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Propositions

1) In Germany, Britain and the Netherlands early party founders developed the ideas and practices of the democratic party to justify this new form of political organization.

2) Studying political parties as a transnational phenomenon is crucial to properly understanding their historical origins.

3) Education is the missing link between early failures of mass organization and the later foundation of the Dutch Anti-Revolutionary Party, the British National Liberal Federation and the German Social Democratic Workers’ Party.

4) In the early phase of party formation, elections were more a means than an end, because they guaranteed internal cohesion for young party organizations.

5) Interdisciplinary work requires more translation skills than comparing three national historiographies in three different languages.

6) The nineteenth-century belief in the power of organization is an important addition to macro-level political and socio-economic change in explaining the emergence of party organization.

7) Parliamentary and extra-parliamentary organization cannot be studied as conceptually distinct entities, because they were closely related in the nineteenth century.

8) Political history contributes best to current debates when it illustrates the limits of categorical thinking about concepts such as the “masses” and “democracy”.

9) Croquetas and kroketten are like the historiography and the social science literature on early political parties. They seem very similar, but their individual value can only be appreciated if you understand the difference. This is why it is advisable to make sure that you tried them both multiple times.

10) Heimat is a concept that can only be understood from a distance.

11) Regardless whether political or personal in nature, crisis does not necessarily indicate decline but can also mean new beginnings.