

Analysis of content and context of historical documents: the case of petitions to the Frankfurt National Assembly 1848/49

Best, Heinrich

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Sammelwerksbeitrag / collection article

Zur Verfügung gestellt in Kooperation mit / provided in cooperation with:

GESIS - Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Best, H. (1980). Analysis of content and context of historical documents: the case of petitions to the Frankfurt National Assembly 1848/49. In J. M. Clubb, & E. K. Scheuch (Eds.), *Historical social research : the use of historical and process-produced data* (pp. 244-263). Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-326144>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer Deposit-Lizenz (Keine Weiterverbreitung - keine Bearbeitung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Gewährt wird ein nicht exklusives, nicht übertragbares, persönliches und beschränktes Recht auf Nutzung dieses Dokuments. Dieses Dokument ist ausschließlich für den persönlichen, nicht-kommerziellen Gebrauch bestimmt. Auf sämtlichen Kopien dieses Dokuments müssen alle Urheberrechtshinweise und sonstigen Hinweise auf gesetzlichen Schutz beibehalten werden. Sie dürfen dieses Dokument nicht in irgendeiner Weise abändern, noch dürfen Sie dieses Dokument für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, aufführen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Mit der Verwendung dieses Dokuments erkennen Sie die Nutzungsbedingungen an.

Terms of use:

This document is made available under Deposit Licence (No Redistribution - no modifications). We grant a non-exclusive, non-transferable, individual and limited right to using this document. This document is solely intended for your personal, non-commercial use. All of the copies of this documents must retain all copyright information and other information regarding legal protection. You are not allowed to alter this document in any way, to copy it for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the document in public, to perform, distribute or otherwise use the document in public.

By using this particular document, you accept the above-stated conditions of use.

Analysis of Content and Context of Historical Documents –
The Case of Petitions to the Frankfurt National Assembly 1848/49¹

1. Document Analysis and Historical Social Research

If we study behavior, opinions or values in past societies, our data bases usually consist of written texts. In order to analyze such material historians developed the scrupulous techniques of 'source criticism', a research instrument which is successfully used to verify the reliability of texts, to reconstruct the course of political action on the level of cabinets and diplomatic services, or to write the history of ideas. The hermeneutical approach must fail if we want to analyze larger bodies of documents in a standardized way which is necessary if we are going to measure mass phenomena. In such cases we have to apply research instruments whose selective and evaluating procedures approximately correspond to the standards of survey research. The different approaches to content analysis which have been developed in the past decades, now offer a variety of tools to those historians and sociologists who want to study collective behavior, opinions or values of the past on the basis of written texts.

Nevertheless in Germany and moreover in Europe we can only find a few examples of the application of content analysis to historical source material. One reason may be the relatively large amount of work required by most approaches to content analysis. Furthermore, the primarily psychological orientation of some computer programs for text analysis does not correspond to the field of interest of many potential users. Another reason may be that different uses of language in past and present are not considered in the standard dictionaries. Finally we can observe that content

¹ The results presented in this paper are part of a more comprehensive study of the petitions to the Frankfurt National Assembly. For a more detailed description of methodological approaches and results, see Best, Heinrich, *Die quantitative Analyse inhaltlicher und kontextueller Merkmale historischer Dokumente. Das Beispiel der handelspolitischen Petitionen an die Frankfurter Nationalversammlung*, in: Best, Heinrich, and Mann, Reinhard (eds.), *Quantitative Methoden in der historisch-sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschung* (HSF, Vol. 3), Stuttgart 1977, pp. 162–205, and Best, Heinrich, *Interessenpolitik und nationale Integration 1848/49 – Handelspolitische Konflikte im frühindustriellen Deutschland*, Göttingen 1979. The research was partly financed by the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung.

analysis is rarely complemented by „contextual analysis“ of the documents in question: The examination of the political and social constellations which led to the formulation of a text, the institutional framework of its distribution and even such simple questions as who the authors were, and who the followers of its message were are often neglected. As opposed to this, the drafting and distribution of texts should be seen as a social process which involves a variety of individuals, groups or formal organizations. We can assume that the inclusion of such aspects in the reperory of content analysis will enrich our knowledge of both, text and context.

In the pages that follow I wish to give a short account of the methodological approaches and statistical techniques applied for coding and analyzing petitions to the Frankfurt National Assembly. My intention is to show that the combination of textual and contextual analysis can be used as a research technique which may help to discover motivational and structural determinants of political participation in past societies.

2. Relevance and Validity of the Source Material

The petitions to the Frankfurt National Assembly are important data bases concerning collective political behavior and public opinion in the the years 1848/49, as they were the most important institutional channel of mass political mobilization after the March Revolution. In the altered institutional framework the petitions enabled previously unpoliticized classes to involve themselves directly in political arguments and conflicts of interest².

Roughly 25,000 to 30,000 petitions, articulating the demands on the first German parliament of about 2.5 to 3 million signers, disprove the thesis of „complete indifference of the mass and its passive role in public life“ after the March Revolution³. It is no surprise that the political, clerical and economic associations and pressure groups that had come into being in 1848 soon used the petitions as a manifestation and plebiscitarian justification of their demands. As there was also a great number of local and regional interest organizations, political corporations and informal groups included in the mobilization campaign, information concerning organizational patterns and conditions of the social structure of political action in early industrial Germany is to be expected from an analysis of the petitions.

² Literature on the petition movement is sparse and scattered. A broader but methodological unsatisfying study was written by Schirrmeister, Karl-Günther, *Menschenrechte in den Petitionen an die deutsche Nationalversammlung*, Phil. Diss. Bamberg 1970.

³ See Hamerow, Theodore S., *The Elections to the Frankfurt Parliament*, in: *The Journal of Modern History*, 33 (1961), p. 29.

Main subjects of the petition movement were: basic human rights, inclusion of Austria in a national German state, demands for restrictive measures of trade regulation, for the separation of church and state, for abolition of feudal charges and for recognition of the German Imperial Constitution by the constituent states. One of the largest of these thematically quite precisely differentiated blocs is constituted by petitions relating to commercial policy (3,775 single petitions and 397,000 signatures). This category included all those petitions that made concrete demands concerning tariff policy, commented on the commercial policy of the National Assembly and/or the provisional central government of the Empire, or quite generally demanded the establishment of a German tariff union. Their relatively high share in the total amount of the petition movement (13 %–16 %) makes evident that violent conflicts of interest concerning commercial policy, which had been carried out during the period before the March Revolution (Vormärz) within the governments and parliamentary representations, on the diplomatic level and in the press, became the impulse of a mass movement under the different political conditions of 1848/49.

The significance of tariff policy as a means of economic control by the government as well as the relevance of commercial disputes for the exposure of cleavage structures are underlined by the fact that from the 1820s tariff conflicts caused serious political splits and dominated public debates not only in Germany but also in France, the United States and Great Britain⁴. Thus petitions relating to commercial policy make up a group of sources the analysis of which is likely to give information about mobilization processes, participation behavior and cleavage structures in early industrial Germany. Its special value lies in the possible combination of criteria of contents and context, thus allowing attribution of ideological and political tendencies to regional, social and organizational connections.

In order to limit the amount of potential research issues this paper will confine itself to the study of relations between the variations of the subject matters of the petitions and the social setup of the respective groups of signers.

Above all, the following questions are to be addressed:

- What were the social bases of recruitment for the protectionist and the free trade movement?
- What were the demands the signing socio-economic interest groups committed themselves to?
- What kinds of groups cooperated in the signing of petitions?
- Which factors influenced the cooperation of groups within the petition movement?

⁴ See, e. g., Pincus, Jonathan J., *Pressure Groups and Politics in Antebellum Tariffs*, New York 1977; McCord, Norman, *The Anti-Corn Law League 1838–1846*, London 1958; Aydelotte, William O., *The Distintegration of the Conservative Party in the 1840s: A Study of Political Attitudes*, in: Aydelotte, William O., et al. (eds.), *The Dimensions of Quantitative Research in History*, Princeton 1972, pp. 319–346.

The findings are intended to contribute to the investigation of the widespread theory that class conflicts which were increasing during the revolution had prevented joint political action of bourgeoisie, farmers, petty bourgeoisie and workers, and had driven the bourgeoisie „into the arms of reaction“⁵.

3. Methods of Data-gathering

But before I begin to deal with the four research topics mentioned above, a short description of the concrete procedures of transforming „sources“ into „data“ is in order. In doing so I shall confine myself to the three selected variables, „tendency“, „reference“ and „signing interest group“ which are to be subjected to several methods of analysis in the next step.

The data have been collected using traditional interview procedures by means of a partly standardized questionnaire. Thus unexpected variants could be taken into consideration and the final definition of the variables could be taken up at the end of the data record.

The following data and groups of data for each petition were recorded: location information, date of composition, reception date, place of origin, affiliation to a collective petition, supporting organization, signing socio-economic pressure groups, number of signatures, and the references. Besides, a commentary is provided to record peculiarities. It was not until the completion of the partly standardized data inquiry that the variables were operationally defined and the final code plan fixed.

All of the petitions relating to trade policy could be included, as far as their contents is concerned, in one of the following categories: either „protectionist“, „free trade“ or „indifferent“. This classification was facilitated by the emergence in 1848/49 of commercial pressure groups such as the „General German Union for the Protection of National Labour“ (Allgemeiner Deutscher Verein zum Schutze der vaterländischen Arbeit) on the protectionist side, the „German Union for Freedom of Trade“ (Deutscher Verein für Handelsfreiheit) and the „Merchants' Union“ (Verein von Abgeordneten des Handelsstandes) on the free trader side. These organizations coordinated the great number of diffuse and sometimes even contradictory de-

⁵ Today, this view is shared by marxist as well as ‚bourgeois‘ authors. See, e. g., Schmidt, Walter, Zur Rolle der Bourgeoisie in den bürgerlichen Revolutionen von 1789 und 1848, in: Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft, 21(1973), pp. 301–320; Dorpalen, Andreas, Die Revolution von 1848 in der Geschichtsschreibung der DDR, in: Historische Zeitschrift, 210 (1970), pp. 324–368; and Nipperdey, Thomas, Kritik oder Objektivität? Zur Beurteilung der Revolution 1848, in: Klötzer, Wolfgang, et al. (eds.), Ideen und Strukturen der deutschen Revolution 1848, Frankfurt 1974, pp. 143–162.

mands relating to tariff policy. Their tariff drafts fixed the „official“ sets of demands made by free trade and protectionist movements. Agreement or non-agreement with these competitive programs relating to commercial policy could generally be taken as a criterion for the inclusion of the petitions in the categories „protectionist“ or „free trade“.

Those petitions without specific demands relating to tariff policy, demanding merely the establishment of economic unity throughout Germany, reconciliation of antagonistic points of view or consultation of experts for the formulation of the tariff, were labelled „indifferent“.

Petitions relating to trade policy distributed among the three basic categories of contents as follows:

Tab. 1: Distribution of Petitions Among Basic Categories of Contents

tendency	absolute frequency	relative frequency (in percent)
protectionist	3,400	90.1
free trade	347	9.2
indifferent	28	0.7
	<u>3,775</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Apart from this rough classification of the petitions according to contents, the individual grievances were listed as well. It soon turned out that the sets of grievances were relatively deficient in variants; more than 89 % of the petitions belonged to a total of 52 collective petitions the texts of which had been previously formulated and supraregionally distributed. Central control of the agitation by free trade and protectionist leagues contributed to further standardization of contents.

These conditions enabled us to do without a complicated coding pattern: The grievances we identified were defined as dichotomous variables, which means that each petition was classified according to presence or absence of every individual reference. Reasons and commentaries given in the petitions were not embodied in the data set, but were nevertheless considered significant material and recorded in the questionnaires. A selection of the grievances recorded is to be found in Table 4.

2,772 petitions (= 73.4 % of all petitions relating to trade policy) contained information about the social position (Stand) of the signers, appearing sometimes as a collective label (example: „We, the Trittenheim wine growers, demand . . .“), from November 1848 on as an addition to the individual signature. An allusion to a heterogeneous group of supporters was an important argument in favour of commercial demands, and it became a common practice to provide one column in the list of signatures for the signers to enter their „social position“ (Stand).

With regard to the extremely diffuse statements characterizing „social position“ overall social categories had to be established to take into account peculiarities of material as well as special problems of research. Given these conditions, the formation of pressure groups organization in 1848 seemed to be the most appropriate pattern for classification of the various descriptions of occupation; it represented an immediate clue to problems relating to policy of interest and at the same time took into consideration the contemporary perception of the social system.

In contrast, I refrained from imposing a model of social stratification or categories of occupation lacking an equivalent in contemporary conceptions, as it can be assumed that specific forms of political action and collective ideological tendencies have been developed in the actual context of cooperating pressure groups rather than within the framework of social categories defined *ex post facto*. This way I was also able to avoid certain problems of stratification and grouping that tend to obstruct analysis of social phenomena especially of the 19th century.

The definition of the socio-economic pressure groups used for social classification thus follows the pattern for organization of economic pressure groups in 1848/49. Farmers organized in a „Congress of Delegates of German Agricultural Associations“ (Kongreß der Abgeordneten deutscher landwirtschaftlicher Vereine), master craftsmen in the „German Congress of Craftsmasters“ (Deutscher Handwerker- und Gewerbekongreß), workers in the „General German Worker's Congress“ (Allgemeiner deutscher Arbeiterkongreß) and in the „Berlin Workers' Congress“ (Berliner Arbeiterkongreß), merchants in a „Merchants' Union“ (Verein von Abgeordneten des Handelsstandes) and manufacturers in the „General German Union for the Protection of National Labour“ (Allgemeiner Deutscher Verein zum Schutz der vaterländischen Arbeit), which had been founded as a manufacturers' organization. An extra group such as the wine growers articulated their demands in the „Assemblies of German Wine- and Fruit Producers“ (Versammlungen der Deutschen Wein- und Obstproduzenten), employees in the textile industries also founded their first organization, the „Association of Saxon Spinning Clerks“ (Verein Sächsischer Spinnereibeamter). These national assemblies and top organizations were established on a broad basis of local organizations and informal groups; one can thus infer that many everyday social contacts took place within the framework of socio-economic interest groups as well.

Apart from the socio-economic pressure groups mentioned here were, however, some groups that had made no effort to form organizations, although they had been assigned a clearly limited position in society. Either motivational or material resources for the development of a corporate structure were lacking in these cases. This applies in the first place to civil servants, to members of academic professions, and to the largest group in early industrial society – the agricultural labourers. Because of their special significance as supporters or subjects of the trade mobilization campaign these groups were included in the set of variables as independent social categories in spite of the lack of specific corporations. With regard to these exceptions I have assigned the given descriptions of occupation to the ten socio-economic pressure groups: manufacturers, merchants, farmers, master craftsmen, work-

ers, clerks, wine- and tobacco growers, members of academic professions, civil servants and agricultural labourers. The inclusion of individual professions in these groups tended to follow the contemporary craft statistics which was to a certain extent divided into similar categories⁶.

Recording the data, I defined each pressure group as a dichotomous variable and registered its presence or absence in the lists of signatures. Thus the affiliation of an individual signature to a certain group was not recorded. Consequently we cannot make statements like „in petition X, 10 % of the signers were manufacturers“ but only statements such as „workers signed in 20,3 % of all petitions“. This procedure had its basis and justification in the hypothesis that the signing of petitions was the result of joint decisions made within the framework of socio-economic pressure groups and, thus, represented the intention of the group.

This assumption is supported by the fact that in 62,5 % of the cases in which information about the signers' social position was available the respective pressure groups signed petitions isolated from each other. A further 27,5 % of cases concentrated on 20 types of group cooperation in signing petitions (example: manufacturers together with workers and clerks). On the whole, 90 % of the petitions were distributed among 30 types of group representation which make up 2,9 % of a total of 1,024 theoretical possibilities of cooperation. This finding signifies that the members of the various pressure groups signed either on their own or selectively together with an exclusive set of social partners — a finding that definitely supports the initial hypothesis.

4. A Relational Analysis of Content and Context of Petitions to the Frankfurt National Assembly

Subsequent to this short description of the set of variables that was analyzed I am going to answer the four research questions referred to above.

In 1848/49, when plebiscitary support of commercial demands was supposed to have an effective bearing on political decisions, mobilization of a numerous and socially heterogenous following was more than ever the aim and measure of success in agitation by protectionists as well as free traders. In this stage the different bases of recruitment of protectionist and free trade petition movements show the possibilities as well as the limits of their wooing adherents.

⁶ See, e. g., *Statistische Mitteilungen aus dem Königreich Sachsen, Dresden 1854*, and *Tafeln und amtliche Nachrichten aus dem preußischen Staat für das Jahr 1849*, Vols. 4–6, Berlin (no year).

Tab. 2: The Representation of Socio-Economic Pressure Groups in the Protectionist- and Free Trade Movements

pressure groups	protectionist petitions		free trade petitions	
	N	% *	N	% *
manufacturers	411	16.0	15	6.1
merchants	300	11.9	168	68.3
farmers	523	20.8	74	30.1
master craftsmen	1,094	43.6	51	20.7
workers	753	30.0	12	4.9
clerks	81	3.2	5	2.0
public servants	74	2.9	22	8.9
academic professions	27	1.1	16	6.5
agricultural labourers	156	6.2	38	15.4
wine- and tobacco growers	852	33.9	0	0.0
	N = 2,511		N = 246	

* percentages are adding up to more than 100 %.

Tab. 3: Distribution of Pressure Groups between the Protectionist and Free Trade Movements

pressure groups	protectionist petitions				free trade petitions		
	N	N	%*	dev.from** mean	N	%	dev. from*** mean
manufacturers	426	411	96.5	+ 5.4	15	3.5	- 5.4
merchants	468	300	64.1	- 27.0	168	35.9	+ 27.0
farmers	597	523	87.6	- 3.5	74	12.4	+ 3.5
master craftsmen	1,145	1,094	95.5	+ 4.4	51	4.5	- 4.5
workers	765	753	98.4	+ 7.3	12	1.6	- 7.3
clerks	86	81	94.2	+ 3.1	5	5.8	- 3.1
public servants	96	74	77.1	- 14.0	22	22.9	+ 14.0
academic professions	43	27	62.8	- 28.3	16	37.2	+ 28.3
agricultural labourers	194	146	80.4	- 10.7	38	19.6	+ 10.7
wine- and tobacco grow.	852	852	100.0	+ 8.9	0	0.0	- 8.9

* row-values of columns 3 and 6 are adding up to 100.0%.

** mean share of protectionist petitions in all petitions concerning tariff policy: 91.1 %.

*** mean share of free trade petitions in all petitions concerning tariff policy: 8.9 %.

In interpreting the results of Table 2, the different degrees of success of free trade and protectionist movements must, of course, be taken into account: There were 2,511 protectionist petitions supplying information about the signing pressure groups compared to no more than 246 corresponding petitions for free trade. For example farmers were represented in 30 % of all free trade petitions, whereas 87.6% of all petitions in which farmers were represented, were protectionist (see Table 3).

Tables 2 and 3 reveal that free traders remained confined to a great extent to their traditional core of adherents — the merchants. Traditions of the period before the March Revolution were resumed by rather frequent representation of civil servants and members of academic professions. The groups of farmers and agricultural labourers which were likely to be in favour of free trade at least in those cultivation areas depending on export, were represented above average in the free trade petitions; but nevertheless the protectionist advantage could not nearly be made up for even in the agricultural sphere. Groups such as manufacturers, master craftsmen, workers and clerks were represented below average.

On the other hand, the protectionists found the main part of their following among the industrial and agricultural middle- and lower classes. The group of wine and tobacco growers, which was not at all represented in free trade petitions, held the second place of all categories. On the whole, members of agricultural professions were represented in 55.5 % of all protectionist petitions, workers and master craftsmen in 57.7 %. In view of the success in mobilizing these groups, the traditional core of adherents of the protectionist movement — the manufacturers — lost some of its import. Nevertheless manufacturers committed themselves to protectionist petitions to a considerably greater extent than merchants committed themselves to free trade petitions. It comes as a surprise that this protectionist advantage even applied to the group of merchants that voted much more frequently for restrictions by means of tariff policy than for free trade.

One reason for the protectionist movement's vast success in mobilizing the various socio-economic pressure groups might have been their disposal to match the uniform and purposeful agitation of the „General German Union for the Protection of National Labour“ (Allgemeiner deutscher Verein zum Schutze der vaterländischen Arbeit). This advantage, though, is but an insufficient explanation for the protectionist success as the propaganda impulses had to go along with appropriate motivational incentives and readiness for cooperative political action on the part of the pressure groups in order to lead to the signing of trade petitions: It is also the different reactions to agitation that may serve as an explanation for the different mobilization effects as well as different bases of recruitment of protectionist and free trade movements.

If one wants to reveal the motives of pressure groups for their participation in the trade petition movement, one could reasonably take it as an initial hypothesis that they signed petitions above all because of their commitment to individual topics contained in the petitions. In fact no arbitrary relations between readiness to sign petitions and the existence of certain subject matters are to be expected: pressure groups frequently voted for specific sets of demands submitted to them either

by their own organizations or by national free trade or protectionist associations, the aim being the achievement of the highest degree of mobilization that could possibly be reached.

I have depicted the relations between the variables „signing pressure group“ and „reference“ by means of a matrix of Φ coefficients. In the present case, Φ reaches its maximum value if the appearance of a group always goes along with the occurrence of a certain subject matter, whereas other groups do not vote for this grievance. In case a group tended not to appear in the lists of signatures referring to a special subject matter, the value is negative⁷. As it can hardly be decided whether this abstention is due to indifference or deliberate refusal on the part of the group not represented, these negative coefficients have been neglected. In order to facilitate the interpretation of the results, it was decided that the same should apply to coefficients below .10 (rounded up). If measuring the relation between the occurrence of a certain subject matter and the signing of the respective petitions by a pressure group resulted in a coefficient of $\Phi \geq .10$ this was regarded as evidence for the ‚commitment‘ of this group in favour of the subject matter in question.

Detailed interpretation of all the results of Table 4 would go beyond the scope of this paper. Nonetheless I would like to record three points that seem important to me:

- Obviously, there was only a small number of demands distinctly appealing to specific groups (wine growers – wine tariffs etc.). Most of the grievances were supported by a heterogenous following.
- Common attachment to certain grievances united different pressure groups. It must be considered whether this common articulation of interests led to direct interaction of the groups within the petition movement.
- Individual groups committed themselves to demands that were directly opposed to each other. At this point the effect of a distinctly sectional cleavage structure becomes obvious, splitting up for instance the merchants in their entirety into two groups: one group of merchants from northern Germany, committed to export trade and clearly preferring free trade measures; and a second group of merchants from the western and southern parts of Germany, committed to inland trade and protective tariffs.

⁷ The version of Φ used in this paper (with signs) is described in Benninghaus, H., *Deskriptive Statistik*, Stuttgart 1977. The calculation of Φ was derived from 2 x 2 tables of the following type:

		protest against free trade tariff		
		not mentioned	mentioned	
master craftsmen	not represented	566	987	1553
	represented	543	512	1055
		1109	1499	2608
$\Phi = 0.15$				

Tab. 4: „Commitment“ of Pressure Groups in Favour of Particular Subject Matters
(Φ coefficients)

Grievances*	Manuf.	Merch.	Farm.	Mast.	Work.	Vine grow.
Support of an immediate establishment of the German commercial union	0.18	0.12		0.17	0.10	
Support of the convocation of a congress of experts in order to decide the tariff questions	0.13		0.12	0.11	0.15	
Support of raising tariffs on iron	0.10				0.26	
Support of raising tariffs on textiles	0.10			0.10		
Support of decreasing tariffs on raw materials and foodstuff				0.22		
Refusal of export duties				0.20		
Support of export duties	0.13					
Support of a combination of protective tariffs and restrictive guild-laws				0.15		
Support of high tariffs on wine						0.92
Support of high tariffs on tobacco						0.12
Support of high tariffs on sugar			0.15			
Support of reciprocal trade agreements	0.21	0.14	0.13	0.35	0.28	
Refusal of reciprocal trade agreements		0.31				
Support of the motion of Eisenstuck and others	0.17					
Refusal of the motion of Eisenstuck and others		0.15				
Support of the draft of a protectionist tariff	0.10	0.17		0.29		
Support of the general aims of the protectionist league			0.20			0.10
Support of the draft of a free trade tariff		0.34				

* Only such grievances were noted, to which the commitment of at least one pressure group was indicated by a $\Phi \geq 0.10$. The commitment of public servants to particular grievances was generally lesser than the liminal value of $\Phi = 0.10$. Holders of academic professions tended to reject the motion of Bernhard Eisenstuck ($\Phi = 0.13$) and were inclined to support the free trade tariff ($\Phi = 0.10$). Agricultural labourers tended to support the general aims of the protectionist league ($\Phi = 0.15$). On the other hand they were inclined to support the free trade tariff ($\Phi = 0.13$). The texts of some grievances had to be abbreviated in case of space shortage.

Tab. 4: „Commitment“ of Pressure Groups in Favour of Particular Subject Matters
(Φ coefficients)

Refusal of the draft of a free trade tariff					0.58
Distrust of the Frankfurt National Assembly in case of its protectionist prepossessions	0.15				
Protest againts the retardation of the pro- tectionist program by the National Assembly and/or the minister of trade	0.15	0.18	0.25	0.50	

At this point the question arises as to what extent participation of the various socio-economic pressure groups in the petitions can be explained by commitment to the subject matters of the petitions. As opposed to the preceding analysis, we shall refrain from investigating how far the individual demand was connected with participation or non-participation of a pressure group in petitions. We shall rather examine how far participation was influenced by the set of grievances as a whole.

In order to ascertain the strength of this relationship, r^2 was used, giving the „proportion of explained variation in per cent“. In the present case, e. g., the value of the (multiple) correlation between occurrence of certain grievances in the petitions and representation of craftsmen in the lists of signatures of $R^2 = 0.51$, was interpreted to the effect that participation or non-participation can be „explained“ by the presence or absence of certain grievances to a total of 51%⁸.

Tab. 5: „Commitment“ of Pressure-Groups to the Set of Grievances as a Whole

pressure groups	multiple R^2 : total set of grievances/representation of interest groups
manufacturers	$R^2 = 0.22$
merchants	$R^2 = 0.28$
farmers	$R^2 = 0.27$
master craftsmen	$R^2 = 0.51$
workers	$R^2 = 0.50$
clerks	$R^2 = 0.03$
public servants	$R^2 = 0.03$
academic professions	$R^2 = 0.05$
agricultural labourers	$R^2 = 0.12$
wine- and tobacco growers	$R^2 = 0.91$
	in all cases: $s = 0.000$

⁸ The assumption that the grievances were independent variables was derived from the fact that in most cases signers supported previously formulated texts. Seldom they influenced the formulation of petitions directly. For the justification of an application of multiple correlation analysis to dichotomous variables see Blalock, Hubert M., Social Statistics, 2nd. ed., New York 1972, pp. 454 ff., 498 ff.

The results reveal characteristic differences between the pressure groups as regards their commitment to the sets of demands offered.

Clerks, public servants and members of academic professions tended but to a small degree to focus on certain subject matters of the petitions. Their indifference suggests that they did not develop any independent centers of interest as far as tariff policy is concerned, and that their participation in the petition movement was only a subsidiary one. The same applies to the agricultural labourers whose mobilization was evidently only slightly more connected to the presence of certain demands in petitions. This outcome remarkably corresponds with the fact that in 1848/49 the groups mentioned did not establish any independent organizations on the national level. In contrast to these groups, wine- and tobacco growers petitioned almost exclusively for grievances referring to their own specific interests. Petitions of workers and master craftsmen included subjects relating to specific groups as well, though without focusing on an exclusive subject. Obviously, however, specific demands had to be contained in the texts in order to induce them to participate.

On the other hand, manufacturers, merchants and farmers concentrated less distinctly on special grievances. In the case of the two groups mentioned first, their relative indifference can be accounted for by the fact that they were the initiators of the free trade and protectionist petition movements. So they were directly involved in the distribution of different text versions and in this function signed copies the demands of which were traced out for other groups as well. In the case of those farmers not specialized in wine- and tobacco growing, who, with the exception of sugar customs, did not make any demands for agrarian protectionism, relative indifference is rather due to a „hanger-on-effect“; an assumption that shall be supported by further evidence elsewhere.

To summarize, it is to be kept in mind that „issue-orientation“ was no doubt an important motive for signing trade petitions. With the exception of wine and tobacco growers, however, this factor by itself is only an insufficient explanation for participation of pressure groups in the petition movement.

An indication of further attempts at an explanation was given by the allusion to a „hanger-on-effect“: Obviously the social relations between pressure groups had a bearing on their participation in the protectionist and free trade petition movement. A comparison of the values given in Table 5 for commitment in favor of sets of grievances on the one hand and relative frequency of isolated signing of texts by pressure groups on the other hand supports the assumption that „issue-orientation“ and involvement in systems of social relationship were complementary impulses for participation of pressure groups in petitions.

The results reveal that groups which were distinctly attached to certain grievances, tended to sign petitions on their own, whereas groups which were relatively indifferent to the subject matters, petitioned almost exclusively together with their social partners. Table 6 supports the assumption that analysis of social relations established by pressure groups within the framework of the petition movement suggest further evidence as to the impulses for their participation. For analysis of the patterns of interaction reflected by the lists of signatures, I made also use of Configu-

Tab. 6: „Commitment“ of Pressure Groups in Favour of the Set of Grievances and Relative Frequencies of Isolated Signing of Petitions

pressure groups	„commitment“	frequencies of isolated signing	
		N	%*
manufacturers	$R^2 = 0.22$	109	25.2
merchants	$R^2 = 0.28$	150	31.8
farmers	$R^2 = 0.27$	78	13.0
master craftsmen	$R^2 = 0.51$	364	31.6
workers	$R^2 = 0.50$	203	26.5
clerks	$R^2 = 0.03$	5	5.8
public servants	$R^2 = 0.03$	3	3.1
academic professions	$R^2 = 0.05$	0	0.0
agricultural labourers	$R^2 = 0.12$	11	5.8
wine- and tobacco growers	$R^2 = 0.91$	809	94.8

* The proportion is related to the total number of petitions signed by the respective pressure groups (basic values, see Tab. 3, col. 1).

ration Frequency analysis (CFA)⁹, a statistical instrument developed by E. A. Lienert and J. Krauth for use in psychology. CFA measures the frequency of occurrence of particular configurations — in the present case for instance joint signing of protectionist petitions by workers, manufacturers and clerks — and compares this value to the probability of occurrence of the respective configuration (expected value). Inherent structures of cooperation of the various pressure groups may be taken for granted if the frequency of occurrence of a certain pattern of interaction is significantly higher than expected. The configuration „manufacturer, worker, clerk“ for instance is to be expected only once, whereas there are in fact 22 protectionist petitions jointly signed by these groups; a discrepancy between expected value and observed value revealing an underlying regularity that requires interpretation.

The results of CFA have been visualized by a diagram using the technique of Smallest Space Analysis¹⁰. By this means the different pressure groups were arranged

⁹ See Krauth, Joachim and Lienert, Gustav Adolf, KFA. Die Konfigurationsfrequenzanalyse und ihre Anwendung in Psychologie und Medizin, Freiburg 1973. For computerized analysis I used the program KONFA which was written by Burkhard Roeder. For a more detailed description of KONFA see Roeder, Burkhard, Die Konfigurationsfrequenzanalyse nach Krauth und Lienert. Ein handliches Verfahren zur Verarbeitung sozialwissenschaftlicher Daten, demonstriert an einem Beispiel, in: Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, 26 (1974), pp. 819–844.

¹⁰ Lingoes, James C., The Guttman-Lingoes Nonmetric Program Series, Ann Arbor/Mich. 1973. For the Analysis of the Petitions I used the program SSA I/MINISSA I.

within a two-dimensional system of coordinates in such a way that groups cooperating rather frequently, such as farmers and agricultural labourers, are plotted close to one another, whereas groups which rarely signed petitions together, such as workers and academics, are plotted farer apart. Thus social distance as far as it was revealed during the petition movement is measured by the distance between the different groups, whereas the characteristic types of group cooperation, as identified by aid of CFA, are marked by the connecting lines (see Diagrams 1 and 2).

Diagram 1: Interaction Pattern of the Protectionist Petition Movement

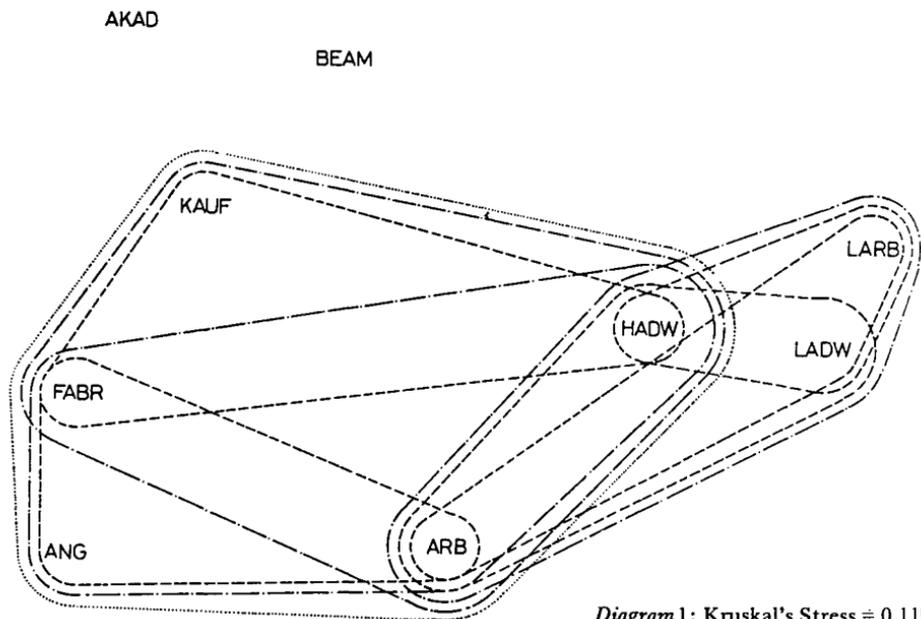


Diagram 1: Kruskal's Stress = 0.115

Legend to Diagrams 1 and 2:

- = significant frequent isolated signing of one group
- ↔ = significant frequent interaction between two groups
- = significant frequent interaction between three groups
- = significant frequent interaction between four groups
- = significant frequent interaction between five groups

FABR = manufacturers
 KAUF = merchants
 HADW = master craftsmen
 LADW = farmers
 ARB = workers

LARB = agricultural labourers
 ANG = clerks
 AKAD = academic professions
 BEAM = public servants

Diagram 2: Interaction Pattern of the Free Trade Petition Movement

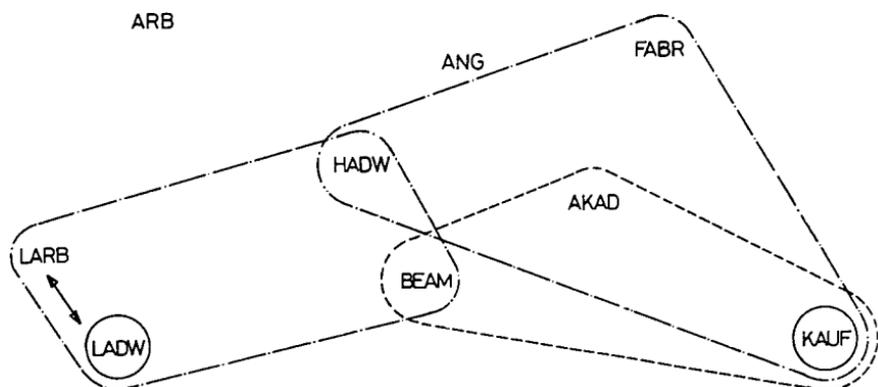


Diagram 2: Kruskal's Stress = 0.089

Two clearly different substructures can be discerned regarding the social interaction pattern of the protectionist petition movement: a „rural“ and an „urban“ network, master craftsmen and workers acting as intermediaries between them. Close relationship between workers, master craftsmen, farmers and agricultural labourers can be accounted for by the connection of proto-industry and agriculture within the framework of rural domestic industry. Obviously the protectionist movement succeeded in exploiting for its mobilization campaign the close social contacts developing between the different producer groups in the country. Because of their simultaneous affiliation to „rural“ and „urban“ milieu craftsmen and workers developed much more complex patterns of interaction than the other groups. As far as workers are concerned, this finding contradicts the obvious suspicion that they generally had been forced to participate in the protectionist movement by pressure exerted by the manufacturers: only 26.9 % of all protectionist petitions that were signed by workers were at the same time signed by manufacturers, whereas in 26.5 % of all cases workers petitioned without any participation of other groups. In the case of the master craftsmen we are struck by an especially close connection to the farmers, linking them closer to the rural than to the urban milieu.

Manufacturers belonged to two different fields of interaction as well. A system of relations, also including clerks and workers, can be accounted for by the cooperation of these groups within the framework of industrial companies, whereas joint signing of petitions with merchants and craftsmen reflects relations between industrial and commercial elements of urban economy. Academics and civil servants did not have any significant relations to other groups within the framework of the protectionist petition movement.

Within the free trade petition movement too, we have a „rural“ as well as an

„urban“ pattern of interaction connected by craftsmen and public servants¹¹. Cooperation of the groups involved on the free trade side, however, was significantly rarer than on the protectionist side. It comes as a surprise that merchants, being the most important supporters of the free trade movement, held a peripheral position within its system of social relations. This gap between the core of the interested and the group of people addressed can be taken to be one reason for the failure of the free trade mobilization campaign¹².

In the free trade movement groups concerned tended to cooperate less and less as time went on: the proportion of petitions with isolated group representation increased from 62,0 % of 78,2 % subsequent to November 1848 when the campaign in favor of the free trade tariff project was unleashed. Contrary to the intention of its initiators the free trade tariff had anything but a supporting and unifying effect for an overall free trade petition movement but rather seems to have increased the isolation of north German foreign trade merchants.

¹¹ To make possible a comparison between free trade petitions and protectionist petitions I eliminated those petitions which were supported by wine- and tobacco growers. This procedure did not affect the patterns of interaction of the other groups, because wine- and tobacco growers signed nearly in all cases without participation of other groups. Configurations were noted if their probability of occurrence was < 0.1 % and if their absolute frequency was ≥ 5 .

interacting pressure groups	expected value	frequency
FARM, WORK, AGRLABR	4	19
FARM, MAST, AGRLABR	7	41
FARM, MAST, WORK	37	108
FARM, MAST, WORK, AGRLABR	3	13
MANF, WORK, CLERK	1	22
MANF, MAST, WORK, CLERK	1	10
MANF, MERCH, MAST	13	37
MANF, MERCH, MAST, WORK	5	32
MANF, MERCH, MAST, CLERK	0	8

N = 2510

¹² In the case of free trade petitions I used the same selective procedures as for protectionist petitions. Only the liminal value for the frequency of configurations was reduced from 5 to 3, because the number of free trade petitions was significantly smaller than the number of protectionist petitions.

interacting pressure groups	expected value	frequency
FARM (isolated)	9	33
FARM, AGRLABR	7	12
FARM, MAST, PUBSERV, AGRLABR	0	3
MERCH (isolated)	7	124
MERCH, PUBSERV, ACADS	0	3
MANUF, MERCH, MAST, ACADS	0	3

N = 246

On the other hand, protectionist patterns of interaction gradually took shape: Prior to November 1848, which means before agitation was controlled by the protectionist league, 87,8 % of protectionist petitions subjected to CFA were signed by the pressure groups separately; subsequent to November 1848, this proportion went down to 28,3 %. Formation of the characteristic patterns of interaction, as for instance development of „rural“ and „urban“ systems of relations, did not occur until the second stage.

Reasons for the significant change of participation behaviour can be found in the different techniques of organization of petitions and in the different tenor of protectionist agitation. Prior to November 1848, organizations and grievances specifically concerning particular groups prevailed, whereas the mobilization campaign of the „General German Union for the Protection of National Labour“ increasingly relied on overall patterns of organization combining concessions to specific interests with an appeal to the common „material interests of the nation“. In spite of the fact that latent conflicts continued to exist the protectionist program displayed considerable integrating power. Only the wine- and tobacco growers were mobilized almost exclusively by specific demands and largely without participation of other groups.

Analysis of the patterns of interaction by means of CFA revealed that cooperation of groups was determined by their affiliation to a particular „milieu“. Remember the discovery of „rural“ and „urban“ systems of relations or the significance of working in the same factory. At this point the question arises which basic social conditions and which motives influenced group cooperation and, on the other hand, which weight has to be assigned to these determinants.

In order to reveal connections of this kind, factor analysis seems to be the most appropriate instrument. In the present study entries announcing presence or absence of the ten socio-economic pressure groups in the petitions were intercorrelated as original variables. Factors influencing their relations were interpreted as clustering forces determining cooperation of these groups within the petition movement. Free trade and protectionist petitions were analyzed separately as CFA had revealed different patterns of interaction, and comparison of the contrasting groups promised additional possibilities of interpretation.

As to the protectionist movement, factor analysis revealed four determinants of group cooperation¹³. One factor, identified as „working together“, most significantly influenced relations between pressure groups. It accounts for 50,3 % of variance and above all determined cooperation of manufacturers, workers and clerks. Second was one factor signifying „living together in the country“ (21,7 % of variance), showing high factor scores for farmers and agricultural labourers, and another factor denoting „perceived identity of interests“ (16,4 % of variance), showing high scores for craftsmen and lower scores for manufacturers, merchants, workers and farmers. A factor standing for „social proximity of local dignitaries“ was least

¹³ I used SPSS, vers. CDC 6.0, subprogram FACTOR, method PA 2, orthogonal solution

significant (11.6 % of variance). This factor showed high scores for public servants and academic professions, and considerably lower scores for manufacturers and merchants.

Almost the same determinants of group cooperation are discernible within the free trade petition movement¹⁴. Only the factor denoting „social proximity“ is lacking here. Within the free trade petition movement the factor standing for „living together in the country“, accounting for 45.9 % of variance, was of the greatest importance for cooperation behaviour, succeeded by the factor signifying „perceived identity of interests“ with 41.5%. The factor identified as „working together“, which showed high scores for craftsmen and workers within the free trade movement, follows with 12.6 %.

(VARIMAX). See Nie, Norman H., et al., SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2nd ed., New York 1975, pp. 480 ff.

The following factor scores were calculated:

	FACTOR 1 („working together“)	FACTOR 2 („living together“)	FACTOR 3 („perceiv. id. of interests“)	FACTOR 4 („social proximity“)
MANUF	0.56	- 0.15	0.19	0.14
MERCH	0.21	- 0.07	0.29	0.26
FARM	- 0.03	0.65	0.20	0.02
MAST	- 0.04	0.20	0.73	0.06
WORK	0.48	0.30	0.15	- 0.06
CLERK	0.46	0.00	0.04	0.10
PUBSERV	- 0.06	0.12	0.02	0.60
ACAD	0.07	0.02	0.04	0.52
AGRLABR	0.02	0.47	0.05	0.09
WINEGROW	- 0.41	- 0.34	- 0.71	0.02
PCT of Var.	50.3	21.7	16.4	11.4

¹⁴ Factor scores:

	FACTOR 1 („living together“)	FACTOR 2 („perceiv. id. of interests“)	FACTOR 3 („working together“)
MANUF	- 0.05	0.35	- 0.02
MERCH	- 0.95	0.16	- 0.01
FARM	0.70	0.11	0.01
MAST	0.12	0.53	0.57
WORK	0.08	0.04	0.61
CLERK	0.04	0.37	0.13
PUBSERV	0.05	0.66	0.09
ACAD	- 0.10	- 0.66	0.04
AGRLABR	0.55	- 0.05	0.22
PCT of Var.	45.9	41.5	12.6

The results of factor analysis suggest that existing systems of social relations like „living together“ and „working together“ played a more important role for cooperation of pressure groups within the petition movement than mere ideological determinants such as the factor standing for „perceived identity of interests“ did. The protectionists were able to benefit from existing social relations within social sub-systems to a greater extent than free traders, whose more abstract grievances led to a more ideologically determined cooperation of pressure groups.

5. Conclusion

The results presented have revealed that the assumption that class conflicts had increased during 1848 and 1849 and prevented joint political action of bourgeoisie, workers, farmers and craftsmen, is at least not true of the trade petition movement. Especially the protectionist movement actually succeeded in expanding the basis of recruitment for their petition campaign beyond the limits of status and milieu. Conflicts between socio-economic pressure groups could be concealed by nationalist economic propaganda at least for the topic under consideration and at least during the period under research.

It was only subsequent to November 1848, in a period when according to most authors, the bourgeoisie fled „into the arms of reaction“ for fear of the social demands of the proletariat and petty bourgeoisie, that the patterns of interaction of the groups participating in the petition campaign took shape and the protectionist mass movement reached its climax

The need to revise some current views of the Revolution of 1848/49 – which I experienced myself in the necessity of revising some of my own expectations – indicates once more that knowledge in collective behavior and opinions of past societies cannot be derived from scattered citations or with reference of contemporary authorities. As opposed to that it needs gathering of mass data in a standardized way and the application of statistical analyses. Content analysis will be an important research instrument for a „collective history“ of this type, whose databases nearly exclusively consists of written text. Systematic inclusion of a „contextual analysis“ into the repertory of content analysis could be essential to its adoption and expansion in the field of quantitative history because contextual analysis of historical documents opens further dimensions of research and could form a methodological link to traditional historical „source criticism“.