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Security and Conspiracy in Modern History

Cornel Zwierlein & Beatrice de Graaf[*]

Abstract: *»Sicherheit und Verschwörung in der Neuzeit«*. Security History is a new field in historical research. Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theories have attracted since some years great attention, both in historical and in social research. A thorough study of those both opposed and mirroring key phenomena and concepts does not exist. This contribution tries to outline a sketch of the development of their interwoven history, how (imagined) conspiracies challenged new means of security production and vice versa. The main assumption is that a) a translocal public sphere, b) concepts, practices and means of institutionalized security production, and c) developed narratives that contain conspiracy theories only emerge together from the Renaissance onwards. Only if there is a public sphere in which conspiracy theories can circulate anonymously they become themselves an element of historical agency. Security as a leading principle of politics emerges only with the development of the state. The contribution outlines the steps of change from confessional age to Enlightenment, to the Revolutionary age and to Modernity, identifying mainly two important systematic changings which affect the security/conspiracy combination (Emergence of observability alongside the politics/religion and Ancien Régime/Bourgeois Society distinctions). It finally asks if there is currently happening a third epochal shift of comparable importance.

Keywords: security, security history, conspiracy, conspiracy theory, communication history, information public sphere, Antichrist, confessional age, Renaissance, Enlightenment, revolution, Modernity, late Modernity, theory of epochs.

1. Introduction

Conspiracy theories circulating widely beyond local face-to-face communities, concerning unclear, hidden but powerful threats to the security of the state, its citizens or a community are a modern phenomenon in Europe. It is modern because the constellation combining a) a translocal public sphere, b) concepts, practices and means of institutionalized security production, and c) developed

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narratives that contain conspiracy theories only emerges together from the Renaissance onwards. Ancient times perhaps knew of such circulating texts, but what has been transmitted to us are only public orations denouncing conspiracies and historical writings that describe conspiracies and rumors about them circulating in society. This HSR Special Issue starts with that statement about a historical specificity of the combined phenomena of conspiracy and security and thus it embeds them in a wider context of a renewed Security History. Being sensitive to the constructive and conditioning power of language, semantics and narration in a narrower sense, and communication and media support in a broader, it is also the conviction of the editors – shared in nearly all of the contributions – that the history of security and conspiracy can best be understood by carefully looking from a triangular perspective: Means of security production, state institutions, and certainly the public where both security discourses and conspiracy narratives circulate, obey the historical conditions of communication devices. There is, to our knowledge, no attempt hitherto in historical and social research to bind together the opponents of *security* and *conspiracy* in this way, attempting to give an outline of their development in modern history.

Security History is experiencing its take off these days. Regarding the field of internal security and policing, the 19th century already saw the rise and consolidation of an academic and professional discipline – but there was never a 'security history' linked to it. On an international plane, *security studies* only emerged in the 1940s, when Political Sciences and International Relations were developed as a distinct field of research and education in the U.S. Since then, *security studies* are an inter-disciplinary field of expertise for military strategy, politics, foreign affairs and coordination of military and non-military tools of defense that has been established as a subdiscipline of academic International Relations (Wæver 2010; Zwierlein 2012; De Graaf and Zwierlein 2013). As that field is strongly connected to politics itself, this development clearly has its roots in the changing perceptions of the field of security politics: international and domestic aspects of security became entangled through the coining of the term "social security" during the Roosevelt administration. This marked not only a shift in notions but also in content. In the post World War II period, a series of new notions of national and international security followed one another ("national security" itself, "extended security", "common security", "global security", "cooperative security" and "comprehensive security", cf. Zwierlein and Graf 2010). From the 1970s onwards, sociology and philosophy both developed branches of "security sociology" (Kaufmann 1973). But in historical sciences, no corresponding field existed; only very recently can we recognize a claim for establishing such a field in historical research.

Conspiracies and conspiracy theories are not generally, or at least not commonly, directly opposite terms to "security" like for example "threat" or "risk". But they are one possible threat in a given community or institutional frame-

work: No conspiracy or conspiracy theory is imaginable as a threat to an individual without such a framework. The lone individual who is planning the murder of another mere individual is, literally not *con*-spiring against him because the term necessitates something like the activation of an environment (at least two against one). In history and theory, we mostly speak of a conspiracy only with respect to the consensual action of a larger group within a given commonwealth against a public person or institution; even more, conspiracy theories mostly refer to such more complex constellations. So, already by that choice of the two opponents, the focus and the questions of this issue are narrowed down thematically, and as will be argued later, also epochally.

While the first contribution by Beatrice de Graaf (De Graaf and Zwierlein 2013) will outline the approach in this HSR Special Issue from the methodological point of view of Foucauldian dispositive theory and in dialogue with political science, the contribution by Cornel Zwierlein on the Renaissance history of security and conspiracy (Zwierlein 2013) contains in the first part a general discussion of the existing definitions of "conspiracy/conspiracy theory" in historical research, and it develops the thesis of the Renaissance as starting point for the above-mentioned combination. The task here is to prepare that methodological and historical introduction by a short sketch of the major developments of the opposition of "security and conspiracy" in modern history (Section 2) followed by an overview of historical research on the topic (or rather both topics) in a *longue durée* sense, also trying to explain why there are some important gaps (Section 3), before only very briefly summarizing the consecution and connection of the contributions in this special issue (Section 4).

2. Security and Conspiracy: Elements of Historical Development

If both topics alone – security and conspiracy – are relatively new issues in historical research, this is even more true for their combination and confrontation. That leads quickly to the problem that one cannot rely on an already existing master narrative of their correlated development through history, not even if we restrict ourselves to European history.

2.1 Greek and Roman Dispositions and the Renaissance as Starting Point

Before concentrating on the transition to modern history, let us first have a look at ancient history because, for both notions and concepts, "securitas" and "conspiracy", the Renaissance was able to revive ancient Greek and Roman notions, perceptions, and forms of communication and practices. The same does not apply to the institutional realities behind the notions, but nevertheless it is

important not to neglect the ancient roots, so as not to construct the novelty and specificity of the modern configuration in a misleading way. Roisman (2006) shows how the problem of conspiracies was a daily topic of political rhetoric: "epibouleuein", "symprattein", "symparaskeuazein" are synonyms which may be translated as conspiratorial activity, stressing either the cognitive element of joint planning or the practical element of joint preparation and action. If the comedians, foremost Aristophanes, already showed how conspiratorial arguments were usual in daily oral culture in Athens, the theme becomes salient in the orations of Lysias, Demosthenes, Aeschines with some reflections in Thucydides, mostly for the period around 400 B.C., both for "internal" and "external" affairs: During the state of war between Athens and Sparta in 415, 411 and 404, the threat of an internal Athenian conspiracy of oligarchs against the freedom of the city was openly discussed many times. Past historians have often discussed whether those charges of conspiracy were true or not; for Roisman as well as for us in this context, it is more important that the issue of conspiracy itself was a daily topic. Members of the political elite accused each other of conspiring against the republic and its government for idealistic as well as for strategic purposes (to prove themselves good servants of the state); the speeches of the orators are full of these narratives. Of similar interest are the (presumed) conspiracies relating to the opposition between Athenian democracy and an outside tyrant: the accusation was always that there were agents within their own state collaborating with an external power, thus threatening the Athenian constitution (e.g. Aeschines as the city's envoy to the Macedonian king Philip in 346 B.C. conspiring against his own *polis*). We find here explicitly the formula that

> Outside are the plotters; inside, the collaborators [exothen hoi epibouleuontes, endothen hoi symprattontes]. It is the plotters who give and the collaborators who take or rescue those who have taken (Demosthenes 19.297-9, transl. and cit. after Roisman 2006, 118).

But in the Greek sources, the threat of this conspiracy and plotting-together ("epibouleuein", "symprattein" and derivatives) is normally directed against "the polis", "freedom", the commonwealth or constitution – not against some equivalent to "security". What would become the Latin "se-curus" was in its Greek original (ataraxía, eumeleia, euthymia etc.) related to either Epicurean or Stoic philosophy and ethics, and as such apparently restricted to the realm of individual or interpersonal action. Even where the sources (such as a speech by Antiphon) relate to "conspiring" (epibouleuein) against the life of an individual, it seems to have been unusual to name an abstract "sphere" of security enveloping the person as being violated or threatened by conspiratorial actions and plans; more directly, the texts formulate a threat against the body and person itself without a medium element. The Greek tradition of anti-tyrannical conspiracy rhetoric was first re-activated during the Florentine Renaissance (Latin translation by Leonardo Bruni), but it was only received more widely at

the end of the 16th century and probably played no great role during the formative moment of the Early Modern conspiracy pattern, which was fed rather by a hybrid of the medieval and ancient Roman *coniuratio* semantics. But the case of Thomas Wilson's English translation of Demosthenes in 1570, very well studied by Blanshard and Sowerby (2005), is very telling, as it shows how the Athenian anti-tyrannical rhetoric against Philip of Macedonia could be blended with the English Protestant anti-tyrannical rhetoric against Philip II of Spain and the fear of a general anti-Protestant European conspiracy in the 1560s: so the Greek tradition enters exactly when the fully developed confessional conspiracy theory pattern has emerged (on which see Zwierlein 2013).[1]

In the case of Rome, some conspiracies even have a mythical status. Pagán 2004 is one of the later works on conspiracy in ancient Rome, concentrating exactly on the issue of how (betrayed and successful) conspiracies were narrated by the ancient historians (Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, Appian...), and less on how conspiracy was an issue of common discourse; so no analysis of Ciceronian rhetoric that would be the exact parallel to Roisman's analysis of Athenian political rhetoric; nevertheless the reflections on the construction of conspiracy narratives are useful. The Catilinarian conspiracy as well as the conspiracy that prepared the murder of Caesar belonged to the European memorial heritage of all times, it is not our aim to enumerate here all the receptions and rewritings of those arch-conspiracies in the Middle Ages, Early Modern and Modern Times. But it is important to note that the common notion used to denote it in Latin was "coniuratio", not "conspiratio". "Conspiratio" has, with Cicero for example, mostly a positive sense of "consensus" and "spiritual concord"; only rarely does it occur in its negative political sense in Cicero's letters, in Tacitus, Suetonius. The medieval manuscripts and early modern editions of Sallust are normally inscribed like *C. Crispi Sallustii de coniuratione Catilinae* (...), which was the common medieval term and which still served Angelo Poliziano for his famous description of the Renaissance Pazzi conspiracy against Lorenzo de' Medici (*Pactianae coniurationis commentarium*, 1478). Cicero also used "coniuratio" as the key term in the Catilinarian orations (cf. only I Catilin. par. 1). German translations of Sallust used for "coniuratio" terms like "Bundschuch/Rottung oder Empörung wider eyn Obergkeyt" (Sallust, transl. Schrayer 1534), which was exactly the terminology used in 1525 by the princes

[1] It should be noted that the first complete edition with Latin translation (by Hieronymus Wolf) of Demosthenes' orations was only published in 1572, and the first Greek edition in 1504 in Venice (Aldus Manutius). This Latin translation quite seldom used the translations "coniuratio/conspiratio" for the terms that Roisman (2006) identified in his analysis as markers of conspiracy thinking. The crucial passage cited above ("exothen..."), for example, is translated by Wolf as "Foris sunt qui insidientur, intus qui iuuent insidiatores." (Demosthenes 1572, 240a). But we do indeed find "per conspirationem [...] facta" as a translation for "syntaxámenoi" (ibid., 465). Nevertheless: the late translation happened just at the moment when we identify the take-off of full-scale confessional conspiracy theories.

and magistrates to denounce the Peasants' Revolt. The term "conspiracy/conspiratio" itself and its derivatives became of common usage seemingly only in the political language of the Western Wars of Religion from the 1560s onwards, with some early uses during the German Protestant princes' struggle and the war against the Turks (1530s, 1540s). There is, for example, no European 15th-century Incunabulum bearing a title (colophon) with that term. If pamphlets and other printed work then denounce, in the second half of the 16th century, a "Papal, Turk or Antichrist conspiracy", it seems obvious that the important step that had to be taken for the entry into modern history of conspiracies and conspiracy theory was the development of something which we might call – using a certainly anachronistic systematic term – a political theology during the age of confessional schism: con-spiratio, now in a negative connotation, seems to have expressed better the metaphysical (divine or Antichrist) element of these presumed collaborations of men and supernatural powers.

The development of "security" as a leading term of modern history and politics does not follow that scheme (having no necessary link to spiritual powers), but goes chronologically in parallel with it. The main steps are as follows: "securitas" as a notion of Roman imperial politics since the 1st century A.D.; loss of importance of "securitas" through the Middle Ages; recovering of "securitas" as a guiding principle of politics with the rise of the Italian territorial state and the early interterritorial state system since the 15th century; then the spread of it following the configuration of the state/state system and its related political language throughout Europe.

"Securitas" in the meaning of care-free (and also care-less) is a term restricted to the realm of individual ethics, like "apatheia" and "asphaleia" in Greek philosophy. It is present as such in Cicero (*De officiis*): "Whereas with Cicero the notion of *securitas* tends to adhere to the private realm, with the collapse of the Roman Republic the term begins to be employed in a decidedly public fashion" (Hamilton 2013, 62). Velleius Paterculus uses it to denote the achievements of the emperors in removing the threats of civil war. Under Nero, the goddess "securitas" received her own altar in the forum and from that time on figured on coins and in texts such as Macrobius as a virtue of the emperors together with *Concordia, Libertas, Salus, Pax, Fides Exercituum, Victoria* (Haase 1981, 903-4; Instinsky 1952). So, as a political agenda, it is an imperial term, not a republican one: it is linked to the general peace guaranteed by the emperors *within* the empire and is, as such, specifically a post-civil war term. One may introduce, then, as a guiding argument for the distinction between the Middle Ages and modern times, the idea that during the Middle Ages, it was inter-personality that counted; as such the prevailing notion is *pax*, mostly traced back to *pactum*, a relationship between two persons, not a status in a (spatial) sphere. Indeed, "securitas" as a term occurred in the Middle Ages normally either in semantic relationship with such interpersonal relationships

or it was related already to "space": security in a city with city walls (Schuster 2006), "securities" as the name for escorts or safeguard letters for voyages. But all in all it was a rather rare notion, completely overshadowed by "peace" and all its derivatives. As we have said, this changed with the emergence of the state as a transpersonal, more and more spatially conceived entity that necessitated the development of a differentiation of the concept along "internal" and "external" lines during the Renaissance in Italy. Only later it was to be found elsewhere in Europe – wherever the constellation of statehood, state communication, interterritorial state relationships through steady diplomacy, and dispatch communication spread. Until now, conceptual history has linked this constellation of security and the state system (since Conze 1984) to Hobbes and has temporarily located it within the 17th century. But the identification of that moment is derived too much from intellectual history and does not enquire into the conditioning structures behind the developments in political language (and afterwards in systematic treatises by great philosophers).

2.2 Public Sphere Plus Antichrist: The Confessional Age

We have to add a third element to our observations on the mirroring notions of security and conspiracy, that was put at the very beginning of this introduction as the first point: it is the "public", but rather a public of information communication and not the emerging public sphere and public opinion with its critical function to criticize and correct government or princes as we know it especially from Jürgen Habermas. Conspiracy theories in a modern-era sense are only imaginable under the conditions of the existence of the "public" as a separate communication area with its own rules, particularly with the possibility of very frequent anonymous production and reception of news, texts, propaganda material etc. The earlier public theory and public history, as inspired by the American "public opinion" school and then especially by Habermas (repeatedly), with a striking new boom after 1989 when *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* was translated into English (Habermas 1989; Calhoun 1992), was chiefly concerned with the emergence of a critical "counter-power" in the sense of a prehistory of democratic societies or, one might say, a democratic semi-institution, the "fourth power". Early reception in particular, also in the field of history, was concerned with this (ruler-) critical function of the "public" – for example in the discussion about the reformatory public (the state of research is largely unchanged since the summary by Talkenberger in 1994), in the discussion about the urban public and its critical function (Würgeler 1995; 2009), or the enquiry into the function of criticism of the absolutist government model in various forums and forms in the 18th century (Gestrich 1994). International research, particularly after 1989, took up this thread and inquired into the critical function of the public in the course of the French Revolution, hereby extending the perspective to certain groups which had been neglected in the orig-

inal conception of the model (Calhoun 1992; 2010). Theoretical criticism of the model itself was expressed variously: for example, criticism of the space metaphor in the "public" model (Mah 2000). However, it was overlooked for a long time that the presupposition for public criticism, i.e. an *information* public sphere, was positioned chronologically earlier and should perhaps be viewed as more fundamental in its effects, even if those effects were not particularly visible (Dooley 1999; 2010; Woolf 2001; Zwierlein 2006, 208-72, 557-610; De Vivo 2007, 57ff.; Landi 2006). The communication of criticism – from cautious clerical or courtly *correctiones principis* right through to revolutionary pamphlets –, in the context of a public which aims to restrain or even topple a changing regime, is only possible on the basis of constantly circulating observational information about the current state of the observed (and then perhaps criticized) system (Luhmann 1992). In our context, this becomes a significant argument in several ways: firstly with regard to the media form in which public information creates the present: conspiracy theories require a particular form of present-perception to "train" a form of present-analysis and future planning which is then used parasitically by conspiracy theories, both in its narrative and in its conceptual form. This has to exist in order for a division to exist into the areas of the empirically possible, the metaphysically possible and the various forms of "fictionality", i.e. the prerequisites for various forms of conspiracy narratives (Zwierlein 2013). Secondly, and more generally, the information public sphere creates a perception of a) the continually changing positions on the "chessboard of Europe" (or to use the metaphor of the times: on the *theatrum Europae*), with their own internal logic; and b) the structure of the perception that all political and reportable actors (including kings) also experience themselves as observers observed by the anonymous, independently communicating realm of information public sphere, generates – consciously or unconsciously – an impression among the observers which one might initially call a system-inclusion and at the same time a system-instability experience and which can be described by certain characteristics: a) consciousness of the integration of the actors into a larger conglomerate, characterized by dynastic-political, confessional, or economic logics of connection and division; b) plannability, and at the same time limitation of this plannability by system contingencies in this field; c) consciousness of connections and (causal, conditional) interdependencies over large areas.

It is not necessary here to presuppose any logical-rational calculation, or to use the word system/sistema etc. for a state, economic, confessional or political system or for a general European system, even if we can note the use of this body of words for various areas at various times in the early modern era. The important point is that the information public sphere enables a quiet consciousness to emerge that there are superordinate factors and interdependencies, which may be difficult to trace, understand or predict, but to which all actors, even the most powerful rulers of the time, are subject; that clearly none of the

visible actors has complete control of the system any more, neither the Pope nor the Emperor. This initially opens up a new emotional space to be filled with fear and worry about the security and stability of the whole and its parts, to which the binomial of "security" and "conspiracy" can attach itself: it is only in this space that modern conspiracy theories can then introduce "super-causal instances". The fear of a lack of real controllability of the system generates fearful images of a secret power which in fact controls everything. The possibility of such super-causal instances as an inversion of the lack of complete control of the "system which is bigger than the sum of its parts", as perceived daily in the information public sphere, is thus also surely the actual differentiation criterion when asking which security/conspiracy constellation is only imaginable since the modern era. The threat to the security of an entire system, not just to a single actor or to a form of state, seems to be new.

This therefore very significant information public sphere also emerged in the Renaissance at the same time as, and as a side-effect of, state and interstate communication, i.e. also at the same time as the increase in significance of *security* and *conspiracy*. It was fully developed relatively early on, chiefly based on professionalized hand-written paper and post communication. Through these channels, texts and mass pamphlets could repeatedly circulate which strengthened the critical function of the public, even in the early modern era (in the Reformation, the Wars of Religion, the Civil Wars, the Fronde, etc); and conspiracy theories, too, could by their appellative tendency transport criticism of rulers. However, there was a tendency from the 15th to the 18th century for the descriptive and observational function of public information to have quantitative and effective priority over the (always indicated) potential for public criticism within the same framework.

Although the Renaissance was therefore the incubation period for the modern-era security/conspiracy relationship as we understand it, the first full – in the sense of previously developed – version, and therefore also the matrix or paradigm, of the modern-era conspiracy theory is the confessional-transnational form which became prominent from the 1560s with the Western European Wars of Religion and which, in various forms, described a central confessional conspiracy instance controlling the whole of European politics and which could then be theologically identified with the Antichrist. Crouzet (1990), Kaufmann (2003), Leppin (1999) and others have reconstructed the general apocalyptic consciousness during the confessional age. It is important to precise and narrow down that question to apocalypticism as interpretative framework within the European State System and within a transnational public sphere. Confessional-political actors and actions were indentified causally with the intentional plans of the Antichrist super-instance, whether they were the Pope or the amorphous mass of the Protestant network with their central planners in Wittenberg or Geneva. They ultimately threatened the security of the entire "system", not only of one state, one king or one confession. In this mix-

ture of spiritual-theological elements and European state system-specific elements was exactly that surplus which reacted to the new system-inclusion and system-instability consciousness described above. This macrostructure could then be transformed into the microstructure of each respective social field of conflict or local milieu which has been studied by Crouzet (1990) in detail or by Roberts (2004). At this point, instead of giving a sequence of examples, we refer to Pohlig (2002), Lake (2004, with further literature p. 109, Note 5 on Elizabethan anti-Popery), Clifton (1973), Pillorget (1988), Coster (1999), Wood (1982), Onnekink (2007) for England in the 17th and 18th century, and Zwierlein (2013).

2.3 From the 18th Century to the Late 19th Century

Continuing our rough sketch of the development of "security and conspiracy" (and the third hidden engine, the media environment), we must find a place for the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, because research on conspiracy thinking and conspiracy theories concentrated early on that period. Hofstadter coined the influential thesis of the "paranoid style" of politics, beginning exactly with the American Revolution and Independence Wars of the 1770s. Later, historians like François Furet and Lynn Hunt continued to concentrate on that period, identifying conspiratorial discourses as a specificity of the Revolution period (Furet 1981; Hunt 1984); this research has continued until now (Tackett 2000; Campbell, Kaiser and Linton 2007). During the Enlightenment and the French Revolution – at least to the extent that research has highlighted until now – the element of political theology lost (much of) its salience. At first glance this is not surprising, but let us exemplify it with some observations about the notorious *Histoire des conjurations, conspirations et révolutions célebres, tant anciennes que modernes* by François Joachim Duport Dutertre and Desormeaux (10 vols., 1754-1760).

Dutertre (1715-1759), classified as one of France's 18th-century journalists (Dictionnaire des journalistes, 1600-1789: a correspondant of Malesherbes), presents this work as a sober historical narrative for which he did not undertake a huge amount of his own research of sources: "only the form [e.g. the interpretative framework] is mine" (Dutertre 1754, I, vi). The short general remarks on the topic of his 10-volume enterprise reveal that for Dutertre, a conjuration is always a complot of some men against the present government of a republic or a monarchy. He does not mention special transnational elements of such a plot. The fact that – after a first chronological attempt – he decided from the second volume onwards to gather all the conjurations of one nation into one volume shows that he always has the ideal-type of *coup d'état* against the legitimate government in mind, close and often identical to a revolt, led by a conspiracy peer group, mostly headed by an "anti-hero" chief which he judges as evil. He starts with some classical "conjurations" of ancient history, notably the Catili-

narian one, and then lists for the Holy Roman Empire, for example, the Hussites of Bohemia against Emperor Wenceslaus, "the Anabaptists", and Wallenstein against Emperor Ferdinand II. Under "Anabaptistes", Dutertre gives a strange combination of the Peasants' war of 1525, the revolt of the Nobles of 1522 and the Anabaptist kingdom of Münster of 1534/35. For Italy he has, among others, accounts of the attempt by Cola di Rienzi to create a new republic of Rome, the conjuration of the Pazzi, famous since the above-mentioned treatise of Poliziano, the conjuration of Fiesco against the Doria in Genova, and the Sicilian Vespers; in other volumes, instead of adding single conjurations as separate chapters, he simply presents the accumulated stories of "all" conjurations in France, Spain, Naples, England, Japan, Portugal, Turkey etc. For France, the Huguenot uprising is a whole story of conjuration, after that the assassination attempts of Jean Chastel and Ravaillac against Henri IV, and he ends with some plots from the reign of Louis XIII, perhaps prudently not touching on topics like the Fronde, still too "hot" to be touched.

What we have here, in the middle of the 18th century, is already something like a canonical collection of classical archetypes of conjurations and conspiracies. But it is obvious that from this (rather mediocre) 18th-century perspective on conjurations, nearly every critical opposition, revolt, critical group and action directed against the given order was treated under that name. The religious motivational factors for the 16th/17th-century events are regularly revealed as "fanaticism", which means that the 18th-century author excludes by definition transcendental powers as causal actors – in contrast to the former Antichrist conspiracy theories from the confessional age. Durtertre's work is a compilatory expansion of the classical conjuration history genre since Sallust rather than a history of conspiracy *theories*. So, it just gives an account of historical conjuration events which may have been accompanied by a conspiratorial discourse – he is not very interested in its circulation, in the power of those texts and concepts themselves. But the underlying general approach shows that not only within the elite of sharp-tongued rationalist Enlightenment, but also on the level of obedient pro-monarchical journalistic 'enlighten-tainment' (if we may use that neologism to characterize that level of discourse), the range of probability of conspiracy theories to be formulated, to circulate and to be successful was perhaps widened with respect to the spatial range of interdependency of political actions, but strongly reduced with respect to the transcendental agency factors mentioned (cf. Campbell 2004, 200). The one security that is threatened by those conjurations here was the security of the state, maybe the *nation* state in its early modern form as the "patrie" of the king's or the republic's people, but not yet the revolutionary nation *tout court* (cf. Schmidt 2007). Certainly, one would quickly find the use of "conjuration/conspiration" and "sécurité" at that time applied to every imaginable smaller community and situation, but it is nevertheless telling that if an author writes a general history of conjurations and conspiracies, he automatically thinks only on that level of

state security.[2] Tackett 2000 also remembered that only very seldom did philosophers like Voltaire or Montesquieu or even practitioners of politics refer to conspiracies. So, at first glance, the 18th century seems to be a return to pre-confessional times with respect to security/conspiracy – with the exception of the proto-nation as the threatened realm of security.

If we emphasized above the development of a system-consciousness in the framework of, and by means of, Europe-wide political public information about political, confessional, economic and other interdependencies as being specific to the modern era, this seems not to have changed. Indeed, summarizing the assessments of Bercé and Campbell (cf. n. 2) to the effect that the 18th century saw a decrease in the occurrence of larger state complots and a shift towards intrigue and cabal, it initially seems that a part of this consciousness was lost, or lost significance: in relation to the European state system itself, a certain stabilization had taken place, such that the conglomerate now seemed to the scholars of the 18th century to be a real, orderly system (Muhlack 2006; Klueting 1986; Schilling 1994; Schroeder 1994; Duchhardt 1997; Thompson 2011), in which the dynastic-political power relationships were so clear, and moreover the large states and rulers were so undisputedly the only decisive actors that there was now hardly any perception of contingency which might lead to an impulse of fear.[3] A "super-causal instance" beyond the interests of princes and rulers thus seemed no longer plausible, so that conspiracy theories with this exaggerated element no longer appeared. The system-inclusion consciousness, at least at the highest level, was now no longer accompanied by a system-instability consciousness.

Also connected with this are the changes on the security side of the security/conspiracy binomial: Karl Härter has pointed out in several contributions that for the German-speaking world, the governing objective of "security" becomes completely dominant in the cameralist theory and practice of the policey-type administration and that, precisely towards the end of the 18th century, it increasingly replaces, supplements or is combined with the older eudemonistic state objective of happiness (Härter 2003; 2010). In the early

[2] In this, Durtertre is implicitly supporting the point made by Bercé (1996, 1-5): The latter stated that during the 18th century, conspiratorial action against the state declined; however, Campbell (2004, 202) argued that this was true only for the highest level of *coup d'état* actions, while on the level of courtier rivalry, competition between branches of noble families etc. the amount of conjuration/conspiracy/cabal was still high during the 18th century. But Durtertre identified with an – already very large – notion of conjuration/conspiracy: only those against the legitimate government of a state, while many examples by Campbell fade smoothly into the smaller scale of cabal and intrigue.

[3] The political sciences reconstruct the transfer of the state-system way of thinking from Italy to Europe and on to the wider world as the expansion of a system and the incorporation of ever more sovereign states (e.g. Armitage 2007, Reus-Smit 2011, 209-12). The process is surely more complex. An appropriate model should, conversely, also formulate the expulsion of potential candidates at the end of aristocratic society.

Enlightenment, Leibniz in 1670 makes a central conceptual distinction between internal and external security, which then becomes a standing notion. The political economies of Europe – the French physiocracy and économie politique in a similar way to the German and Italian cameralism – now increasingly conceive the (albeit ideal) normal condition of their societies and states to be that of complete security. Apart from external security from war and subjugation, administrations tended to establish state institutions against insecurity based on crime, malnutrition, disease, and also natural disasters. If we take the example of state-biased insurances as an indicator of the development of security production devices, the notion of civil society based on the social contract enters the scene here: society is seen as an accumulation of individuals obligated to one another to (anonymous) solidarity in insurance institutions and thereby in "risk societies" in their proper and literal sense. Society as a whole was to disconnect itself from natural afflictions of all kinds from its environment, at least on the level of values (Zwierlein 2011; cf. Kaufmann 2012). As a minor German administrative philosopher formulated in the 1780s, it was only nowadays, in enlightened times, that one

> does not aspire [sc. to stabilize] the inner security [of a state] by the external security but vice versa, the external by the inner, because it has been realized that those states where the best possible police institutions were to be found usually also had the most potential instruments to procure security from external threats and to guarantee its duration (Pfeiffer 1780, 5).

The literature on all these topics is immense, but only in a few, mostly more recent contributions, is direct attention given to the state objective of security.[4] In all this, however, "conspiracies" hardly ever appear as a threat to these areas of inner security. Certain robber bands might be described as "conspiracies" in the micro-arena, but harvest devastations, fires or storms are not described as conspiracies against internal state security, either by God or by nature, in cameralist literature.

It can be said, therefore, that the 18th century was a low point for our heuristic pairing of security/conspiracy: it was a time in which the – albeit still unfinished according to Jellinek's classical definition, or even non-existent according to Osiander's (2009) somewhat extreme argumentation – princely state was at least able to dominate perception to the extent that transcendental threat elements faded from the above-mentioned system-consciousness. Insecurity in the European state system and, from the perspective of the individual state, external and internal security themselves, seemed relatively plannable, in spite of all the imponderables.

[4] For an overview of the transition from happiness to security in Enlightenment state objective theory, with many references to literature which are not included here cf. Zwierlein (2011b).

The 18th century as the century of Enlightenment, however, also prepares the next step, which leads to a new boom and configuration of security/conspiracy during the French Revolution. To characterize this briefly: The revolutionary conspiracy thinking had a dialectic form which was something like the inverse effect of a Rousseauian social contract thinking: since the revolution imagined the new society to be formed as the metaphysical amalgamation of men transformed into the state of civilization and all acting as implementers of the single, indivisible "general will", they necessarily imagined every real or supposed action against that general will to be a similar "single, indivisible, pervasive enemy and imagined a death struggle with this opposite, whose supposed power and coherence vastly exaggerated the tangible evidence."[5] We could say, in a rather Schmittian way, that the dichotomy of struggle between the True Church and the Antichrist as mastermind operator during the confessional age was replaced by the secularized dichotomy of revolutionary civil society on the one hand and the counter-revolutionary conspiracies of traditionalism and despotism on the other. Conspirators are "une faction d'ennemis de la liberté".[6] We read in hundreds of texts at that time of "conspirations" that are made by "an Austrian Committee", by "une secte de conspirateurs", by "philanthropists", by "50,000 brigands", by the "Jacobins", by Louis XVI and his followers, and later also by Robespierre himself who was said to have made himself king. The revealing actor also changes with the passing of time: it is the "Tribunal révolutionnaire", some representatives in the Assemblée nationale or the "Comité de sûreté générale", the committee of general security: there we have our opposition of security and conspiracy. In 1792 the "conspirations" of the "prétendu comité autrichien" "se trament contre la sûreté générale, dont votre comité de surveillance est expressément chargé de recueillir les traces".[7] Here we have the direct opposition of conspiracy and the security of the nation or even of civilized mankind. Conspiracies are made against the progress of civilization itself.

At this point it seems useful to generalize this new constellation of security and conspiracy, which we called above en passant "Schmittian". Perhaps even more helpful (but still Schmittian) is to come back to Koselleck's *Kritik und Krise* (1959). Koselleck wrote this early work under the clear influence of Carl Schmitt's *Leviathan* (1938), but he understood his work in particular to be a sort of historical explanation of the present-day Cold War, a fact which is often

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[5] This is the ingenious summary of Furet's position by Lucas (1996, 769) (without citing him), who himself insists that if this is a correct description of the "Jacobin mind-set" and of the Terror, one should not take the Jacobins to be "the only – or the only true – revolutionaries".

[6] Archives parlementaires 1792, XLIV, 38. – Kaunitz, who with his *renversement des alliances* is judged to have undergone his "noviciat en machiavélisme" there (cf. for Kaunitz: Schilling 1994, for the topic of Machiavellism: Zwierlein 2010b with many further references).

[7] Archives parlementaires 1792, XLIV, 33.

forgotten in its reception (cf. Scheurmann 2002, Missfelder 2006; for Schmitt's circle in post-war Germany cf. Van Laak 2002, for Koselleck cf. Daniel 2006, Olson 2012). Seen from a liberal-conservative perspective, the book was related in spirit to Jacob Talmon's (Talmon 1952; 1957) or even Hofstadter's historicizing diagnostics of the times. The basic structure of the essay, which ultimately condenses almost 400 years of European history, is that of a double large epochal shift which, for the first step, broadly followed Schmitt's logic of neutralizations (Schmitt 1932; Ottmann 2003; Zwierlein 2011c): the (Hobbesian, so to speak) state, as a neutral ruling power, supersedes the confessional parties of war. The state had, with its bourgeois functional elite (mainly lawyers) created a successful counter-power against the – in some cases confessionally divided – estates and nobles. With this bourgeois functional elite, however, the state at the same time created its own eventual destroyer, in a second dialectical process: the citizens founded a morality which was separate from politics, a society which was separate from the state and apparently initially neutral, and, above all, created the bourgeois utopia of human development which ultimately leads to the dissolution of the state. Since then, at the latest since the French Enlightenment, various rival bourgeois utopias competed with each other, always with a teleological historical-political backbone, whether this was a liberalist conception of economic progress or a variant of communist utopias. In this way, for him, the macro-conditions of the 1780s and of the 1950s were directly connected. One may criticize some of Koselleck's approaches and interpretations, including his concept of state, but his reference to a distancing between state and society in the perception of the actors and the significance of temporalized secular teleological models of history and the future are surely important.

It should also be mentioned that both Koselleck and Hofstadter single out the Illuminati as a prime example: For Hofstadter, the fear of the Illuminati – the dissolution of whom, by the Duke of Bavaria, was described in an emotional pamphlet in 1797 in English with the title *Conspiracy Against All the Religions and Governments of Europe [...]* – created the typical structure of American "paranoid style of politics". For Koselleck, Adam Weishaupt's Illuminati were the best example of a pre-revolutionary bourgeois illusion, which was formed within the utopia of an already-present, natural and legitimate historical process of stages, from the natural state via the current absolutist state to a stateless society, and which was characterized by the absence of active revolutionary plans, instead beginning a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy solely in the organization and peaceful, secret propagation of the order of Illuminati. The French Revolution was thus interpreted not as a civil war but as a "fulfillment of moral postulates" (Koselleck 1959, 156), as a process which necessarily obeyed the laws of history – and similarly, in Koselleck's present day, the fundamental principle was the global conflict between the USA and the USSR

as state/imperial emanations of two respectively opposing ideological progress-related philosophies of history.

Important for our purposes – without, as already mentioned, embarking on a detailed criticism of a text whose concepts are now more than 60 years old – is this reference to the separation of (bourgeois) society and (monarchical/estate-based) state and the autonomization of society as a subject of history, at the same time replacing the older cyclical models of historical structure with progressive sequences of steps. The result is namely that a system-instability consciousness seems to rejoin again the system-inclusion consciousness – particularly strongly, it seems, in the later Enlightenment and in the Revolution. Perhaps a more precise formulation would be as follows: The first system-inclusion consciousness, which was related primarily to the political world of states and the state system, with its (to a limited extent) pluriform actors, and which began in the Renaissance, was equipped by the emerging information public sphere with an observational instance which enabled the perception of interdependencies, but also of contingencies and instabilities. Now, with the Enlightenment, a next advance of the public sphere seemed to consist of an autonomization of the bourgeois sphere itself – still not necessarily interpreted as a criticism of the existing ruling system.[8] The information public sphere now included art, science, crafts, economy, technology – everything that bourgeois Enlightenment communication knew. The initial effect, on the abstract level, was that bourgeois society experienced itself as a self-sufficient actor; princes might be significant for this communication as patrons, dedicatees or employers of the authors, but only fractionally as the object. Only by that, "society", "civilization" or "humankind", as the Scottish Enlightenment calls it, is emerging: as a macro-actor for whom the philosophies of history of Smith, Ferguson, Hume, Herder and the Illuminati are written. And now, in the politicization of the revolutions and of their preludes and aftermaths, the disconcerted old state could discover in the Illuminati conspirers in the sense of the old "plots"; above all, however, the new bourgeois society could in turn interpret the whole old state system as a conspiracy against it, as was exemplified in the few citations given above. And thirdly, various groups, parties, fellowships, bourgeois confessions etc. could perceive each other as a whole, or individual actors and agents among them, as (bourgeois) conspirers and conspiracies against each other.

With each of these new, and now fully modern, conspiracy theories, it is important to ask precisely what security is threatened here. It is often firstly the security of the nation, but sometimes also the security of cosmopolitan society, insofar as this could be imagined at this time. From the conservative side, how-

[8] The literature is immense. We would just point to Gestrich (1994), Melton (2001) and for a useful overview of the distinct media of the 18th century cf. Fischer, Haefs and Mix (1999).

ever, it can also be still the security of the perceived union between state and dynasty in a longer-standing tradition.

One might initially assume that the rest of the 19th century does not completely fit into a linear course of history, but rather that the French Revolution phase was an exception with regard to this very specific opening up of a security/conspiracy constellation. After all, the great prominence of anti-Jesuit conspiracy theories in the 19th century (Cubbitt 1993; 2013) would seem to argue for a kind of neo-confessional return of the constellation of the confessional age – just as the 19th century is often spoken of in general as a neo-confessional era (Blaschke 2000). Mostly, however, it can be observed that anti-Jesuit conspiracy theories were launched by one of the bourgeois or post-bourgeois progressive groups and that they identified the Jesuits as agents of the old system. They were regarded as enemies of the state and of society; concern was raised about the establishment of a state within the state, about the false indoctrination of youth, and the Jesuits' alleged spy network; in the narratives, however, they were no longer agents of the older super-causal instance of the Antichrist of the 16th/17th century. The worldview was no longer theological-apocalyptical. As such, the appearances of anti-Jesuitism in both epochs are only at first glance isomorphic, but not homologous.

The 19th century was also characterized by a pluralization of structurally similar conspiracy threats. As well as the forms of anti-Jesuitism, anti-Semitism, and anti-anarchism, individual groupings, parties or groups were repeatedly identified as conspiracies by various sides, which reflects the new circumstance that the – ultimately bourgeois, although the aims were sometimes anti-bourgeois – system of associations, clubs and parties was constantly producing, in a completely new form, new actors who became the object of public attention. The confessional era knew nothing comparable to this – except, at most, the particularly striking pluralization into sects and religious groupings in England in the 17th century.

The security which was threatened was now adapted to the framework of nation states; initially, therefore, the fear applied to coups or threats to the nation state and to national society. Wherever threats to values (civilization, humankind) were expressed, or wherever the old state itself was denounced as a threat, transnational groups defending the security of something which was not yet institutionally tangible – for example, a communist society – were heard, admittedly usually vaguely. The transnational dimension of conspiracy and security seems to have gained significance particularly from the 1870s/1880s on.

2.4 No Speculation About the Future

How, finally, should we characterize the latest developments in the relationship between security and conspiracy? Do we have a basically structurally un-

changed continuation of the development since the threshold era of the *Sattelzeit* (1770 to 1830) described above, or is there a third, large threshold era – in general, and in particular for our constellation of security and conspiracy? Koselleck (1959) assumed the largely unbroken continuation of the new opposition of bourgeois progress utopias which began in 1770-1789, but his perception also reflected the spirit of the existing Cold War. There are a lot of reasons for situating a new epochal break either in 1945 or in 1990. This is evident at the level of the transformation of security conceptions and practices; the communication-historical perspective would also argue in favor of this.

Concerning 'security', a major shift occurred around 1945 with the emergence of 'national and social security' in the form that was coined during the Roosevelt era in the US. That politics, at a first look, did strengthen the classical form of the internal/external security division by empowering the welfare state and the means of military defense. But other elements, like the global scope of the intelligence services, pointed already to a hybridization of that internal/external division.

Since then, in the field of International Relations, a wealth of interconnected new principles such as *extended, comprehensive* or *human security* came up, all aiming at the replacement of the classical *state security*. Those new security regimes resulted in a corresponding duty of the UN or other ad hoc state communities to provide humanitarian intervention (as the *responsibility to protect*). Within domestic politics, the extension of the functions of "police" and a blurring and mixing of the functions of police and army can be ascertained. After 9/11, the functions of 'national security' were re-enforced, but at the same time, the transnational scale of those 'national security' agendas became visible in new types of war.

The 'good' counterpart of that transnationalized national security was the concept of "human security" that the UN Human Development Report described as "safety from the constant threats of hunger, disease, crime and repression. It also means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of our daily lives – whether in our homes, in our jobs, in our communities or in our environments". As subgroups of "human security", it listed a number of "securities" such as "job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime", which were the "emerging concerns of human security all over the world" (Human Development Report 1994, 3). In 2003, the *UN Commission on Human Security* announced:

> The international community urgently needs a new paradigm of security. Why? Because the security debate has changed dramatically since the inception of state security advocated in the 17th century. According to that traditional idea, the state would monopolize the rights and means to protect its citizens. State power and state security would be established and expanded to sustain order and peace. But in the 21st century, both the challenges to security and its protectors have become more complex. The state remains the fundamental purveyor of security. Yet it often fails to fulfil its security obliga-

> tions – and at times has even become a source of threat to its own people. That is why attention must now shift from the security of the state to the security of the people – to human security (UN Commission on Human Security 2003, 2).

According to this commission, the so-called "Westphalian System" was over, and the community of states was increasingly obligated not only to guarantee security between sovereign nation states as the only actors and addressees of international security politics, but also to address the individual security needs of the people, particularly in cases where dictatorships or "failing states" threatened or could no longer guarantee their security in all dimensions of life.

At least three levels of thought about security are linked here: (1) the emphasis on the individual, (2) the inclusion and recognition of the needs of previously marginalized groups, (3) the extension of what are considered possible threats to security. *Human security* is mostly defined here in the abbreviated formula as *freedom from fear* and *freedom from want* and thus encompasses two dimensions: the dimension of protection (military if necessary) and the dimension of development policy. UN peacekeeping missions should become a stronger and more frequent instrument. The propagation and increasing acceptance of a new institution and legitimizing factor in international law, the *responsibility to protect* (rtp), was the next step: in 2001 the Canadian government proposed the appointment of the *International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty* by the UN, which then drafted a corresponding report. The idea behind rtp is to reverse the current procedure of legitimization of humanitarian interventions: the question of humanitarian intervention should no longer be central only from the perspective of the community of states looking down "from above" on events in member states; rather, the first level should involve the responsibility of the home country to protect the population "from below", vis-à-vis both its own population and the community of states. On the next level, if the home state infringes this obligation, the community of states itself has a responsibility to protect the population against the existing threats, and in case of doubt also against the illegal actions of the government of the home state itself (Paris 2001; Hampson and Penny 2007; Verlage 2009). The second dimension of the extended security concept (*freedom from want*) was articulated in particular in the above-cited expert report "Human Security Now" by the UN Commission on Human Security 2003. Its basic idea is that *human security* also means that each individual has a right to particular minimal provisions with regard to food, energy, education, everyday security (e.g. from crime and even from unreasonably dangerous traffic) (UN Habitat Report 2007). The catalysts for the *freedom from fear* dimension were the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and the Kosovo conflict in 1999. The catalyst for the *freedom from want* dimension was the Asian financial crisis of 1997 (Hampson et al. 2001; Ulbert and Werthes 200;, Fröhlich and Lemanski 2011).

After 9/11, it was not with recurrence to 'human security' that the US led to 'war against terrorism' but rather with respect to a widened concept of 'nation-

al security'. Nevertheless, also in that case, the transnational elements became extremely strong; the so-called Westphalian system (cf. for a concise concept history of that notion Schmidt 2011) was challenged hardly by this enlarged classical security concept just as by avantgarde ideas like 'human security'. Both developments seem to dissolve the division of internal and external security which grew from the late Middle Ages and increasingly from the 17th century: to the erosion of the classical principle of sovereignty. It seems as if they implicitly carry in themselves the target horizon of a quasi-world government by the community of states, in which everything is "internal security". All those processes of extension of the concept of inter- and transnational security regimes were severely criticized and discussed which is not our topic here (cf. only MacArthur 2008; Krause 2005). It is enough to state here that there exists a bundle of overwhelming indices for a constant and massive drift of change which seem to have the dimension of opening really a new epoch of globalization.

At the same time, we live in an era characterized by a boom and dense proliferation of conspiracy theories: 9/11 symbolically marks the opposition of both anti-Islamic and anti-American conspiracy theories, which have also been manifested in real actions, not dissimilarly to the opposition between anti-state anarchic conspiracy theories and anti-anarchic conspiracy theories in the 1880s/1890s. However, given the complexity of the globalized present era, this is only one of several threat scenarios invoked by the security/conspiracy opposition. Anti-Western or anti-capitalist conspiracy theories by opponents of globalization or ultra-ecology groupings can be seen. All these combinations of *security* and *conspiracy* can be described in themselves at a loose crossover point between contemporary history and political science's analysis of the present. According to the epoch-formation model that we have followed so far, however, the question is whether a truly new form of security/conspiracy is implied here or whether it is merely a case of variations on the older, fully modern form.

According to the logic applied so far, we would have to be able to describe a development in communication history which, in a similarly fundamental way to a) the emergence of a transnational political information public sphere between the Renaissance and the 1560s and b) the emergence of bourgeois internal communication in the 18th century, generates a new form of perception of the world, which in turn produces a system-instability consciousness: in the first case this led to the observability of *politics* by *religion* and vice versa, i.e. of the political state system from outside, for example by confessionalized religious actors who, in a conspiracy theory, were able to reveal political actors as agents of the "real" apocalyptic enemy. In the second case, it led to the observability of the (absolutist) state by (bourgeois) society. It was possible to "reveal" all the agents of the *Ancien Régime* as conspirers against civilization's progress. Although there is no doubt that in the last few decades, a new and

decisive communication revolution has been in progress with electronic media, in particular those that allow direct bi-directionality, especially the internet and its derivatives, we have to ask in the logic of this argument which new observer-actor is "created" by this communication revolution, and how this observer then observes the previous old system and possibly reveals it as a conspiracy. What, then, takes the place of bourgeois society?

There seems to us to be no generally accepted interpretation of this yet, and certainly none that would be broadly internalized by the actors themselves. Castells (1999) coined the term of network society, referring to the new form of de-collectivized, highly individualized workers and the replacement of industrial capital by cultural capital; his three-volume work, however, ends rather vaguely: among others, ecology is identified as really new avant-garde movement. Hardt and Negri (2000) can perhaps be viewed as authors of a newly developed form of neo-Marxist conspiracy theory: against a global, abstract-mythical empire they posit as new actors the "multitude" who must demand political world citizenship – but is that a really new perspective? A third similar vision is expressed by Rosanvallon (2008; 2011) according to whom in recent years new forms of negative, deliberative and reflexive forms of popular control have arisen that both underscore and support a new form of critical civil society (based a.o. on the rise of social media), but on the other hand run the risk of destroying this civil society in a bundle of individualized, populist and consumerist virtual entities. In this new age of virtual particularity, not the state, the political parties or ideological bodies, nor even the 'citizen' in its classical definition, are the new actors in the conspiracy or security oppositions. Rather, social media trends, disseminated in real time, are constantly and reflectively rehearsing and playing out a number of parallel universums at the same time. A threat can manifest itself in a virtual sphere, by means of imagination, without becoming 'real' in any physical sense at all, but this virtual threat still dictates political and public behaviour. Those are more or less convincing descriptions about what is happening in a 'risk society in the new media age', but they do not indicate a clear new perspective with new contents. With respect to our argument developed above the question still remains, if there is really emerging a third level of observing perspective on the same scale as in the former steps of unfolding observabilities and conflict frontiers alongside the politics/religion and Ancien Régime/Bourgeois society division. Some 'new phenomena' seem to be interpretable along rather old schemes of observability and conflict patterns.[9] Others do not seem to have (yet) the necessary

[9] The fact that the Islamic world can observe the West and has been able for some time now to perpetrate terrorist attacks on it seems structurally only to be a repeat of the "observability" of politics by religion on a global level.

dominance.[10] Many of the analyses brought forward currently come from specific political "corners"; we can only take them to be an indication of the idea that a similarly decisive social transformation is suspected to be emerging from the information technological transformations.

All this lies in the future, and it is not appropriate for the historian to speculate about it; on the other hand, every historical investigation, model and thesis formation grows implicitly or explicitly out of the horizon of these uncertainly-gauged current problems. So, it would be intellectually unfair not to mention them, as they are certainly, in a certain manner, incentives for the enterprise of this special issue and for the overall current interest of historical and social research in those issues. So, we have decided to include also analyses which are located at a fluid crossover point between contemporary history and political science. However, for the latest phase, the outlined framework of historical development cannot yet be completed in a satisfying way.

2.5 Security and Conspiracy, Real and Imagined

Brief attention must also be given to a problem which concerns all the epochs dealt with: in the following, and also above in the construction of an epoch-sequence model, are we dealing only with security *discourses* or also security *practices*? Are we talking about real conspiracies or only about fictitious conspiracies and conspiracy theories? The approach taken here is that these questions are misleading and are the wrong ones to ask. Feelings of security or insecurity, riotous gangs, "secret" meetings of several against many or against one ruler have always been in existence everywhere since there have been hominids. Such units only have a historical dimension if they are observed in the framework of general, larger developments in society, as carried out above. For the historian, an epoch's descriptions of itself as interpreted through sources on the topic of "security and conspiracy" should have a certain indicative function, which is why in this introduction, emphasis has always been placed on the etymological and conceptual history – even if it is clear that the lack of use of the word "securitas" as a descriptive term in a given epoch does not necessarily mean that it is not possible to write security history for that epoch. In the case of conspiracies, the fully formulated conspiracy narratives and conspiracy theories which circulated as autonomous texts (or in other media) in the respectively available public sphere should be better indicators to

[10] Ecological politics, with their implicit leading division and conflict frontier 'ecological equilibrium vs. human progress', do possess perhaps such a new vision and have also an image of history and future which is at least partly no longer progressive. However, the hesitant beginnings of such thinking and of the party formations since the 1980s together with the current pragmatic implementations of various parties within the classical political systems do not yet allow us to discern the nature of a general "great transformation" which would be structurally comparable in size to that of the third estate in bourgeois society.

trace the limits and possibilities of an epoch than the reconstruction and analysis of a rebellion or plot itself, since acts of violence and group formations alone are often difficult to locate semantically: is it a case of an old aristocratic grouping, a modern-era secret society or a party formation? In transition phases, this is difficult to decide. In the farthest-reaching conspiracy theories of a given time, on the other hand, one can see which "super-causal instances" are used as ordering systems, and which interpretations and counter-narratives are specifically intended to make people understand events in a different way: a dynastic marriage and a political union, for example, as pieces of the mosaic of what is actually a Papist/Antichrist plan; a meeting in an aristocratic salon as preparation for a monarchical anti-revolutionary conspiracy. In this respect, the methodological openness to the discourse-analytical dispositive approach and also the attention given to the linguistic-narrative side of conspiracy theories in this HSR Special Issue is justified by the topic: there seems to be a clear point of entry for a historical dimension here. Our (admittedly not quantifiable) assessment is that eras with a high circulation frequency of conspiracy theories are clearly often also eras of high frequency of actual assassination attempts, complots, and conspiratorial network formations – although it remains a difficult task to discern between origin and consequence. Precisely for the question of how security, security planning, security institutions and precautions of a given society react to "conspiracy", it is important not to place the real-or-not-real question at the point of departure (or even at all), since the reaction to conspiracies in terms of social security production takes place long before and long after the real manifestation of acts of violence.

2.6 Summary

We will summarize this sketch of the indicated development of security and conspiracy, their relationship to each other and their conditioning by the media system for Modern History in Table 1.

3. Brief Remarks about the State of Research

To our knowledge there exists no monographic or collective attempt to thematize the relationship between security and conspiracy, with equal attention given to each, over several epochs. This makes it necessary for us to give some consideration consecutively to the state of research of security history and the state of research of conspiracy (theory) history, even if, in the case of security history, this has been attempted recently by some contributions (see below).

Tab. 1: Development of Security and Conspiracy in History

Epoch	Security	Conspiracy	Media System
Renaissance	*securitas* becomes relevant again as a concept within the state and in the state system.	Conspiracies as *conjurationes* are still perceived as locally limited or as collaborations, e.g. of a hostile prince with a faction within a *città*. No free circulation of fully developed *conspiracy theories*.	The new paper and post relais communication (courier system) of diplomatic communications "trains" transpersonal and transterritorial thinking in terms of interdependencies.
Confessional era	The reception of the Renaissance concept of state (and interstate) security in Europe follows the spread of the state system.	Fully developed conspiracy theories now circulate which, where religion observes politics, usually have at the vanishing point a transcendental "super-causal instance" (apocalyptic motifs): political ac-tors are revealed to be agents of an actually quite different, Biblical plot.	Emergence of a first self-reproducing public information, which enables the mutual observability of politics and religion; *conspiratio* now becomes more important alongside *coniuratio* as a linguistic concept; at the same time, there is a perception of system instability.
18th century	Great upsurge of "security" as a declared state objective of all cameralist, physiocratic, and also liberal concepts and administrative practices since the mid-17th century. "Secure normal society" as a yardstick.	Period of decline of conspiracies and also of the circulation of conspiracy theories in a political sense. The evidence of apocalyptic motifs giving form to conspiracy theories declines.	Emergence of the bourgeois public (new sub-media, recipients and above all thematic areas of continuous and current communication).
Sattelzeit/revolutionary era	Security of the nation, security of civilization, security of humankind join security of the princely states or merge with it.	a) Conspiracies by revolutionaries against state and monarchy b) Conspiracies by agents of the Ancien	The bourgeois public creates the "middle class", and makes the Ancien Régime (state, estate-based society) observable

		Régime against the progress of bourgeois society c) Conspiracies by various bourgeois groups and their concepts of progress against each other are now imaginable.	by society; at the same time (or because of this), there is a perception of system instability.
19th/early 20th century	Firstly a restriction of the social horizon back to the nation state as framework, and correspondingly also its security. Particular increasing institutionalization, bureaucratization and 'administratization' of security in a managerial sense. From the 1880s, increasingly international cross-movements, which change national/international security concepts and practices.	Basically continuing as in the *Sattelzeit*. Pluralization and proliferation of producers and of demonized groups of actors. The international threat element in conspiracy theories increases.	Basically continuing as in the *Sattelzeit*.
Since 1945/1990	Emergence of 'national security' (national security bureaucracies, international security organizations). Simultaneously extension of the security concept, human security extended, global security, dissolution of the classical division between internal and external security.	The new upsurge of conspiracies/conspiracy theories mostly reproduces, on a more global level, patterns that are structurally already familiar.	Technical-electronic media revolution: globalization and individualization of perception, leading to a convergence of official, commercial and informal communication; virtual particularism. Unclear: which abstract new forms of observability does this generate? Humanity as destroyer of itself?

3.1 Security History

With the usual sense of important issues and the universalist approach of the Annales school, Lucien Febvre claimed as early as 1955 the necessity of a history of the "sentiment de securité" encompassing religious, economic, political and social aspects of security production (Febvre 1955). Mainly he insisted on the religious history of security in faith and on the history of insurances, the latter issue having been raised by Jean Halpérin four years before. Jean Delumeau then partly replied to that demand by writing histories of one possible opposite to the feeling of security: fear (Delumeau, 1978; 1983; 1989). But these works concentrated on the impact that the Reformation and the confessional schism in Europe had on the inner feelings of men, and how instruments like the Catholic confession and Protestant church discipline formed Early Modern characters. Their main impulse and inquiry adhered to a framework of questions raised since the 1960s by Foucault with his "surveiller et punir", by Elias with his civilization process or by Oestreich with his concept of *Sozialdisziplinierung* (Oestreich 1968; Schulze 1988): very different approaches, but in their main interest in discipline, the impact of force on human feeling and also fear, they belong to an intellectual heritage of a generation of men born in the 1920s – too young to have been involved in the very first ranks of decision-making or military forces during the Second World War, but old enough to have experienced personally that society of militarization, oppression and fear – from very different perspectives (cf. Miller 2002). It seems that this heritage as well as the intellectual impact of the Cold War situation, where the structure of International Relations was minimized to variations of always the same bipolar form, led to a strong concentration on internal affairs in the political and social sciences and in the humanities. With the exception of Oestreich, none of those (somewhat but not completely arbitrarily chosen) three works looked at inter-state war or religious fundamentalism. Where Oestreich treated war and even confessional war, he concentrated once again on military discipline and on neo-Stoic elements of transconfessional arguments; something as irrational as conspiracy theories was not his subject. And Foucault concentrated on the irrationality of rational state machines but likewise not on conspiracy theories. Not only was the focus of these theoretical agenda-setters on the internal relationship between man and powers like the state or other machines of discipline; but also, for example, the agenda in the avant-garde field of the 1960s/70s in historical studies, social history, was always explicitly the priority of internal over foreign affairs. So, if "security" was a topic to be touched upon, it was neither in the sense of a general new field to be opened, nor was it integrating foreign and internal affairs of states, commonwealths or groups and their history. Probably, neither Delumeau nor any other author working in that field would have understood his work as belonging primarily to a "security history". At the end of his life Foucault did address, in his lectures

on governmentality, the topic of "Sécurité, territoire, population"; but only some of these lectures (mainly the important 4th one) were known to a wider public before 2004. And again, the focus was on internal security production. So, from the methodological inspirations of cultural and social sciences in general and of historical research in particular in the 1970s/80s, no direct path led to anything like a general security history.

There was, surely, a field of historical research that was of quite central interest in those years and that would have to be addressed as belonging to such a field: the history of social security or of social insurances, mainly since the late 19th century. As the Bismarck system was historically the earliest, or at least played a leading role in international comparison, research was strong here, focusing mainly on the development of its central institutional framework and also laying the path for research on related institutions like e.g. social insurances for mining workers (cf. Tennstedt 2009; Hennock 2003; Gräser 2009; Becker 2010; Hockerts 2011 for current historical overviews and states of research). For U.S. history, similar important topics in research had been the 1935 Social Security Act, Roosevelt's politics of the New Deal, the Philadelphia conference in 1944 of the *International Labour Organization* and the inclusion of "social security" as a universal human right into the UN *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* of 1948 (Art. 22). For example, for the American New Deal politics of the 1930s/40s, which prepared the Social Security Act of 1935, it was emphasized that "Job security, life-cycle security, financial security, market security – however it might be defined, achieving security was the leitmotif of virtually everything the New Deal attempted" (Kennedy 1999, 365). The thesis was put forward that the same policy, under the influence of war, then prepared the harder line of the National Security State with the Act of the same name and with its bodies, the National Security Council and the CIA in 1947 (Hogan 1998). In this field in general, biographical, event-historical and institution-historical approaches always dominate (e.g. Daalder and Destler 2009; May and Zelikow 2009; Monje 2008), while more exact investigations e.g. of the governing objectives and concepts of the policy are lacking. Stuart (2008) recently pointed out that after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the National Security Act of 1947 should be judged as probably the most important law in American post-war history, but that in comparison with the former, there was much less research on this law. Miller (2008), under the impression of the latest developments after 9/11, presented a historical investigation of the Church Commission, which inspected the working methods of the Intelligence Services in 1975.

As well as this area of the history of social security systems, there are some research publications on the area of external security policy (*Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt* 1982-1997). In the area of the recently – since the end of the Cold War and the opening of relevant archives – booming history of state secret and security services, on the other hand, it is conspicuous that in many

monographs and collections, a reflection on the name-giving concept of "security" in these institutions is lacking (cf. for the East German Staatssicherheit e.g. Gieseke 2007; Leide 2005; Mampel 1996; Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs 2003; Suckut 2009).

If in contemporary history of the social security systems, "security" was literally an object of research, for other topics and for earlier periods in general the issue of "security" was touched upon much more rarely. Huge historical projects of editing sources of foreign politics, like the editions of the Richelieu papers or of the Peace of Westphalia (Richelieu 1982-2003, Acta Pacis Westphalicae), concentrated on other terms.

Concerning the conceptual history of security, Werner Conze's contribution of 1984 must still be noted as a departure point in that field, while there were not many follow-up studies, and this article was restricted to German political language only (Conze 1984; Istinsky 1952). Daase (2012) urged the adoption of the method of conceptual and political language history into the political sciences, but it is only recently that this call has been followed up by case studies (e.g. security culture/guilt culture).

As has now been frequently mentioned, the state of research on security history is poor. The crucial question is where and how to start a new general security history. In contemporary history, the epoch for which some research does already exist, the necessity of a new beginning has been stressed but with different approaches: Conze (2005) argues for a prudent use and historicization of the terms of political sciences as heuristic devices, while Rödder (2007) argues against it, supporting traditional hermeneutic approaches. Our own attempts in this field have opted for the first solution in trying to historicize to this date some selected notions like *human security* (Zwierlein et al. 2010; Zwierlein and Graf 2010; Patzold 2012), *insurability* (Zwierlein 2012), *energy security* (Graf 2010), *food security* (Collet 2010), *securitization* (Conze 2012).

For a new history of security, it should be helpful not only to historicize individual approaches, concepts or terms of security, but also in most cases to investigate specific fields of opposites and oppositions to "security": in this way, the otherwise rather amorphous concept is immediately more strongly defined. This does not have to be meant in the sense that, following Koselleck, one would have to choose only classical "asymmetrical antinomies" (such as Greek/Barbarian, civilized/barbaric) necessarily on one and the same taxonomic level. Thus, the opposition between "security and conspiracy" has been chosen here, in which the second concept is clearly far more specific and particular than the first. This means, however, that the binomial fulfils all the more clearly a heuristic limiting and specifying function. As demonstrated above, with appropriate definition, it leads to a concentration on either the ancient, the late medieval or in particular the modern era.

3.2 Conspiracy History

While the question of why security history does not have its own domain in historical studies is fitting, since the corresponding thematics are given in other disciplines and since they are of great general relevance, a comparable argument for a history of conspiracies and conspiracy theories can of course not be made on this general level. They provide, rather, a particular topic and a specific focus, since they are of course opposed to "security" (as a threat), but they present only one of many imaginable opposition elements.

The increased presence of the topic "conspiracy/conspiracy theory" in history and the social sciences did not begin with the explosion of literature in the aftermath of 9/11 mania, which is documented by a wealth of volumes (e.g. Knight 2002, Melley 2000, Barkun 2003); social scientific and historical research had already given attention to this topic in the Cold War phase, spurred on by an essay which appeared approximately at the same time as the above-mentioned epoch-forming study, Koselleck's *Kritik und Krise*: Hofstadter's *Paranoid Style in American Politics* of 1963/4. It was a fulminant essay which made a distinction historically between American anti-Catholic 19th-century conspiracy theories and American anti-Communist ones of the Cold War era, but which did not present a developed concept of how conspiracy theories had developed in the *longue durée.* He methodologically transferred the clinical psychological term of paranoia onto a style of politics, and at the end of the essay he even indicated that he believed this to be actually a supra-historical category, applicable to all eras (Hofstadter 1964, 38-9). Nonetheless, he had made the topic prominent, and he also already made a brief mention of the significance of media conditions (ibid., 24).

A number of political and social science publications were prompted by this. Recently attention in social sciences has turned to both the existence of 'real existing conspiracies' as to the social functions and discursive and constructive dimensions of conspiracy thinking (Kirby 1997; Miller 2002 and Basham 2001, Van Buuren and De Graaf 2013). However, these social scientists tend to forget that the social function of conspiracies is not tied to the 21st century, or to the rise of social media, but can be identified in earlier ages as well.

In the field of history, as mentioned above (Section 2.2), it was predominantly historians of the French Revolution who made conspiracies the object of historical research; following them was e.g. Geoffrey Cubitt for the Restoration (Cubitt 1993). In the 1990s some contributions and conferences were dedicated to this topic (Briggs 1990; Bercé and Guarini 1996; Monier 1998), and more recently there appeared Coward and Swann (2004), Campbell, Kaiser and Linton (2007), Horn and Rainbach (2008). The older historical research on anarchism and terrorism on the 19th century did not place conspiracy theories so much in the foreground.

The definition of conspiracy theory which is usually discussed in recent literature is that of the philosopher Keeley (1999), as follows:

> A conspiracy theory is a proposed explanation of some historical event (or events) in terms of the significant causal agency of a relatively small group of persons – the conspirators – acting in secret. [...] It proffers an explanation of the event in question. It proposes reasons why the event occurred.

This definition has since been criticized on several sides (cf. Clarke 2002); nonetheless, it figures as one of the first more general attempts at definition. The problem with the definitions currently discussed is that they are presented mostly from the philosophical or sociological point of view, and thus typically tend to have little reflection on a historical dimension of the emergence, development of and changes to conspiracy theories – in Clarke (2002, 147), there is a consideration of "evolutionary biological dispositions" of conspiracy theories in humans; for Hofstadter 1964, the basic idea was a kind of supra-historical, cyclically appearing psycho-social form of political style. A truly historicizable definition of conspiracy theory has scarcely been attempted, cf. Zwierlein (2013) in this volume.

In many of the older contributions but also some recent ones, there is not always a clear distinction between concepts – even between "conspiracy" and "conspiracy theory" – and the definition of the object often remains vague. Particularly if "conspiracies" are addressed for example for the rural population or for aristocratic society in the pre-modern era, automatically an often very vaguely differentiated connection is made between the object and medieval cooperative or noble *conjurationes*. In what way and to what extent this connection exists and such *conjurationes* are structural precursors or models for the conspiracy theories of the modern era, which include in recent and contemporary history in particular "terrorist" networks and conspiracy fictions or invented conspiracy theories such as the anti-Semitic hate propaganda writings of the "Elders of Zion", is unclear so far.

More decisive, however, is probably the step from such conspiracies and groupings in themselves as social-structural frameworks towards a specific rhetorical and also narrative form of conspiracy theories, which on various levels of secret, semi-public and public communication themselves become elements of historical agency. This often happens independently of well-known "authors" to whom the respective theory may be ascribed, since this communication form is usually characterized by anonymity, which in itself is a decisive element of the effect of the communication of such theories. Only once conspiracy theories have achieved such a degree of "independent existence" does the question of the relationship between "really existing" conspiracy groups and the "theories" and thus between "reality" and "fiction" become meaningful, a question which is repeatedly addressed in the relevant literature.

4. This HSR Special Issue

This HSR Special Issue puts the accent on developments since the late 19th century; contributions have been collected in relatively close chronological order and thematic content, including contributions from young researchers who are investigating security/conspiracy constellations in the context of terrorism and assassination attempts (De Graaf 2013; Ditrych 2013; Hof 2013, Van Buuren 2013) or of the communism syndrome (Hijzen 2013; Keesman 2013), which already interested Hofstadter. Van der Heide (2013) ends the volume with an investigation into the conspiracy narrative which influenced U.S. policy in legitimizing the Iraq war. Many of these case studies deal with Dutch examples, since they come from the environment of the Center of Security and Terrorism Studies of the University of Leiden. For the approach taken by this issue, it is significant that the focus in each case is strongly on *conspiracies* and *conspiracy narratives* in opposition to *security* as an international yardstick and in international networks and relationships: an approach which is often lacking in the literature cited above.

This section of case studies from the 1880s to 2001 is preceded by a section which presents a mixture of contributions using a particular methodology and/or reaching back to the Early Modern era. Cubitt (2013) resumes the object of his study of 1993, the Jesuit conspiracy theories of the French Restoration period, and reconsiders it with the aid of Buzan and Waever's securitization theory. Härter (2013) looks primarily from the security side at the phenomenon that in the 19th century, at the same time as and counter to the ever stronger development of the nation-state, equal work was done on developing international means of guaranteeing security for the prosecution of criminals and alleged criminals: conspiracies and the circulation of "conspiracies" by anarchists and other groups functioned as legitimization for taking police pursuit to an international level. Hamilton (2013) uses a comparative-literary perspective to present his new approach in security studies of a "philology of care" by means of a close analysis of Donnersmarck's film "The Lives of Others": he demonstrates, in this prime example of a film operating with security services and conspiracy fear, the hidden presence of the old etymological root of *securitas*: care, care-free, care of others, care of the state.

Thus the period briefly structured in this introduction through the development of the security/conspiracy relationship is covered by means of different examples.

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