Commons Debates 29 January 1846, vol. 83, cc. 379–94.

The fluid blend of Evangelical Christian thought and market ethics may have been a particularly British characteristic of early debates about the ‹social question›. Nonetheless, reconciling Christianity and economics proved important in other debates during this period. In Germany, for example, the ‹social question› was initially taken up in Catholicism in the so-called *Vormärz* period before the revolutions of 1848 as part of the broader context of disputes between the region's main confessional groups. Catholic social doctrine during this period was heavily influenced by the religious revival of the early nineteenth century which took form, in part, in response to the secularization politics of the late Holy Roman Empire. These included the Imperial Final Recess of 1803 that secularized ecclesiastical states across Central Europe as part of a redrawing of borders during the Napoleonic wars.[11] As part of this movement, the Church and confessional orders became more active in the social domain, which also served to answer the civil and constitutional demands of liberalism. By addressing the ‹social question›, the Church therefore was able to simultaneously respond to the ‹political question› that characterised the secular movement for constitutional reform. This process would continue even after 1848, which saw the failure of revolutions across Germany and the collapsed attempts to create constitutional monarchies. It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century, with the programmatic concept of diaconia – or, social welfare work, that the Church was able to mark its own departure into social policy.

In Catholicism, various orders were involved in diaconia, and Catholic politicians also took part. For example, church notables like the Mainz Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel Ketteler, Adolph Kolping, the founder of the Kolping works and a priest at Cologne, and Peter Franz Reichensperger all fought for social reforms in the mid nineteenth century. Catholic social thought encompassed, above all, ethical claims on the conscience that spoke to Catholic morals, but from the middle of the nineteenth century, demands related to social politics increasingly took centre stage. Education policy, including the preservation of confessional education, played a prominent role, but family policy also became important, with the view that the family was a root of the corporative social model.[12] In Catholic social

[11] Grebing: Geschichte der Sozialen Ideen, pp. 334 ff.
[12] Pilgram, Friedrich: Sociale Fragen betrachtet aus dem Prinzip kirchlicher Gemeinschaft. Freiburg 1855. von Ketteler, Wilhelm Emmanuel: Die grossen socialen Fragen der Gegenwart. Mainz 1849. von Ketteler, Wilhelm Emmanuel: Die Arbeiterfrage und das Christentum, Mainz. 1864, p. 32 ff., 62 ff., 97 ff.; S. 104–111.

doctrine, therefore, associational life and communal bonds took on particular importance and could be found in Ketteler's work to improve the ‹moral and economic position of the working classes› that, in part, had been inspired by the socialist Ferdinand Lassalle.[13] This emphasis also appeared in Kolping's initiatives to aid young journeymen workers. In German Catholic doctrine, therefore, we see a similar emphasis on community to that espoused in Britain, but the links between economic hardship and the need for social reform were framed differently. The emphasis on communal cooperation and relative silence on natural market forces may have stemmed from different philosophical traditions and popular understandings about the economy, but it may also have derived from the unique context of confessional conflict in nineteenth-century Germany.

Against this backdrop, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the foundation of numerous Catholic associations that aimed to grapple with the ‹social question›: the education-oriented craft associations (especially the groups devoted to journeymen that were associated with Kolping), but also savings banks, mutual health funds, cooperatives and credit associations. This efflorescence of Catholic efforts in the social domain took place in the context of the so-called ‹cultural struggle›, or *Kulturkampf*, between church and state (and, especially, the Catholic Church and Prussia) in the 1870s and early 1880s.[14] Alongside these civic associations, the Catholic Church remained active in providing assistance to the poor, through setting up houses for the poor, hospitals and institutes for the disabled. This social-political breakthrough led to the vast expansion towards the end of the nineteenth century of Catholic social welfare establishments, in caring for the poor, in the field of health and in education, and many of these bodies were eventually absorbed into institutions associated with Germany's ‹social state› in the twentieth century. This was particularly the case for institutions targeting poverty and providing educational opportunities, which took on a central role in the modern welfare state.[15]

In Germany, the Protestant Church also addressed issues related to the ‹social question›, but began to take action slightly later. In the Protestant

---

[13] von Ketteler: Arbeiterfrage, p. 1.

[14] Grebing: Geschichte der Sozialen Ideen, p. 336–341. Pilgram: Sociale Fragen. On the broader context, see Clark, Christopher M.; Kaiser, Wolfram (Eds.): Culture Wars. Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Cambridge 2003.

[15] For Switzerland see for example: Jenzer, Sabine: Die «Dirne», der Bürger und der Staat. Private Erziehungsheime für junge Frauen und die Anfänge des Sozialstaates in der Deutschschweiz. 1870er- bis 1930er-Jahre. Köln 2014.

community, the ‹social question› was mainly discussed in the context of the *Innere Mission*, missionary activities within the German Reich (as opposed to the overseas mission) that focused on alleviating poverty.[16] The myriad Catholic and Protestant organisations in Germany – like their Jewish counterparts[17] – targeted the ‹social question› while also constructing what that question meant. As in Britain, confessional undertones coursed through broader political debates about social problems in the mid-nineteenth century, and the emphasis on fraternity and community made by later social-scientists in Germany certainly echoed these earlier movements and their heirs.

Poverty as the Social Question: political and social-scientific understandings

From the 1830s onward, two related discourses on the ‹social question› paralleled and occasionally intersected with confessional discussions. First, as we saw in the work of Lord Ashley and Kolping alike, new forms of poverty associated with industrial work increasingly came under scrutiny during the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1830s France, in particular, the ‹social question› emerged at the forefront of political debate due to the combination of economic downturn and industrial unrest. By 1848, while liberal reformers and nationalists across Europe called for constitutional change and political rights, the ‹social question› took on new prominence as not only an issue of poverty but also as a political cause. In this revolutionary context, the ‹social question› came to be seen as a universal issue that cut across geographical or confessional divides. In this way, the political debates about the ‹social question› during 1848 and the 1850s were connected to earlier humanitarian discourses that sought to solve poverty and labour problems as ethical imperatives. However, the debates of 1848 instead cited the ostensibly universal norms embodied in natural law and Roman law rather than morality. Various strands of liberalism ran through these discussions, with some advocates like Ferdinand Lassalle calling for an activist state while others, including Ketteler, looking to communal solutions to social problems. These complex debates about the ‹social question› thereby reflected the broader historical context of state building that characterised this period, evidenced for example by the creation of a professional civil

---

[16] For example: Guth, Heinrich: Die Soziale Frage und die innere Mission. Heilbronn 1881.
[17] See, for example: Liedtke, Rainer: Jewish Welfare in Hamburg and Manchester. C.1850–1914. Oxford 1998.

service in Britain (1854) and a unified nation state in Germany (1871). They also echoed broader debates about democratization, which fed into pushes for universal manhood suffrage for example in Switzerland (1848), Britain (with an initial step in 1867), Germany (1871) and France (with consolidation of piecemeal earlier legislation in 1875).

Slightly later, and especially from the 1870s, the ‹social question› came to be associated not only with this process of politicization and democratization. Paradoxically, it also became the subject of seemingly scientific investigations that emphasized political neutrality and objectivity. Some scholars, including Lutz Raphael and others, have cited this process as ‹scientization›:[18] what had appeared to be ethical matters of conscience to some, or political problems that required social activism to others, now became issues that demanded scientific inquiry, scrutiny and indisputable evidence. The result would be solutions to the ‹social question› that were seen to be universally applicable: through new forms of social-scientific knowledge, social problems across the globe could be eradicated. Social science, the neologism that came to embody the late nineteenth century, pointed to faith in the growing new disciplines of the age – economics and sociology in particular, which were increasingly taught in specialised university departments. Through statistical and social-scientific studies, the ‹social question› was seen as a ‹real› problem rather than an abstract ethical issue, and expert knowledge was increasingly used to influence government administration and political decision making. Through the social sciences, the ‹social question› could be answered in what appeared to be a non-partisan manner that could bridge left-wing liberal and social democratic approaches while also drawing on confessional social reform initiatives. In this way, the ‹social question› soon became the central theme in economics and the social sciences of the late nineteenth century, and the development of economics, social statistics and the early social sciences profited tremendously from their use in the social-political debates of this era.[19]

Within these social-scientific discussions, the ‹social question› was often conflated with other ‹questions› affecting society and economy. For example, in Britain, the ‹social question› was often linked to the more spe-

---

[18] Raphael, Lutz: Embedding the Human Social Sciences in Western Societies. 1880–1980. Reflections on Trends and Methods of Current Research. In: Brückweh, Kerstin et al. (Eds.): Engineering Society. The Role of the Human and Social Sciences in Modern Societies. 1880–1980. Basingstoke 2012, pp. 41–58.

[19] Stein, Ludwig: Die Soziale Frage im Lichte der Philosophie. Stuttgart 1897.

cific ‹factory question›. This was not a matter of general poverty but rather a consideration of the problems inherent in factory labour. What is telling is that humanitarian and Christian language continued to pervade these discussions, whether in parliament or mass newspapers. To be sure, the relationship between the ‹social question› and the ‹factory question› already emerged in the early nineteenth century. For example, when reflecting on ‹the factory question› in 1838, the *Preston Chronicle* drew the distinction between the ‹factory question› as something, which any rational person could understand and the ‹social question› as something that required compassion and particular moral sensibilities:

> ‹viewed as a question of social policy merely, the factory system is open to the comprehension of all, and the most humble and uninstructed mind is as fitted to judge of it, as the most lofty and philosophical. The natural sympathies of a human being who is sensible of living and moving a share in the common infirmity, and conscious that however coarse and callous he may be, his existence was once a lovely, a hopeful, and an innocent thing – a source of pride and delight, of pain and anxiety, to two watchers over his dawning faculties, will upon such a question, considered abstractedly as a social question, shed a light more clear than the refined speculations and subtle inquiries of mature wisdom. The sympathies here are the directest and surest guides to truth; and to be capable of feeling is to have the means of plucking out at once the core of the mystery.›[20]

According to this thinking, the ‹social question› relied on human sensibilities, even if problems with factory life could call for more matter-of-fact and practical solutions. Despite this distinction, observers of the ‹social question› in Britain agreed that its answer related to broader economic and political trends and would almost certainly require legislative solutions that held the potential to overturn causes of inequality and hardship.

The ‹social question› about poverty focused, of course, not only on factory conditions but also on the more entrenched problem of access to food. It was this topic, in particular, that bound new forms of political liberalism together with a growing faith in liberal economic policy as a means to transform society. In the 1830s, food prices in Britain were the key issue, and this ‹social question› was used as a political argument to call for tariff reforms that might bring down prices. For example, in a lecture series on

[20] ‹The Factory Question›, The Preston Chronicle, 28 July 1838.

the corn laws, an observer claimed that ‹…if in its first consequences the bread-tax was a question merely of monetary value, having an exclusive reference to the well-being of society, it must be remembered that in its further consequences it became a great moral and social question. Not only did the physical comforts of the industrious operatives depend upon the rate of wages and price of bread, but their moral happiness and social improvement necessarily depended upon the quantity of labour required to furnish the first comforts of life, and *that* quantity of labour was necessarily determined by the amount and quality of, and market for our productions.›[21] Again, we can detect in Britain the sense that the ‹social question› was primarily about poverty, and its remedy could lead not only to the eradication of the poor but also the general increase in happiness – a precept of the Benthamite utiliarianism that was so popular in Britain during this period.
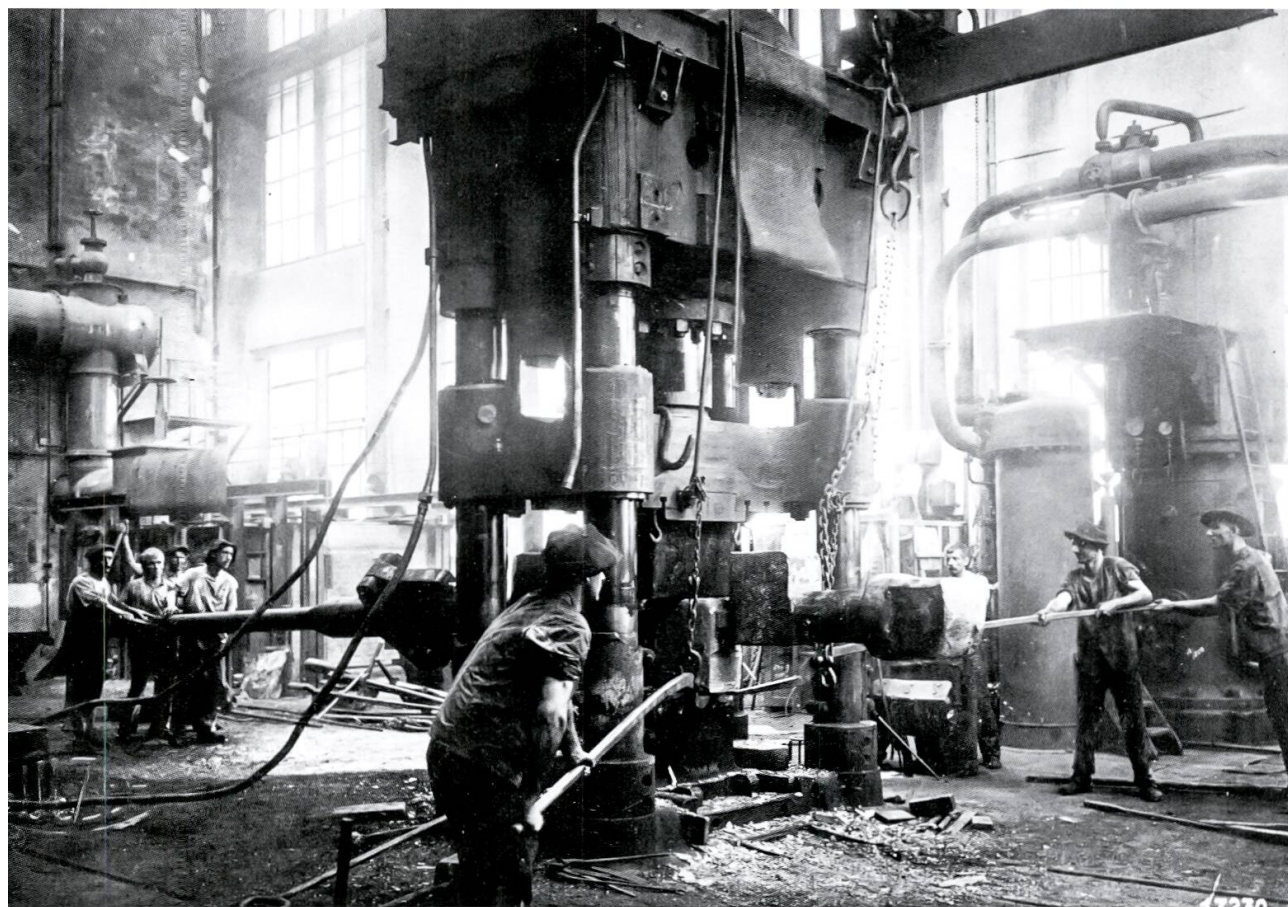
Factory Workshop at Sulzer, Winterthur (around 1900); Werkhalle bei Sulzer, Winterthur (um 1900). (Schweizerisches Sozialarchiv, Datenbank Bild + Ton, Sozarch_F_5032-Fb-0001)

---

[21] ‹Mr Paulton's Lectures on the Corn Laws›, The Manchester Times and Gazette, 27 Oct. 1838.

However, we can also see how solving the ‹social question› was viewed as a means to increase in economic productivity. This productivist argument suggested that well-fed workers meant *productive* workers. In a way, this argument fitted into the overall biopolitical notion of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century liberalism that was also evident elsewhere in Western Europe:[22] the idea that an efficient economy operates almost biologically, and it relies on biopower. This liberal economic and productivist strand of thought coexisted with Christian humanitarian discourse on the social question in Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century, informing how poverty and factory conditions were framed. In any case, in Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century, there was one belief that bound discourse about the social question: the idea that the country was unjustly divided between the rich and the poor. This came through most clearly in later conservative Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli's 1845 work *Sybil, or the Two Nations.* Coincidentally, the work was published in the same year as Friedrich Engel's *The Condition of the English Working Classes*, which decried widespread poverty and especially entrenched environmental factors in determining inequality in Britain.

By the 1870s and 1880s, new understandings of poverty took form, largely as an outcome of social-scientific investigations. In Britain, an important result of the social investigations of the 1880s and 1890s was a newfound appreciation for understanding the motivations and individuality of the poor. To a certain extent, this trend could be seen in Henry Mayhew's studies of the 1840s, but it came to the forefront in Charles Booth's work on poverty in London in the 1880s and Seebohm Rowntree's studies from the 1890s of York. This focus on individuals within the social question also emerged in the work of the fleet of new social workers, such as the middle-class women working for the Charity Organisation Society.[23] It was also highlighted through the experiences of the settlement movement and slumming, which brought young university men to live side-by-side with the poor.[24]

As the *Glasgow Herald* argued in 1900, the ‹social question› needed to be examined from an ‹objective side› and from a ‹subjective side› that could take into consideration the interests and habits of the poor:

[22] Foucault, Michel: Security, Territory, Population. Lectures at the Collège de France. Trans. Graham Burchell. Basingstoke 2009, pp. 1–4.

[23] Ross, Ellen: Love and Toil. Motherhood in Outcast London. 1870–1918. Oxford 1993.

[24] Koven, Seth: Slumming. Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London. Princeton 2004.

‹The subjective side of the question, however, must not be left out of consideration; the actual feelings of the slum folk must be ascertained – their conceptions of happiness, their actual views of life, in general and of their own outlook in particular. The matter may be best put with the help of a concrete case. The ‹social question› might perhaps be studied in South Queensferry on a Saturday night to greater advantage than in any other place in Scotland. According to the latest appalling criminal statistics of Scotland, South Queensferry takes the case – or rather the fusel oil – for Saturday night intoxication and Hooliganism.›

Alongside this focus on individual circumstances, however, lay an emphasis on market forces that was new to the late nineteenth century. Economic works by Alfred Marshall and William Stanley Jevons transformed thinking on supply and demand in the labour market and the marginal utility of earnings. Unlike the earlier debates about tariff reform and the price of bread in the 1830s and 1840s, these discussions appeared, on the surface, entirely apolitical and characterised by academic language.

In Germany, as in Britain, one can distinguish several different meanings of the social question. The «Ältere Historische Schule» (Lorenz von Stein and others) interpreted the social question as an increasing tension between the civil rights achievements of the early nineteenth century and the rising social inequality due to the economic changes and the rise of capitalism. For authors like Lorenz von Stein, moderate state intervention (factory legislation, later social insurance legislation) became an important institution to the social question.[25] The other meaning of the social question rather referred to early socialist authors. Both were, in their specific ways, critical of state intervention (because they were critical of the secular / bourgeois state), and favoured social policies based on associationalism (for example, cooperatives, savings banks and mutual health funds). In the German-speaking context, the Christian paradigms associated with Kolping, Ketteler and others who gained prominence in the first part of the nineteenth century continued to prove influential in this context, not only by providing institutions for social reform that lay the seeds for much of Germany's modern welfare state, but also informing social-scientific understandings of the social question. For example, in the 1870s and 1880s, representatives of the «Jüngere Historische Schule» like Gustav Schmoller

---

[25] Quesel, Carsten: Soziologie und Soziale Frage. Lorenz von Stein und die Entstehung der Gesellschaftswissenschaft in Deutschland. Wiesbaden 1989.

or Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch, took up a number of the ideas espoused in social Catholicism, especially the emphasis on associationalism.[26]

These various conservative and liberal traditions were transferred by representatives of the Historical School to the political arena. Especially representatives of the later generation of the Historical School of Economics, many of whom were also members of the Association for Social Policy (the *Verein für Socialpolitik*), like Gustav Schmoller and Adolph Wagner, became active in supporting the social legislation put forward by Germany's first chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, during the 1870s and 1880s. They were also involved in advocating further social programmes, such as Wagner's espousal of life insurance as a moral good. This alliance between the Historical School and the new German ‹social state› meant a particular kind of answer to the ‹social question›, one that placed providing for the future within the realm of social insurance. One must remember, though, that the Historical School was a heterogeneous body, incorporating liberal, conservative and social democratic strands – thus, its answers to the ‹social question› were not always etatist. For example, Wagner's ideas on the ‹social question› followed traditional liberalism, as he espoused ‹self-help› and mutual aid rather than social legislation and state-run social programmes. Thus, it was only because he did not trust commercial life insurance companies to be run fairly – without garnering undeserved profits – that he turned to the state to establish some form of public life insurance. For Wagner, then, social insurance was a sort of forced self-help (and a measure of last resort) that could result in communal solidarity.

Like Wagner, the economist Schmoller and many of his associates were also decided advocates of cooperatives and, indeed, the guild tradition of working together with fellow members of one's profession in times of need. To improve the condition of the working classes, thought Schmoller, organised forms of self help should be extended: credit associations, cooperatives and mutual sickness funds. On this point, Historical Economists like Schmoller and Victor Böhmert turned increasingly to socialist and social democratic thinkers including Friedrich August Lange or the followers of Ferdinand Lassalle's wing of the Social Democratic Party in espousing an etatist approach to social policy. Thus, cooperatives and mutual funds would be integrated into a more complex, state-run system of social insurance to be run along corporatist lines that seemed to continue an older German tradition. This could be seen, for example, in Germany's social insurance law

[26] Grimmer-Solem: Rise, pp. 136–144.

for accidents (1884), which seemed to uphold traditions of self-help within particular professions but organised solidarity nationally and through the state. In other areas, though, the tradition of self-help seemed more enduring, as was the case in the social insurance policies introduced by Bismarck on sickness (1883) and for disability and old-age pensions (1889).[27] In Germany, as in Britain, therefore, we can see how social-scientific thought on the ‹social question› – regardless of its emphasis on economics, statistical probabilities and political neutrality – blended with other rationales, in particular, the thinking in terms of community and solidarity that had also characterised socialist writing as well as Christian social doctrine.

Labour and Socialism as the New Social Questions?

From the 1870s, debates about the ‹social question› were, in most West European countries, increasingly shaped by the rise of socialism. 1875 saw the creation of Germany's powerful Social Democratic Party, while France's first socialist party was founded just four years later, followed by the establishment of the Social Democratic Federation in Britain in 1881. A global economic depression from the 1870s to the 1890s brought stagnant wages and growing working-class militancy that transcended the ballot box. Strike waves took off across much of Europe in the latter half of the 1880s and continued intermittently in subsequent years, culminating in a major outbreak of unrest in Britain from 1911–14 and within the combatant countries during the First World War. Within this combat, the ‹social question› became more contested than ever before. Not only socialist movements referred to it. The middle classes also addressed the social question, often against the backdrop of the economic crises of the 1870s and 80s and as a privileged answer against the socialist challenge. Social policy debates also became more complex, with the rise of agrarian issues such as the agricultural question and the landlord question.

In Britain, the links between the labour question and the social question became apparent as early as 1868, when the powerful Trades Union Congress took form and immediately took to lobbying for factory reform and the use of strikes as a bargaining tool. By the 1880s, a branch of the labour movement, but, for the most part, middle-class radicals, embraced socialism through the new Social Democratic Federation (1881), on the one hand, or through the more elite and reformist Fabian Society (1884), on the other.

---

[27] Grimmer-Solem: Rise, pp. 210–223.

Women's Work in Britain during the First World War; Frauenarbeit in Grossbritannien im Ersten Weltkrieg. (Wikimedia Common's)

A wave of strikes in the mid-1880s, including the widely publicised match girls strike of 1888 shed new light on the dire working conditions – including, in the case of the match girls, regular exposure to toxic phosphorus – to which Britain's working classes were subjected. While the wave of strikes would subside by the end of the 1880s, the link between the labour question and the social question continued to inform British discourse into the early twentieth century. It could be seen for example in the establishment of the Labour Party in 1900. A number of legislative responses attempted to address concerns about poor working conditions and unjust contracts. For example, a Royal Commission on Labour was established in 1891, and new medical inspectors of factories were instituted shortly thereafter, while a series of social insurance reforms were implemented between 1897 and 1911. Most of these reforms drew on the social-scientific research by Booth, Rowntree and the Fabians, including the pathbreaking work on wages and poverty by Sidney and Beatrice Webb. For the Webbs, the labour question could be solved through careful observation of the market and the creation of labour exchanges that emulated those in practice in Germany and Bel-

gium. Since labour markets seemed to follow universal economic doctrine, the solutions to problems in those markets could, in principle, also be universally applicable.[28]

The Matchgirls' Strike at Bryant und May, London (1888); Der Streik der Streichholz-Arbeiterinnen von Bryant und May in London (1888). (Wikimedia Commons)

[28] Webb, Sidney and Beatrice (Eds.): The Remedy for Unemployment being part II of the Minority Report. London, 1909, pp. 248–51.

Despite the clear draw of economics and, from the early 1900s, of socio-
logy, these experiments in social policy were also informed by more estab-
lished strands of thinking about compassion and humanitarianism, on the
one hand, and self-help and hard work, on the other. Through bodies like
the Charity Organisation Society, which played a critical role in reforming
Britain's ancient poor law in the early twentieth century, the labour ques-
tion was seen as more than simply an economic issue but also as a prob-
lem for communities to solve together. It was only through local charitable
help, in conjunction with local poor law guardians, claimed the COS, that
morality could be policed: potential scroungers could be warded off from
exploiting the system, while the truly deserving could be given tailor-made
assistance.[29] These claims on community were not, however, nostalgic:
members of the COS, like participants in the settlement movement and the
early social workers of this period, sought to modernize charity in order to
make it more efficient. Utilitarianism therefore continued to thrive into the
early twentieth century in Britain, even if it characterised diverse responses
to the ‹social question›.

In Germany and other German-speaking countries (notably Switzerland),
debates about labour at all levels, national, regional and local, continued
to be dominated by academic discourse on social policy at the turn of the
twentieth century. Some of the authors involved were socialists like the
Naum Reichesberg, a Russian-born professor at the University of Bern,
Switzerland. But most of these theorists stood in a liberal and a social
democratic tradition, such as most German *Kathedersozialisten* associated
with the Association for Social Policy and the Historical School. For these
theorists, solving problems related to labour would require, above all, ins-
titutional transformation. Not only factory legislation and social insurance
would be necessary, but also the professionalization of local welfare insti-
tutions and the rise of a large sector of residential institutions for the poor,
disabled, mentally ill and criminals who seemed capable of reform.[30] In this
context, the ‹social question› gradually dissolved after 1900. The old social
category of ‹the poor› was replaced by a series of new groups, produced by
specific institutions of the emerging welfare states, such as the ‹pensioner›,
the ‹unemployed›, the ‹disabled›, and in a wider sense also the ‹abnormal›,
the ‹insane›, the ‹alcoholic›, the ‹hereditary burdened› and other categories

---

[29] McBriar, A. M.: An Edwardian Mixed Doubles. The Bosanquets Versus the Webbs.
A Study in British Social Policy 1890–1929. Oxford 1987.

[30] See, for example: Rosenblum, Warren: Beyond the Prison Gates. Punishment und
Welfare in Germany. 1850–1933. Chapel Hill 2008.

for stigmatized groups. In this sense, the social question not only found an institutional answer: the modern welfare state. As in Britain, through this therapeutic approach to welfare, it also produced a series of new – much more specific – questions and related concerned groups.[31]

Globalisation and the ‹social question›

The ‹social question› was never simply a European problem in the long nineteenth century, even if debates often focused on common European experiences of industrialization, urbanization and politicization. Through colonial connections, Europeans not only observed social problems and policies abroad, they also used foreign contexts as laboratories for types of modernity that did not yet exist at home. This could be seen, for example, in the case of New Zealand, whose old-age pensions policy provided the blueprint for Britain's pension system a decade later.[32] It could also be witnessed in the works of various German administrators who claimed that German social insurance would provide the beacon for the world to emulate. This was clear in Georg Zacher's extensive writing while working for Germany's Imperial Insurance Office, and it could be seen in other works by the agency. Evaluating social policy around the world, these publications repeatedly claimed that the Bismarckian reforms of the 1880s were a hallmark of Germany's ‹cultural progress› and set Germany apart as a true ‹cultural state›. By implication, other countries were backward or, perhaps worse, only concerned with superficial ‹civilisational› concerns. In Germany, as elsewhere, the ‹social question› and its successful solution were tightly connected to understandings of national identity. In the case of Zacher, this meant that his 20-volumes *oeuvre*, which he published between 1898 and 1908, started with a comparative analysis of European states, including Russia, and addressed non-European countries only in the last two volumes. Significantly for the discourse on the ‹social question› before the First World War, the world beyond Europe only included the Anglo-

---

[31] A point noted, for example, by Greg Eghigian and, for a later period, by Detlev Peukert and Young-Sun Hong. See: Eghigian, Greg: Making Security Social. Disability, Insurance, and the Birth of the Social Entitlement State in Germany. Ann Arbor 2000; Peukert, Detlev: The Weimar Republic. The Crisis of Classical Modernity. New York 1993. Hong, Young-Sun: Welfare, Modernity, and the Weimar State. 1919–1933. Princeton 1998.

[32] Rogers, Edmund: «A Most Imperial Contribution». New Zealand and the Old Age Pensions Debate in Britain. 1898–1912. In: Journal of Global History 9/2 (2014), pp. 189–207.

Saxon sphere, namely the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Asian or Latin American countries only started being noticed in European social policy debates after the First World War, often within the context of international organizations like the International Labour Organization. Zacher's comparison was motivated by the ambition to define comparative benchmarks and models for international debates on the development of social insurance. Much ink was spilled on the comparison between voluntary forms of insurance (the British or French model, as represented by the friendly societies), and compulsory social insurances (the German model). Unsurprisingly Zacher positioned himself as an ardent advocate for the German model.[33]

Herman Greulich (left), Stephan Bauer and Adrien Lachenal of the International Congress for Workers', Protection, Bern (Switzerland), 25.9.1925. Herman Greulich (links), Stephan Bauer und Adrien Lachenal, Teilnehmer an der Internationalen Arbeiterschutzkonferenz in Bern vom 25. September 1925. (Schweizerisches Sozialarchiv, Bild + Ton, Sozarch_F_Fc-0003-01)

[33] Zacher, Georg: Die Arbeiterversicherung im Auslande. 20 Vols. Berlin 1898–1908.

Despite the national tensions that underlay these discussions, by the end of the nineteenth century, observers were often agreed that the ‹social question› possessed a global element and that reformers across the world must unite to solve it.[34] It was in this context that numerous international congresses began meeting from the 1880s to address problems ranging from workplace accidents to educational reform. For example, the Permanent International Committee of National Insurance, whose longtime president was Raymond Poincaré, was established in 1891. These conferences brought together social-scientific experts, physicians, social reformers and governmental administrators. They sometimes included trade unionists, representatives from commercial insurance (as in the *International Congress of Actuaries*) or confessional bodies, but were primarily focused on ostensibly neutral ‹scientific› expertise.

The international conferences were, above all, fora for discussion but not for decision making or binding resolutions, and they took on an increasingly technical nature from 1900, with various specialist committees, presumably as a result of the fact that many member states already had social insurance by this point. Perhaps due to this technical focus, and due to the international nature of these bodies, discussions rarely cited the or even a ‹social question›. In contrast to earlier domestic discussions in confessional and even in social-scientific circles, it was not clear what exactly constitutes the ‹social› or where ‹society› lay. Instead, it seemed more appropriate in these bodies to discuss topics such as occupational risk or urban planning. Although these organisations mostly did not survive the disruption caused by the First World War, they paved the way for the reframing of the ‹social question› in 1919 through the League of Nations and the International Labour Organization, both in terms of membership rosters and in terms of ideas.[35] Into the interwar era, the ‹social question› seemed to drop off the world map. In its place, more specific ‹questions› – about forced labour, famine, small pox eradication, amongst others – gained prominence.

Despite its absence, the ‹social question› would continue to haunt domestic and global discussions of social problems into the twentieth century. Be-

---

[34] For example: Stein: Sociale Frage.
[35] Moses, Julia: Policy Communities and Exchanges across Borders. The Case of Workplace Accidents at the Turn of the Twentieth Century. In: Rodogno, Davide et al. (Eds.): Shaping the Transnational Sphere. Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s. Oxford 2014, pp. 60–81. Lengwiler, Martin: Cultural Meanings of Social Security in Postwar Europe. In: Social Science History 39/1 (2015), pp. 85–106.

yond Europe, the ‹social question› was often translated into broader humanitarian ‹questions› that seemed to recall discussions about poverty and hunger in the 1830s and 1840s.[36] Moreover, twentieth-century global debates about the impending ‹population boom› certainly evoked late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Malthusianism worries about poverty, and they also echoed mid-nineteenth century utilitarian discussions in Britain about happiness, health and the efficient allocation of resources.[37] These two strands, humanitarian-ethical and economic, that were so central to nineteenth-century puzzling over the ‹social question› continued to perplex social observers across the globe into the twentieth century and beyond. Through empire, migration and internationalisation, Europe's nineteenth-century ‹social question› was exported to the globe.

Conclusions

What we have outlined highlights some of the complex philosophical and social traditions that informed understandings of the ‹social question› in Western Europe over the long nineteenth century. In many ways, these traditions shaped labour legislation such as Glarus' code from 1864. We suggest that these arguments about the ‹social question› were so powerful because they offered a form of social criticism. For example, looking back at our example of the German Historical School of Economics, one could argue that the ‹social question› was a sociological diagnosis (and thus linked to a specific understanding of contemporary societies) that stood somewhere between Historicism (and a view linked to modernization theory and implicit understandings of Western supremacy) and the critique of modernity at the end of the nineteenth century. The ‹social question› thus mirrored three dimensions of the nineteenth-century *Zeitgeist* – and the controversial debates around it – that seemed to stretch across Europe: teleological understanding of history and social development (industrialization); the expectation that modernity can be controlled, steered and developed through sound government (statistics, etc.); and, paradoxically, also the awareness that fate cannot be tempered, thus bringing individuals to rely on their communities. Despite growing faith in expertise, and the constant reference to economic and utilitarian thinking, we can trace a

[36] Rodogno, Davide: Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire 1815–1914. Princeton 2011.
[37] Connelly, Matthew: Fatal Misconception. The Struggle to Control World Population. Cambridge/MA 2008.

parallel emphasis on ethical responsibility, community and humanitarianism. At least since the middle of the nineteenth century, therefore, the discourse around the ‹social question› overlapped with contemporary strands of social criticism like the growing cultural pessimism, or *Zivilisationskritik* (for example, degeneration theories, anti-urbanism, anti-modernism) that came to characterise the *fin-de-siècle*. Despite their diversity, these different traditions of thinking all contributed to a unifying axis, creating common understandings of the ‹social question›, both within local and national communities and across Western Europe.

These trends were especially dominant in the period from the 1860s onward. For example, a Google *n*-Gram analysis of English-language texts shows a dramatic increase in references to the ‹social question› between 1859 and 1865, and another significant rise in the late 1880s until 1893, which would continue to ascend steadily up until 1912. The ‹social question› provided an optic for understanding contemporary society – and for critiquing it – throughout the long nineteenth century. And, moral understandings – whether phrased in terms of Christianity or ‹degeneration› – were constant throughout these discussions. What is telling is that reference to the ‹social question› increased as the century wore on. On the one hand, this trend indicates the conflation of the social question and the labour question, which itself had become more pressing due to the rise of politicized labour movements and mass socialism. On the other hand, however, it reveals the ways in which the new social sciences helped to reify the ‹social question›, transforming a loose moral discourse into what was perceived as a set of real social problems that required concrete political and economic solutions.

The question remains to what extent these discourses transcended Europe, and how. Future research needs to explore how the ‹social question› was made into a ‹civilising› tool, both at home, and for export to colonial and postcolonial contexts. Were European-style social policies exported (as ‹social answers›)? Was reference to the ‹social question› abroad an assertion that European states were more advanced – for example, compared to India, Kenya or Australia? How were understandings of the social question reconciled with widespread European uses of slavery which, in the case of countries like Belgium and Portugal, continued into the early twentieth century? These complex issues indicate that the moral underpinnings of the social question and the social criticism inherent within this discourse were likely to have pervaded European understandings of the ‹social questions› across the globe. Outside of Europe, was this discourse also employed during the long nineteenth century? Did it echo European civilizational

critiques? And, in the face of new economic woes in the twenty-first century, is Europe ready to grapple again with the ‹social question›, perhaps by radically rethinking the nature of solidarism?[38]

Bibliography

Baldwin, Peter: The Politics of Social Solidarity. Class Bases of the European Welfare State. 1875–1975. Cambridge 1990

Bruce, Maurice: The Coming of the Welfare State. New York 1966

Brunner, Otto; Conze, Werner; Koselleck, Reinhart (Eds.): Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland. Stuttgart 2004

Case, Holly: The Social Question. 1820-1920. In: Modern Intellectual History First-View Article (2015), pp. 1–29

Clark, Christopher M.; Kaiser, Wolfram (Eds.): Culture Wars. Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Cambridge 2003

Connelly, Matthew: Fatal Misconception. The Struggle to Control World Population. Cambridge/MA 2008

Eghigian, Greg: Making Security Social. Disability, Insurance, and the Birth of the Social Entitlement State in Germany. Ann Arbor 2000

Foucault, Michel: Security, Territory, Population. Lectures at the Collège de France. Trans. Graham Burchell. Basingstoke 2009, pp. 1–4

Frie, Ewald: Caritas und soziale Verantwortung im gesellschaftlichen Wandel. In: Jahrbuch für Christliche Sozialwissenschaften 38 (1997), pp. 21–42

Goldman, Lawrence: The Life of R. H. Tawney. Socialism and History. London 2013

Grebing, Helga (Ed.): Geschichte der Sozialen Ideen in Deutschland. Sozialismus – katholische Soziallehre – protestantische Sozialethik. Wiesbaden 2005

Grey, Robert: The Factory Question and Industrial England. 1830-1860. Cambridge 1996

Grimmer-Solem, Erik: The Rise of Historical Economics and Social Reform in Germany. 1864–1894. Oxford 2003

Harrison, Brian: Drink and the Victorians: the Temperance Question in England. 1815–1872. London 1971

---

[38] Rosanvallon, Pierre: The New Social Question: Rethinking the Welfare State, trans. Barbara Harshav Princeton 2000.

Hilton, Boyd: The Age of Atonement. The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought. 1795–1865. Oxford 1988

Hong, Young-Sun: Welfare, Modernity, and the Weimar State. 1919–1933. Princeton 1998

Jenzer, Sabine: Die «Dirne», der Bürger und der Staat. Private Erziehungsheime für junge Frauen und die Anfänge des Sozialstaates in der Deutschschweiz. 1870er- bis 1930er-Jahre. Köln 2014

Kott, Sandrine; Droux, Joëlle (Eds.): Globalizing Social Rights. The International Labour Organization and Beyond. Basingstoke 2013

Koven, Seth: Slumming. Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London. Princeton 2004

Lengwiler, Martin: Cultural Meanings of Social Security in Postwar Europe. In: Social Science History 39/1 (2015), pp. 85–106

Liedtke, Rainer: Jewish Welfare in Hamburg and Manchester. C.1850–1914. Oxford 1998

Maul, Daniel: Human Rights. Development and Decolonization. The International Labour Organization. 1940–70. Basingstoke 2012

McBriar, A. M.: An Edwardian Mixed Doubles. The Bosanquets Versus the Webbs. A Study in British Social Policy 1890–1929. Oxford 1987

Moses, Julia: Policy Communities and Exchanges across Borders. The Case of Workplace Accidents at the Turn of the Twentieth Century. In: Rodogno, Davide et al. (Eds.): Shaping the Transnational Sphere. Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s. Oxford 2014, pp. 60–81

Moses, Julia: Social Policy, Social Welfare and Social Identities (1900-1950). In: Doumanis, Nicholas (Ed.): The Oxford Handbook of Early Twentieth-Century Europe. Oxford 2015

Peukert, Detlev: The Weimar Republic. The Crisis of Classical Modernity. New York 1993

Quesel, Carsten: Soziologie und Soziale Frage. Lorenz von Stein und die Entstehung der Gesellschaftswissenschaft in Deutschland. Wiesbaden 1989

Raphael, Lutz: Embedding the Human Social Sciences in Western Societies. 1880–1980. Reflections on Trends and Methods of Current Research. In: Brückweh, Kerstin et al. (Eds.): Engineering Society. The Role of the Human and Social Sciences in Modern Societies. 1880–1980. Basingstoke 2012, pp. 41–58

Rodogno, Davide: Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire. 1815–1914. Princeton 2011

Rogers, Edmund: A Most Imperial Contribution. New Zealand and the Old Age Pensions Debate in Britain. 1898–1912. In: Journal of Global History 9/2 (2014), pp. 189–207

Rosanvallon, Pierre: The New Social Question: Rethinking the Welfare State, trans. Barbara Harshav. Princeton 2000

Rosenblum, Warren: Beyond the Prison Gates. Punishment und Welfare in Germany. 1850–1933. Chapel Hill 2008

Rosental, Paul-André (Ed.): Dust to Dust. A Global History of Silicosis. Baltimore (forthcoming)

Ross, Ellen: Love and Toil. Motherhood in Outcast London. 1870–1918. Oxford 1993

Stein, Ludwig: Die Soziale Frage im Lichte der Philosophie. Stuttgart 1897

van Kersbergen, Kees; Manow, Philip (Eds.): Religion, Class Coalitions and Welfare States. Cambridge/New York 2009

vom Bruch, Rüdiger (Ed.): Weder Kommunismus noch Kapitalismus. Bürgerliche Sozialreform in Deutschland vom Vormärz bis zur Ära Adenauer. München 1985

von Ketteler, Wilhelm Emmanuel: Die grossen sozialen Fragen der Gegenwart. Mainz 1849

von Ketteler, Wilhelm Emmanuel: Die Arbeiterfrage und das Christentum. Mainz 1864

Webb, Sidney and Beatrice (Eds.), The Remedy for Unemployment: being part II of the Minority Report. London 1909. pp. 248–51

Zacher, Georg: Die Arbeiterversicherung im Auslande. 20 Vols. Berlin 1898–1908

Paris 1855. Bern 1857.

Herr _____ Soll
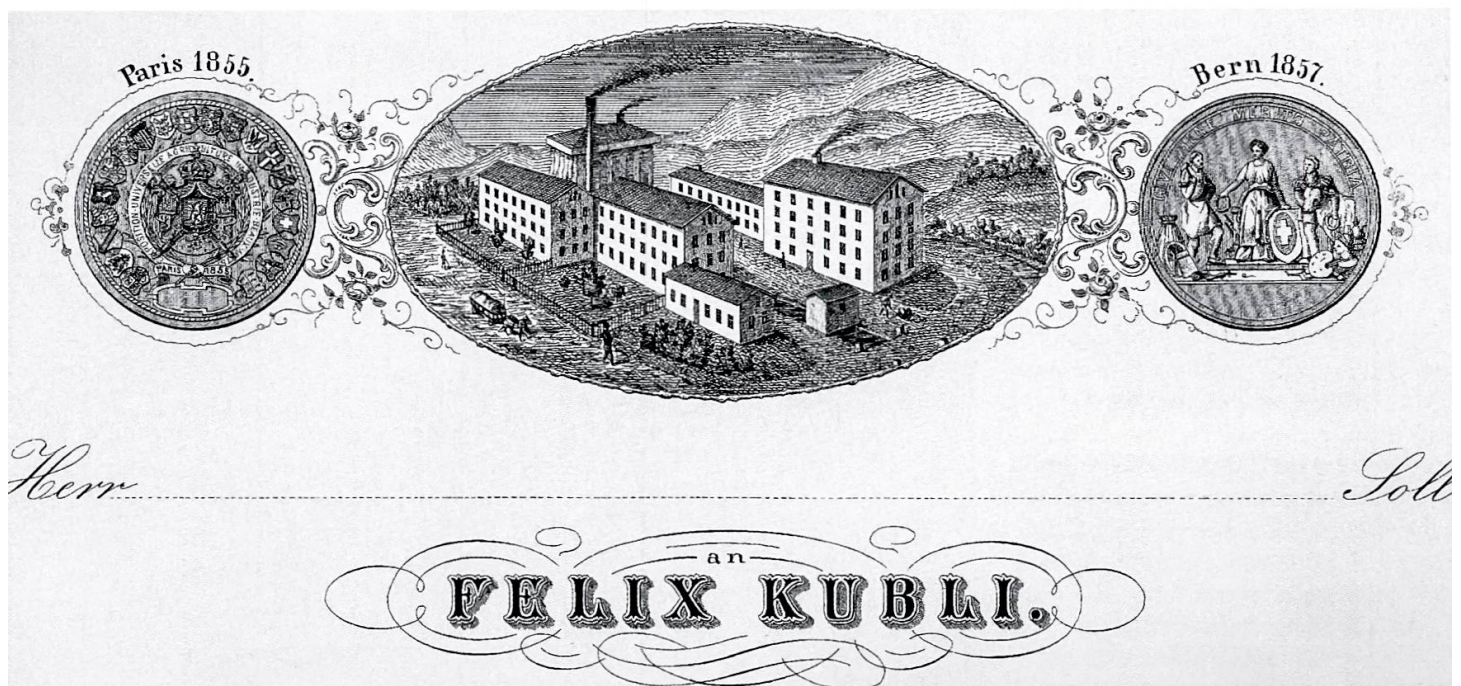
an FELIX KUBLI.

Rechnungsformular (Ausschnitt) der Textildruckerei Felix Kubli, Netstal GL, Schweiz; links: Medaille, gewonnen an der Weltausstellung Paris 1855, rechts: Medaille, gewonnen an der dritten Schweizerischen Industrie-, Landwirtschafts- und Kunstausstellung Bern 1857; Lithografie, um 1870. (Aus: Die Industriekultur des Kantons Glarus, S. 202)