

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN CONFLICTS IN GERMAN  
UNIFICATION: A PRIMORDIAL CASE STUDY, 1839-1871

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## ABSTRACT

Considerations of German Unification usually center on Otto von Bismarck and Prussian power politics, the German Confederation, and Austria along with the Franco-Prussian War. Often overlooked are the important events that brought together certain northern German speaking states. But these conflicts were also the conclusion of a continuous feud between the Germans in the Schleswig and Holstein Duchies and the Danish. The feud, a series of wars which led to the creation of the Norddeutsches Bund in 1867, centered around the ‘Schleswig-Holstein Question’: the rightful rule of the Schleswig Duchy. Successional questions involved various intermarriages, personal unions, competing ambitions, the Danish *Lex Regina* (totalitarianism), and the German *Primogeniture* (the exclusion of female rule). The historical patterns emerging through this feud involve questions of legal, cultural and military history. They show not only the importance of Schleswig-Holstein but also of a kind of nationalism that can be called dynamic.

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## **DEDICATION**

*Zu jenen Dithmarschen Kriegern, die im Schatten der Geschichte vergessen wurden. Deine Nachkommen haben dich nicht vergessen.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The 1848 Three Years War and the 1864 Prussian-Danish War were conclusions to a lengthy dispute between Denmark and the German Schleswig-Holstein Duchies. The dispute covered the legality of Danish succession in governing the Duchies. Ancient treaties signed before and through the 15th century, which were later amended in the 18th century, created a dispute that was exacerbated by treaty misinterpretations. The Three Years War created a volatile environment that led to the start of the Prussian-Danish War, which was also the beginning of the 1864-1871 German Wars of Unification.

This thesis covers the period between 1839 and 1871 by analyzing the dispute's origins, interpretations and effects. I will establish the longevity and continuous collective nationalistic thought of the German citizens in Schleswig-Holstein which sprouted in the 15th century with the 1460 treaty of Tsarskoye Selo and the 1490 treaty of Ribe, and analyze it throughout the unification process. I will cover Prussia's role, under the leadership of Otto von Bismarck, and his use of power politics to spark the German unification catalyst. My goal is to examine how German nationalism in the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies stemmed from earlier events, and how the Danish succession dispute evolved with nationalism to spark the Three Years War. How did nationalism and succession politics in the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies create a volatile concoction that Otto von Bismarck used to start the German Wars of Unification? What is the international significance of the events that happened in Schleswig-Holstein? How did international politics affect the events in the Duchies and what were the potential consequences?

Deeper analysis of existing works dictates a need for this topic to be analyzed. Survey works that cover the period hardly note this line of history, if they mention it at all. The foundation of German nationalism in the Duchies, and the importance of the Schleswig-Holstein events, are pushed aside to analyze the 1848 German Revolutions. Historical books and articles

cover nationalism, including both European and German, discussing the spread of liberalism and nationalism sparked from France and Napoleon. Historical literature emphasizes this link and includes nationalism in Schleswig-Holstein. Even more focused historical works establish that nationalism in the Duchies was sparked by the expansion of French liberalism and nationalism. What these works all have in common is that they focus on the change in the status quo, not on what founded the ideals that provided opportunity for change to take place.

## LITERATURE

German historical literature, from 1815 through 1871, focuses on the creation of the German Confederation that founded itself through constitutional and parliamentary proceedings. Historians focus on the German parliament and its constitutional changes, which were influenced by the 1795 French Revolution. History is written from this perspective by creating continuity across cultural and political borders, and becoming the focal point of self-determination under European political umbrella. Yet, both Schleswig-Holstein conflicts of 1848 and 1864 were the result of a centuries old nationalism that did not stem from the French Napoleonic Era. Acknowledging that most historical literature puts an emphasis on the French historical line, it is now necessary to determine how much has been written about the Schleswig-Holstein conflicts. The scholarly works of modern European history have been thoroughly examined by this author through four primary fields.

- If the conflicts were mentioned, how complete are they?
- Specifically, in which context does the book mention the conflicts?
- The perspective of the work.
- The works were also examined for similarities and differences.

So, how are the events of 1815-1871 examined in literature?

Historical international and survey literatures minimally cover the 1848 and 1864 Schleswig-Holstein conflicts. Together, they explain how the liberal nationalist perspectives arose from the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Era. They explain that the conflicts were a causation of the 1848 revolutions tied together with the long-running complexity of international politics and dynastic concerns. This content is drawn from three kinds of work: international survey, nationalism, and nineteenth-century period works. They all provide a macro-historical

perspective, and draw attention to a region, period or country. However, these works utilize different layers of historical work. This essay must acknowledge those layers as a structural example to keep the complexity of the conflicts and sourced-materials organized and in proper context, which allows for a more comprehensive essay.

Historical literature draws upon multiple layers of historical work to support and complete analysis. The layers are organized in descending order and are utilized for both historical literature and a historical perspective. These layers start with 'mega-macro'. This layer relies on an editor to bring together multiple authors writing on their topics to bring together a whole book. These collaborated works often become text-books, encyclopedias and survey works. The second layer is considered a 'macro' layer. This layer consists mostly of independent authors analyzing single periods, topics or countries. The 'semi-macro' layer consists of material that analyses the primary causes to the 'macro' events. These events include specific period events, ideologies, and wars. 'Semi-micro history,' or fourth layer literature, analyzes small scale wars, revolutions and civil uprisings. The fifth layer is the 'micro' layer, which covers a country's internal movements, tribal wars and dynastic rules. Sixth level works form the 'mini-micro' layer, which consist of family conflicts, individual actions and minor decisions that, within themselves are not influential, yet combined with other decisions create an influential decision. These six layers encompass the different levels of historical literature and perspective by establishing the structure for the following material.

While clarifying the levels of historical literature and determining what types of history are categorized into which layers, it is necessary to explain that works contain material from different levels. The mega-macro layer relies on the macro layer and sometimes the semi-macro layer. The macro layer draws from the semi-macro layer to support its work while also

referencing the mega-macro layer for direction and to establishing its place within a larger context. The microhistory layer works similarly to the mega-macro but in reverse order. The mini-micro layer is commonly its own primary source, yet draws from the micro and semi micro layers for direction and placement in larger history contexts. Although this structure covers most historical perspectives and literature, there are instances when the mega-macro or macro layers utilize the micro or semi-micro layers to support their work. It is necessary to draw from the micro layer when a single event or action has a magnitude of influence to change macro level work and perspectives.

The Schleswig-Holstein conflicts are rarely mentioned in mega-macro and macro-layer literature. *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* continues the trend, by not discussing the legality or influence of the conflicts, but how they were promoted as an example of historical nationalism as a version of political nationalism.<sup>1</sup> Jakob Venedey, a 19th Century German publicist and politician utilized the “emotionally charged issue of Schleswig-Holstein,” as a guiding principle to promote ethnic and linguistic borders.<sup>2</sup> Venedey was looking for a rational clarification of the terminology ‘*Volk*’, expressing the north Germanic ‘tribes’ were, “The most precious and noble people of German descent.”<sup>3</sup> This perspective complicates the ability to define a homogeneous German state and conflicts with the liberal utopian dream of people co-existing in peace and freedom.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Helmut Walser Smith, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 251.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Christian Jansen focuses on the concerns of moderate liberals when dealing with historically grown borders. He points out Venedey’s concern with minority injustices changing from the German minority in Schleswig-Holstein to the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein when changing borders.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

Another survey work that scarcely details the conflicts is the *Palgrave History of Europe: Nineteenth-Century Europe*. In this survey work, Michael Rapport covers the 1848 conflict by presenting it in the revolutionary perspective by describing the attempted Danish annexation of Schleswig, separating it from Holstein. He continues to examine the 1848 conflict as a “revolution” and concludes that it was a radical uprising.<sup>5</sup> The 1864 conflict is described as a multilayered protest revolving around Danish overconfidence tied with the *Eiderdan* nationalism; German liberal nationalism was sparked from Frederick von Augustenburg’s claim as Duke to Schleswig-Holstein and the death of Frederick VII, king of Denmark which left no male heir to rule the Duchies.<sup>6</sup> While Rapport covers the conflicts somewhat more, his work states that the 1848 revolutions played a large role in supporting the conflicts which, stemmed from liberal nationalism.

Other European and German survey works cover the conflicts even less. *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy* mentions the 1848 conflict as an extension of German liberal nationalism.<sup>7</sup> *The Course of German History* covers the 1848 conflict from an international perspective by signifying the potential European war that would have erupted if Prussia had not signed an armistice with Denmark which left the Schleswig-Holstein nationalists to be outnumbered and defeated by Denmark.<sup>8</sup> The 1864 conflict is mentioned with the Bismarckian perspective which describes the Treaty of Gastein, and establishes it as a stepping stone in

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Rapport, *Palgrave History of Europe: Nineteenth-Century Europe*, (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2005), 142.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 183.

<sup>7</sup> Brendan Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy, From 1453 to the Present*, (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 209.

<sup>8</sup> A. J. P. Taylor, *The Course of German History*, (New York: Routledge Classics, 1988), 88.

Bismarck's route to German unification.<sup>9</sup> *A Concise History of Germany* establishes that the 1848 conflict was a "long-running issue" and was a highly complex issue of "international politics, dynastic rights and modern nationalism."<sup>10</sup> Mary Fulbrook continues to lightheartedly describe the 1864 conflict as an antecedent to the Austria-Prussia war and notes Lord Palmerston's overquoted joke that the Schleswig-Holstein conflict is so complex that only three people have understood it: Prince Albert, who is dead; a German professor who went mad, and he himself who has forgotten what it is all about.<sup>11</sup>

Monographs such as *The Course of German Nationalism: From Frederick the Great to Bismarck, 1763-1867* describe similar aspects to the previous works. Hagen Schulze writes about the vehement opinions of German nationalists and patriots in 1848, Prussia's reactions to the Federal Parliament's (*Bundestag*) request for military aid in the Duchies and the German "Irredenta's" request for aid in the unredeemed lands north of the Elbe River.<sup>12</sup> Schulze focuses on the 1864 conflict with Otto von Bismarck's power politics, the "Irredenta," and the Duchies' ruling decisions between the Duke of Sonderburg-Augustenburg and the Danish King from the house of Sonderburg-Glücksburg.<sup>13</sup>

Nineteenth Century period works such as *History of Germany: The Long Nineteenth Century* focuses once again both in 1848 and 1864 on German nationalistic anger, the role of the 1848 conflict as a crucial part of the 1848 revolution. The 1864 conflict and the Treaty of

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 119. The Treaty of Gastein designated that Schleswig would be governed by Prussia and Holstein be governed by Austria after the conflict.

<sup>10</sup> Mary Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 121.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 127.

<sup>12</sup> Hagen Schulze, *The Course of German Nationalism: From Frederick the Great to Bismarck, 1763-1867*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 72-73.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 93-94.

Gastein are mentioned as a spark to the future Austro-Prussian War.<sup>14</sup> Another period work is *19<sup>th</sup> Century Germany: Politics, Culture and Society 1780-1918* which did not cover the 1848 conflict but does go into the political rights of the Duchies, the death of Frederick VII and the ‘dualistic’ Treaty of Gastein for the 1864 conflict.<sup>15</sup>

Jumping off from where the previous historical literature ended, this essay only mentions the French influence when it sparked an already established nationalistic ideal. Instead of focusing on the trends that dictate revolution and uprisings, the focus will be on the dynamic nationalism that continuously changed with events that arose through centuries of treaties, dynastic issues between the identity of state and ruling families, and the subsequent conflicts in 1848 and 1864. Instead of focusing on the spread of the liberal subset of nationalism, this author focuses on the foundation and development of German nationalism. Separating it from the conflicts as an extension of French influence and a subset to the revolutions in the German Confederation, the conflicts will be examined as catalysts that unquestionably had larger implications not only for the German states but for all of Europe. The implications are analyzed not just for their influences, but by how they changed military protocol, international politics, dynastic succession, German identity, and the German unification. This essay continues to contribute to the historical pattern by focusing on the conflicts that are often overlooked in the European, German and Nationalist survey works. By drawing attention to the conflicts, the thesis provides ample opportunities to illuminate facts that are not only fundamental but substantial to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Schleswig-Holstein context under the German unification umbrella.

Drawing from the primordial perspective, this thesis must start from the beginning.

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<sup>14</sup> David Blackbourn, *Blackwell Classic Histories of Europe: History of Germany 1780-1918: The Long Nineteenth Century*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 113, 125, 184.

<sup>15</sup> John Breuilly, *19<sup>th</sup> Century Germany: Politics, Culture and Society 1780-1918*, (New York: Arnold Publishers, 2001), 145-146.



## BACKGROUND

### Der Anfang (The Beginning)

To completely understand the 1848 and 1864 Schleswig-Holstein conflicts, one must begin when the entire Cimbric peninsula, as the Romans called it, was inhabited by the Germanic Anglo-Saxon, Frisian and Jute tribes.<sup>16</sup> These tribes were a larger Indo-European Group that migrated from the Pontic-Caspian Steppe between 3500-1000 BCE.<sup>17</sup> Settling in the lower Scandinavian states, of what is now present day Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Germany, these tribes would remain settled there for the next 1,500-4,000 years. Between 400-500 CE, the *Dani* tribe, who are now known as the Danish, migrated south into the northern expanses of the Cimbric peninsula. Two common theories suggest that either the Jutes or the *Anglos* were pushed to the south, which led to their migration to the British Isles, now England; or that the Jute-Anglo migration happened before the Dane migration, which created a peaceful habitation of the Northern part of the peninsula. Either theory is acceptable but what's important is this aspect shows the German affiliation to the territory prior to Danish arrival. After the emigrational period, the inhabitants of the peninsula were, from North to South: Danes, Jutes, *Angles*, Frisian, and Saxon, ending at the Elbe River on the southern end of what is now Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>18</sup>

Cultural and linguistic ties from the Germanic tribes to England and North Jutland were continuously found until the change in language by the Danes. The linguistic and cultural changes that followed the Danes would, over time, erase most characteristics of the previous Germanic Jute tribe. However, there are still ties to previous tribes. A coastal portion of Eastern

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<sup>16</sup> Reinhold Solger, *Memorial on the Schleswig-Holstein Question: Addressed to The Hon. Bradford R. Wood, Minister to The Court of Denmark, Copenhagen*, (New York: Baker and Godwin Printers, 1862), 6.

<sup>17</sup> Colin McEvedy, *The New Penguin ATLAS of Ancient History*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 8-9, 30.

<sup>18</sup> Baron V. D. Pfordten, *Report on the Succession in the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein, Laid before the Committee of the German Diet*, Trans. W. Pieper, (London: Vacher & Sons, 1864), 5.

Schleswig is still named Angeln, i.e. Home of the Angles.<sup>19</sup> By the time of the 1848 Schleswig-Holstein conflict, over three quarters of Schleswig inhabitants were still following the old Germanic cultural traditions in clothing, manners and language.<sup>20</sup> South of the Angles and the Northern Frisians, who will be discussed later, are the Dithmarschen and Saxons. At the time of the 1848 conflict, the entire Duchy was inhabited by Germans.

There is much speculation in Jutland scholarship, especially during the pre-Dane inhabitation period. This is caused by the lack of linguistic remnants from that period. One unique case study involves the Golden Horns of Gallehus, which were found near Tønder which is inscribed as *ek hlewagastiz holtijaz orna tawido*. Proto-Norse translates it as *ek hlewagastiR holtijaR horna tawido*.<sup>21</sup> Old Norse translates it as *ek hlégestr hyltir horn gørða* and Old Saxon as *ik hleogast hulti horn toida*. The English translation is “I, Hlewagast, Holtijaz, made the Horn.”<sup>22</sup> What is important to take from the linguistic issue of the Horns is that the transcription can neither be identified as North or West Germanic. Another case study involves Tacitus, in his *Germania*, when he describes the *Angli* being close to the Langobards of the Elbe estuary.<sup>23</sup> Centuries later, the *Angli* would help conquer Britain and found the Kingdom of England. The importance of the connection between the British Isles and Jutland is that the Angles in Britain spoke a West Germanic idiom.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, by tracing linguistic ties backward instead of forward, facts provide significant evidence that Jutland was inhabited by predecessors of today’s Germans, at the least, the *Angli* tribe. Considering the Saxons and Frisians are still present on

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<sup>19</sup> Solger, 6.

<sup>20</sup> Solger, 6-7.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Thaler, *Of Mind and Matter: The Duality of National Identity the German-Danish Borderlands*, (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2009), 48.

<sup>22</sup> Thaler, 48.

<sup>23</sup> Thaler, 49.

<sup>24</sup> Thaler, 49.

Jutland, the only two tribes in question were the *Angli* and the Jutes. Drawing from the English connection, the Jutes mirror the *Iuti* in England, in the regions of Kent and the Isle of Wight.<sup>25</sup> To tie the linguistic followings of the North Germanic (Danish) and the West Germanic (Angles/Jutes) into another loop, both the *Angli* and the Jutes were outnumbered by Saxons. It is abundantly clear that Angles and Jutes influenced the culture in England, but the extent of which is difficult to determine. However, one key element is still present: that the Cimbrian Peninsula was inhabited by the Germanic tribes of Angles, Saxons, Frisians and Jutes. It was not until the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> centuries CE that the *Dani* tribe migrated onto the peninsula.

Moving forward from the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE, the Germanic tribes consisting of the *Angli*, Saxon and Frisians would experience increased trade. Throughout the Viking period, 6<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, Schleswig-Holstein would become a key trading center in the Baltic region, which was centered around the Viking settlement of Haithabu, located just north of the present-day city of Schleswig.<sup>26</sup> However, with the establishment of the Hanseatic League, 1159 through 1618, Lübeck would retain its prominence as a trading center in the region. During this period Germanism would extend its reach north.<sup>27</sup> This is highlighted in the traditional 1927 play *Gewitter über Gotland* (Storm over Gotland) about Jürgen Wullenwever.

Charlemagne is not forgotten for his role in the region. The Saxons were the last Germanic tribe to finally succumb to Charlemagne during the 772 Saxon Wars, he would incorporate the Saxon Duchy into the Carolingian Empire in 804.<sup>28</sup> During this time, he would establish the River Eider as the official border between the Danes and Frankish Empire. At the

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<sup>25</sup> Thaler, 49-50.

<sup>26</sup> Jann Markus Witt & Heiko Vosgerau, *Schleswig-Holstein von den Ursprüngen bis zur Gegenwart*, (Hamburg: Convent Verlag GmbH, 2002), 65.

<sup>27</sup> Germanism describes the expansion of German culture.

<sup>28</sup> Witt, 74.

843 Treaty of Verdun, Saxony, containing the present Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein, and parts of Niedersachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Brandenburg, and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, would officially be accepted as one of the German Duchies.<sup>29</sup>

### **Die wilden Dithmarschen (The Ferocious Dithmarschen)**

Before continuing into the Holy Roman Empire period, one must first explain the role of the Dithmarschen, starting with their migration into the region around 150 BCE.<sup>30</sup> A tribe settled in the Western Marshes of what is now North Holstein and Southern Schleswig. They face out towards the North Sea with the North Frisians just north up the coast. The population remained continuously isolated in the marshes until Charlemagne advanced into the region around 780 CE. A stout and stubborn people, the Dithmarschen are a Germanic tribe that prided themselves on tradition, resilience and strength.<sup>31</sup> Due to the harsh climate and living conditions around the North Sea, they evolved in the marshes, becoming fierce defenders of their homes against both invaders and the climate.<sup>32</sup>

Charlemagne took special interest in attacking the Dithmarschen. Their ferocity against the Franks, and their resolve in standing with their German neighbors of Holstein, created interest for Charlemagne. The Dithmarschen would continue to fight until they agreed to be

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<sup>29</sup>Jann Markus Witt & Heiko Vosgerau, *Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins: anschaulich, spannend, verständlich* (Heide: Boyens Buchverlag, 2010), 63.

<sup>30</sup>Hermann Lübbing, *STEDINGER, FRIESEN, DITHMARSCHER: Freiheitskämpfe niederdeutscher Bauern*, (Bremen: Verlag H. M. Hauschild GMBH), 71.

<sup>31</sup>*Life in The Marshes of Schleswig-Holstein*, (Edinburg: Thomas Constable & Co., 1854), 8, 13, The lasting motto in the marshes is “Better Death than Servitude”; Patrick Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 74. Geary defines a “people” as group of people with “shared common ancestry myths, cultural traditions, a legal system, and leaders.” The premise of Geary’s book is concentrated on European nationalism and the ethnocentrism, racism, xenophobic reactions that reside around the pseudo-historic stories that created modern European history. This perspective, while valuable when explaining creation myths, it is not a ‘cover-all’ for all European history prior to the modern period. This work is an excellent case study to explain how that theory does not equate to all pre-modern European history.

<sup>32</sup>*Life in The Marshes*, 20.

baptized at St. Johannisberg in Meldorf, the capital of their region.<sup>33</sup> On the day of the baptism, the Dithmarschen turned on the Frankish Christians and burned down the church. Charlemagne, concerned more with secular rule than the conversion of the Dithmarschen, moved the church diocese down to Hamburg and beginning in 848 bishop Ansgar would slowly work north to convert the Saxons. Charlemagne would establish a Saxon Count to rule over the regions, Schleswig, Holstein and Dithmarsch. The rule of the Count would be the beginning of a complex dynastic question that would become a primary cause of the 1848 Conflict.

The Dithmarschen, because of their location at a great distance to any trading centers, would then remain undisturbed until 1214 when the Danish king Waldemar pressed his regional influence by building Lunden Castle south of the Eider River. After the castle's siege, the king would be detained in Mecklenburg. The Dithmarschen would push the Danes out of the marshes until the king's release, and the king would seek aid from the North Frisians to help quell them. Instead of defeat, the Dithmarschen would reluctantly help the Danes in conquering the North German Princes: the Holstein Count Adolf IV, the Count of Schwerin, the Duke of Saxony-Lauenburg, Archbishop Gerhard II of Bremen, and the Mecklenburg Prince.<sup>34</sup> However, the German Dithmarschen would stand with their neighbors by betraying the Danes at the Battle of Bornhöved on July 22, 1227.<sup>35</sup> According to the Bremen chronicler, without Dithmarschen help, the German Princes would have lost the battle and regional control.<sup>36</sup> As a reward, the Dithmarschen would remain free in their established territory, pay 500 marks, and be subordinate only to the Archbishop of Bremen.

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<sup>33</sup> Lubbing, 72.

<sup>34</sup> Lubbing, 75.

<sup>35</sup> Klaus-Joachim & Lorenzen-Schmidt, *Das Neue Schleswig-Holstein Lexikon*, (Schleswig-Holstein: Wachholtz Verlag, 2006), 122.

<sup>36</sup> Lubbing, 75.

The Dithmarschen would continue to fight off outside influences by murdering multiple Bremen bishops and staining their reputation with their Holstein neighbors. This would begin the incorporation of the Dithmarschen through military means into the German Holstein Duchy. In 1403 Count Albrecht von Holstein and his brother Duke Gerhard VI came from Schleswig on a military campaign to Meldorf in the Dithmarschen and built an encampment at Marienburg. The local Dithmarschen would attack the encampment, led by leader Rolef Boykenson. His influence is captured in an old folk song:

“Tredet herto, ji stolten Dithmarschen,  
Unsen Kummer, den wille wi wreken.  
Wat Händeken gebuwet han,  
Dat können wol Händken tobreken.  
De Dithmarschen repen averlut:  
Dat lide wi nu und nummermehre,  
Wi wille darum wagen Hals und Gut,  
Und willen dat gar ummekehren.”<sup>37</sup>

„Step forth, you proud people of Dithmarsch,  
Our concern, for which we want to take revenge.  
What those [small] hands gave birth to,  
those [small] hands are able to break.  
The people of Dithmarsch call out loudly:  
We will not stand for this now or forever,  
We will risk our needs for our possessions fort,  
and we want to reverse that.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Lubbing, 78. The source does not provide translation; Karl Müllenhoff, *Sagen Märchen Lieder aus Schleswig Holstein und Lauenburg*, (Kiel: Schmerssche Buchhandlung, 1845), 31. This source provides the entire lyrics to the song, however no acknowledged translation of the lyrics has yet to be found; Oskar Beber, *Kurze Geschichte Dithmarschens*, (Marne, Holstein: L. Altmüller, 1922), 35. The quote is essential to the work because it establishes credible sourcing to Rolef Boykenson’s existence. It also confirms that the battle occurred. I have examined this small primary source in a manner consistent with Andre Calilhanna’s article “How to legally quote song lyrics in your book”, (October 30, 2013), <http://blog.bookbaby.com/2013/10/lyrics-in-books/>.

<sup>38</sup> Translation by Dr. Thomas Bell, German Language Professor, North Dakota State University, March 27th, 2018. The translation is incomplete as an intact dictionary for the language cannot be found. However, enough is translated to determine most of the content. I have placed brackets around the words that are in question.

However, Rolef would be killed in a fight. Angered by the death of their own, the Dithmarschen rang the church bells (a sign of distress) and although both dukes would plea for peace, it was not achieved. Spooked by a Dithmarschen war cry, Count Albrecht's horse bucked and killed him. Gerhard VI would seek revenge by proposing unacceptable peace terms to the Dithmarschen which contributed to the continued fighting. After the battle, which witnessed the death of over 2,000 servants and knights, Duke Albrecht's widow made peace with the Dithmarschen and his body was handed over to show mutual respect for Germanic tradition.<sup>39</sup> The remembrance of Victory Day remains to this day in Dithmarschen, and falling on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of August.

The Dithmarschen would experience lasting peace with the Dukes of Schleswig and Holstein. King Christian I of Denmark, born to the Count of Oldenburg, acquired the title Duke of Holstein in 1460. He wanted their friendship and signed a mutual protection treaty in 1473.<sup>40</sup> However, after his death the successors, King *Hans* (John) and Christian II attempted to add the Dithmarschen to the Holstein Duchy and requested 15,000 marks. Above all, they were to recognize him and his brother as country gentlemen and allow the construction of three permanent houses in Brunswick, Meldorf and the Eider. German perception of the Danes continued to decline as seen with this proverb:

"Do repen de Dithmarschen averlut:  
Dat schüt nu und nimmermehr.  
Darum willen wi wagen Hals und Gut  
Und willen dar alle um sterven,  
Ehr dat de Koning van Dänemark  
So scholde uns schone Land verderven."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Lubbing, 80.

<sup>40</sup> Lubbing, 82.

<sup>41</sup> Lubbing, 83; Jastram, *Lebensbilder und Skizzen aus der Culturgeschichte*, (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von B. G. Teubner, 1875), 189; Rudolf Nehlsen, *Geschichte von Dithmarschen*, (Tübingen: Laupp, 1908), 25; I have examined this small primary source in a manner consistent

„The people of Dithmarsch call out loudly:  
That happens now and never again.  
Therefore we will risk our needs for our possessions  
Want everyone to die,  
before the King of Denmark  
is guilty of ruining our beautiful country.“<sup>42</sup>

The Danish King *Hans* and his brother Duke Frederick of Holstein, infatuated with subduing the Dithmarschen peasant republic, paid for the services of Junker Thomas Schlenz's 4,000 Black Knights. They were to help the already 8,000 Danes, North Frisians and Holsteins to battle with the 4,000 Dithmarschen peasant fighters. These forces would end up fighting the famous Battle at Hemmingstedt, which was located near present day Epenwörden.<sup>43</sup> The Danes would quickly attack the marshes by laying waste to Meldorf. The peasants were quick to move from Meldorf to a nearby defensive location on top of a hill. Fighting on their own land, the Dithmarschen created an opportunity by breaking open one of the dikes and flooding the area, which created shallow lakes and water-logged ditches.<sup>44</sup> This would herd the Danes into a funnel which allowed the Dithmarschen to attack and drive the enemies out of the marshes. Large numbers of the King's army either drowned or were bogged down by the water which allowed for easy killing by the experienced peasants. The Black Knights were also slaughtered, along with 360 noblemen, and were left to rot in the field. The casualties to the Dithmarschen are

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with Andre Calilhanna's article "How to legally quote song lyrics in your book", (October 30, 2013), <http://blog.bookbaby.com/2013/10/lyrics-in-books/>. It is essential because it does show the deteriorating relationship between the Danes and the Germans. This proverb also shows the response to the Dane's unrealistic terms on the Dithmarschen. Through this, it is apparent that the Danes were set on revenge towards the Dithmarschen.

<sup>42</sup> Translation by Dr. David Bell, German Language Professor, North Dakota State University, March 27th, 2018. The translation is incomplete as an intact dictionary for the language cannot be found. However, enough is translated to determine most of the content. I have placed brackets around the words that are in question.

<sup>43</sup> Lubbing, 84.

<sup>44</sup> Lubbing, 87,88.



unknown but the King lost over half of his army plus the knights and Junker Thomas Schlenz, which totalled roughly 7,000 dead.<sup>45</sup> The Dithmarschen spared those who remained alive, but buried most of the dead including high ranking personnel and nobles. Junker Thomas Schlenz and Counts Adolf and Otto von Oldenburg, whose bodies were plundered, remained on the battlefield for the birds and beasts to tear apart. In 1900 a memorial was erected near the site, which contains the famous battle cry “*Wahr di, de Bur de kumt* (take care, the farmer comes).”<sup>46</sup>

It was not until 1559 when King Christian III led 24,000 soldiers, accompanied by the Holsteiner Field Marshall Johann Rantzau, on another campaign against the Dithmarschen.<sup>47</sup> It was this time after a lengthy period of multiple skirmishes that the Dithmarschen decided to choose peace. On June 13, 1559, they sent two priests to the King’s encampment and upon seeing them, he shouted “*Gotts dusend, de Bur will sick geven!* (A thousand thanks given to God, Welcome!!!).”<sup>48</sup> It marked the end of the last Germanic tribe to be incorporated into the Holstein Duchy and ruled by both the Dukes of Schleswig-Holstein and the personal rule of the King of Denmark. To this day the Dithmarschen are still revered for their persistence, strength and pride. As this author knows firsthand, when asking autonomous Schleswig-Holsteins in Germany about the Dithmarschen and having one’s family originate from the Dithmarsch, common responses were: they are a prideful people, stubborn. They walk around with a chip on their shoulder, sometimes arrogant. Blunt, yet logical. Realistic. You can always spot a Dithmarschen in the Duchies.

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<sup>45</sup> Lubbing, 90.

<sup>46</sup> Friedhelm Schneider, “Dusenddüwelswarf,” *Gesellschaft für Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte*, (Gesellschaft für Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte), <http://www.geschichte-s-h.de/dusendduewelswarf/>.

<sup>47</sup> Joachim, 122-123.

<sup>48</sup> Lubbing, 101.

## Die Karolingerzeit (The Carolingian Era)

The semi-micro historic case study of the Dithmarschen was a strong acknowledgement of Germanic traditions, loyalty to Germans and the magnified consequential circumstances between the Duchies and Denmark. However, we will now return to a larger, macro level history line and continue deciphering a continuously increasing complex situation. The Carolingian Empire ended in 888 CE with the death of Charles (the Fat) and the the Holy Roman Empire rose with Otto I in 962 CE to start the period of dynastic rule in Europe.<sup>49</sup> This author takes the modern perspective to the beginning of the Holy Roman Empire which began in 962 CE as it conveniently shows the slight break in European power during the period. This change is notable in the Duchies as the Dithmarschen broke the Frankish rule and ambitiously remained free, the slow process of Christianization halted, and the Danish influence increased with Denmark's success in the region now known as Sweden.

The structure of rule in the Duchies began to take root during Charlemagne's rule in 850 CE when he appointed Ludolf I of the Ottonian Dynasty, Duke of Saxony. His rule allowed for more German influence in the region to balance the Danish influence. During the latter period of the Ottonian Dynasty, King Henry I (The Fowler) and Otto II (The Great) would be anointed as German Kings of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>50</sup> The Ducal rule in Saxony would continue until 1106, when Duke Magnus of Saxony, whom was the last of his lineage, would appoint Adolf I of the Schauenburg house to be his successor. In 1110 Adolf I would become the the Count of Schauenburg-Holstein.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Witt & Vosgerau, 63.

<sup>50</sup> Witt, 77.

<sup>51</sup> Witt, 80; Otto von Bismarck, *zur Schleswig-Holstein Erfolgefrage und die Krieg gegen Dänemark*, (Berlin, 15. Januar 1865), 21. This source is a bounded collection of handwritten communications between von Bismarck and the Prime Minister of Great Britain. It explains the

## **Die Blutlinien von Bornhöved (The Bloodlines of Bornhöved)**

The Danish would push to gain lands in Schleswig and Holstein in the latter part of the 12th Century as the Holsteins were battling the Slavic influence in the southeast portion of the Duchy. During the advance, Adolf III, Count of Schauenburg-Holstein was captured. He negotiated his release in return for the Duchy of Holstein. Waldemar II, King of Denmark agreed and for a short period Denmark ruled both Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein.<sup>52</sup> However, in 1227, with the help of the Dithmarschen at the Battle of Bornhöved (mentioned above) Adolf IV would drive the Danes out of the region and north of the Eider River.<sup>53</sup> It was at this battle that Adolf IV pledged, if given victory, he would become a monk. He fulfilled his oath and abdicated his rule for Heilwig of Lippe in 1238. Heilwig would rule as regent until 1243 when both Johann I and Gerhard I would rule together until their father's death (Adolf IV) in 1261. They would divide the Duchy into two houses: John I as Count of Holstein-Kiel and Gerhard as Count of Holstein-Itzehoe-Schauenburg; after the death of John I, his sons would divide into two houses: Adolf V, Count of Holstein-Kiel (Wagrilche) and Johann II, Count of Holstein-Segeberg

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dynastic succession of Denmark and sheds light on unequal marriages within the ruling class. This source was found in the rare books collection at the *Humboldt Universität Bibliothek* in Berlin.

<sup>52</sup> Magnus Grafe von Moltke-Grünholz, *Die Schleswig-Holsteinische Frage*, (Hamburg: Perthes - Besser und Mauke, 1849), 9; GStA PK, III. HA, Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, I. Nr. 4644/1, 115, This source is placed here to provide insight on the opposite perspective at the time. "For, from this one, the duchies were the happiest land, blessed by God, with all the gifts necessary for charity, and governed for centuries by a number of the mildest and most benevolent rulers. But they were at the same time kings of Denmark, and Denmark refused to be satisfied with the ancient summons of the eternal union with the duchies. It wanted to draw these closer and, if possible, turn them into Danish provinces."

<sup>53</sup> Joachim, 122; Bismarck, 21; Witt, 94. Witt details the perception of violence in the period. He establishes that "Acts of violence were now as attacks on the peace of all, not only of the injured party." This is evident when analyzing the Battle of Bornhöved. The context of the German Princes are established here as it is the Danes acting on violence. The Dithmarschen, sparked not only by this act, but also by a primordial nationalism, which will be discussed later, and a cultural brotherhood, along with payment, obviously adheres to the contextual structure under these premises.

(1273).<sup>54</sup> Gerhard's sons would duplicate this move as his portion was divided into three houses: Gerhard II, Count of Holstein-Plön, Heinrich I, Count of Holstein-Rendsburg, and Adolf (the Elder), Count of Holstein-Pinneberg-Schauenburg in 1290.<sup>55</sup>

The 14th century would prove to be more complex for the dynastic rulers in the Saxon region. In the 13th century, houses were dividing as more families were gaining prominence; yet the number of houses started to decline as family lines, such as the Holstein-Plön, ended. Others such as Holstein-Kiel were incorporated into the Holstein-Rendsburg line that started in the Holstein-Itzehoe-Schauenburg line. This line, under Gerhard III (The Great), would also become the Count of Schleswig starting in 1326 CE.<sup>56</sup> However, it was in the 12th and 13th centuries that ruling families started to take spouses from other ruling families in Europe. The two beginning marriages between Denmark were between Johann II (Kiel-Wagrilche) and Margareta of Denmark, and Gerhard III (Rendsburg) and Brigitte of Denmark.<sup>57</sup> While the immediate families would not cause concerns in the Duchies, their descendants would cause issues.

In 1319 Christopher II of Denmark, a regent to Duke Valdemar V ruled the Duchy until he reached proper age, attempted to reestablish Danish rule in Schleswig. However, Gerhard II, Count of Holstein-Rendsburg, would drive back the Danes and establish Duke Valdemar V as King Valdemar III of Denmark, and was appointed Gerhard III, Count of Schleswig-Holstein-Rendsburg.<sup>58</sup> It was now that the German nobles had influence in the Danish court. In such a position, Valdemar III was influenced to sign the *Constitutio Valdemaria* although it would

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<sup>54</sup> Bismarck, 21-22. Bismarck titles the Holstein-Kiel(Alter) line as the Wagrilche Line. This line ends after the deaths of Adolf V and Johann II.

<sup>55</sup> Bismarck, 21, 23. Bismarck titles the Holstein-Plön line as the Jüngere Kieler Line.

<sup>56</sup> Bismarck, 22.

<sup>57</sup> Bismarck, 22-23.

<sup>58</sup> Bismarck, 22.

tarnish his reputation as an usurper in Denmark.<sup>59</sup> As a precursor to the 15th century Treaty of Ribe, the *Constitutio Valdemaria* (June 7, 1326) would establish that the Duchy of Schleswig and Denmark must never be united under the same ruler.<sup>60</sup> King Valdemar would later abdicate his throne and return to be the Count of Schleswig as Valdemar V. Through the event of Gerhard III gaining control of Schleswig, it established the personal union between Schleswig and Holstein.<sup>61</sup>

Valdemar V's abdication of the Danish throne essentially dissolved Denmark and provided a key opportunity for the German nobles to conquer more lands. This was magnified after two ducal lines ended. Henry I, Duke of Schleswig and son of Valdemar III of Denmark, passed away in 1375 without a heir. The house of Holstein-Segeberg (1350-1403) also ended, which dissolved into the Schleswig-Holstein-Rendsburg line. Margaret of Denmark would attempt to directionalize power towards her son Gerhard VI of Schleswig-Holstein-Rendsburg, being as she was the younger daughter of Valdemar IV of Denmark and Helvig of Schleswig. However, ducal power remained in the Holstein-Segeberg line until 1403. Gerhard VI would gain power of both Duchies under the Schleswig-Holstein-Rendsburg line, but the remaining small portions of the Duchies to the Holstein-Pinneberg line, which would last until 1640.<sup>62</sup> This is not just the personal union, but the political union of the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies.

Heinrich IV of the Schleswig-Holstein-Rendsburg line would follow Gerhard VI's death. His rule would be subjected to continuous war with the Danes in the Danish-Holstein-Hanseatic War. His death at the siege of Flensburg would transfer the power to his sons: Gerhard VII and Adolf VIII. However, the deaths of Gerhard VII in 1433 and Adolf VIII in 1459 were the end of

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<sup>59</sup> Solger, 8-9.

<sup>60</sup> Solger, 8-9; Thaler, 31; Joachim, 103.

<sup>61</sup> Solger, 12.

<sup>62</sup> Bismarck, 23.

the Schleswig-Holstein Rendsburg male line.<sup>63</sup> Their sister, Helwig, would marry Dietrich of Oldenburg and their son Christian I of Denmark would gain partial control over Schleswig with the lands of Holstein-Rendsburg. He would rule as Count until 1474 when he was promoted to Duke of Holstein. What is important to remember is that the lineages of the ruling classes provide a cause and effect to the legitimate rule over the Duchies. The cause was the question over authentic bloodlines which creates the effect of the Schleswig-Holstein Conflicts.

### **Die Verträge des 15. Jahrhunderts (The Treaties of the 15th Century)**

On March 2, 1460, King Christian I of Denmark would sign into act the Treaty of Ribe, which was one of the most important documents that decided the fate of the Duchies in the 19th century.<sup>64</sup> It would also be one of the most controversial as well. The Treaty states, in low German: “*dat se bliven Hoda Jradi Tosa Mende ungedeelt.*”<sup>65</sup> This quote is translated into “that they stay together forever undivided.”<sup>66</sup> This proclamation by King Christian I acknowledges that the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein shall never be divided or ruled by separate kings or powers. Therefore, the Duchy of Schleswig cannot be ruled by the King of Denmark while the Duchy of Holstein is ruled by the Holy Roman Empire. The treaty also confirmed the rights of the Duchy nobles, gave rights to uprising against a ruler who tried to separate the Duchies and established a ruling council that was only permitted to elect locals into office.

King Christian acknowledged that he could not rule the Duchies and Denmark at the same time. Therefore, by signing the treaty, he signed into act that his lineage would continue to

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<sup>63</sup> Bismarck, 24.

<sup>64</sup> Solger, 10-11; Chevalier Bunsen, *Memoir on The Constitutional Rights of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein*, (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1848), 6, 7; Pfordten, 9.

<sup>65</sup> Bunsen, 7.

<sup>66</sup> Witt, 154.

rule the duchies as a “personal union,” not a real union.<sup>67</sup> This means that his lineage would not rule the Duchies as the King of Denmark, but rather as the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Rendsburg under the House of Oldenburg. The treaty also updated the acknowledgement of the *Constitutio Valdemaria* (June 7, 1326). It was not until 1472 that the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick III, confirmed that the Treaty of Ribe included the Dithmarschen. It was only claimed, however, as the Dithmarschen would not be defeated until 1559. After the claim, the Duke would acquire the official title of: Duke of Schleswig, Holstein, Dithmarschen and Stormarn.

### **Die turbulenten Jahrhunderte (The Turbulent Centuries)**

The 16th and 17th centuries brought the experience of the Protestant Reformation, the establishment of both the Royal line of “Duke of Schleswig-Holstein at Gottorp (the Oldenburg line) and “Duke of Schleswig-Holstein at Haderseve (the Holstein-Pinneberg and Schaumburg line), and the beginning of dynastic issues involving succession between Russia, France and Great Britain. The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century was not warmly received in the Duchies. Neither were the preachers. Christianity had not fully been established, especially in the remote parts of the Duchies, such as in the Dithmarschen. The “old faith” was still strong in the Duchies and it was apparent when in 1524, preacher Heinrich of Zütphen was burned at the stake in the Dithmarschen.<sup>68</sup> However, Lutheranism spread much quicker in the Duchies, which was an effect from previous attempts to turn the region protestant, but also because Frederick III took to Lutheranism. Christian III of Denmark would later convert, and with this sign of evangelical trust contributed to the Duchies being at least seemingly more susceptible to conversion to Lutheranism.

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<sup>67</sup> Solger, 12-13; Thaler, 31.

<sup>68</sup> Witt & Vosgerau, 144.

The Danish monarchy, under Christian III, had great success in the 16th century. He could consolidate Norway and the rest of Denmark back into his rule. In 1544, along with his younger brothers John II (The Elder) and Adolf, partitioned the Duchies under each other's rule. However, this move was opposed by the Estates of the Realm in the Duchies. Christian III and his brothers decided that their younger brother Frederick was entering a career as a Lutheran administrator of an ecclesiastical state within the Holy Roman Empire, allowing them to rule the Duchies accordingly.

The ruling brother's descendants would form additional lines under the Royal Duke of Schleswig-Holstein at Gottorp line. The first would be named Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg, and the next generation from that: Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg and Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Beck (known since 1825 as Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg).<sup>69</sup> Although these lines would not have immediate rule in the Duchies under the King's role as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein at Gottorp, they would be a part of the successional discussion later. On the 9th of January, 1608, John Adolf issued a "paternal disposition *inter liberos* concerning the *jus primogeniture*."<sup>70</sup> This act, ratified by Emperor Rudolf II on February 28, 1608, concluded that Duke John Adolf's firstborn able-bodied son and upon his descendants in agnatic succession, by the order of *primogeniture*, prohibits all sales of the hereditary feudal estates.<sup>71</sup> The most important aspect of *primogeniture* is that women were excluded from the succession line.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, if the line was only able to continue through a female succession, then Denmark's personal union with the Duchies would end and all power would return to the

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<sup>69</sup> Pfordten, 22.

<sup>70</sup> Bunsen, 8-9; Pfordten, 19.

<sup>71</sup> Pfordten, 19.

<sup>72</sup> Solger, 17; Bunsen, 9.



ruling Duke of the Duchies.<sup>73</sup> The motion, with reference to Schleswig, was confirmed by Christian IV of Denmark on July 13th, 1609, and July 21st, 1621. The only remaining house outside of the Royal line for the ruling families in the Duchies was the Count of Holstein-Pinneberg-Schauenburg. In 1640, the bloodline went extinct and the rule of that house was absorbed into the royal Gottorp line, despite the help of Lower Saxon Duke Augustus. By 1650, the rule over the Duchies is seen in this 1650 map:

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<sup>73</sup> Solger, 17.

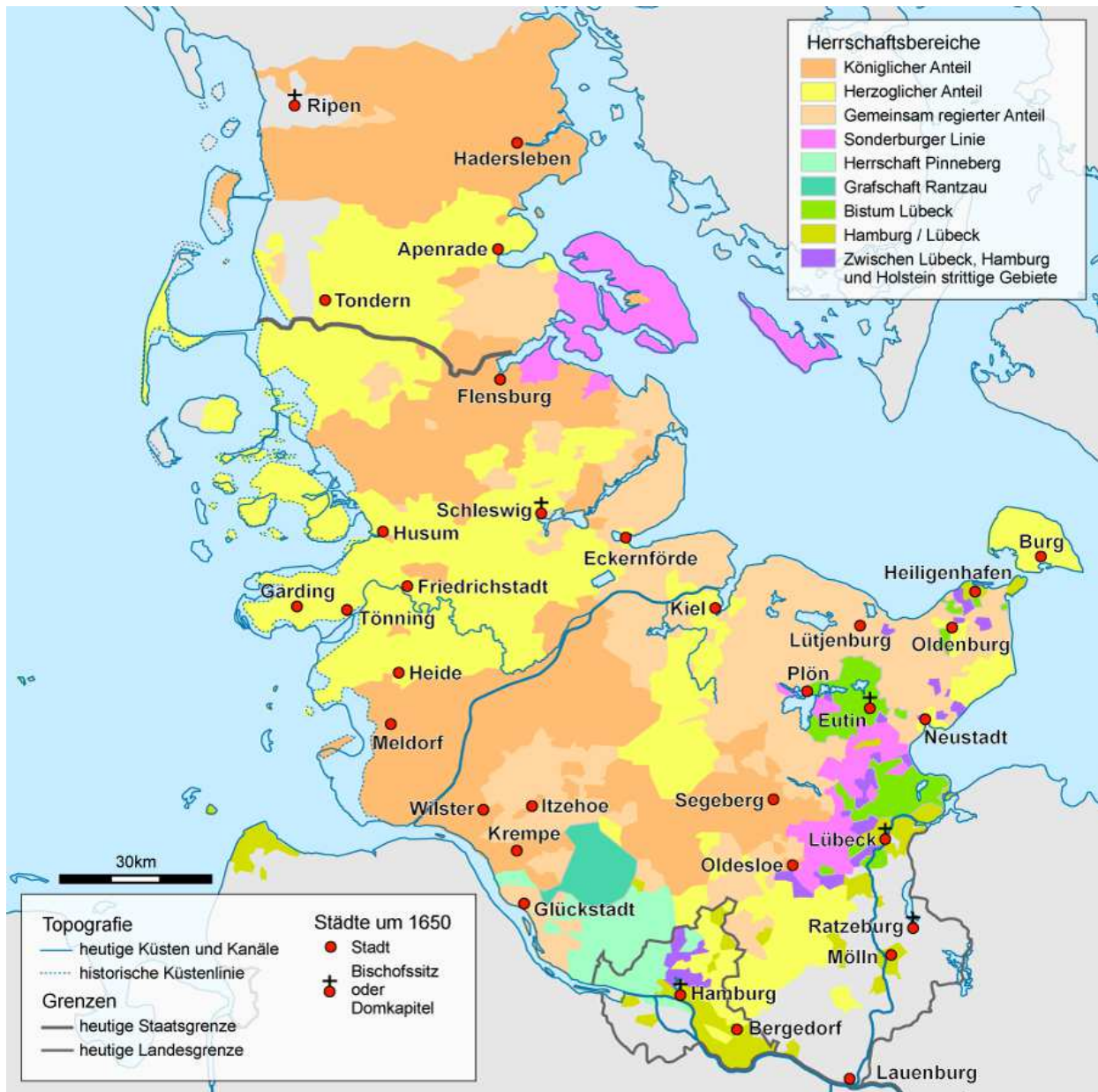


Figure 1. Family Ruling Areas.<sup>74</sup>

The 17th century was a very difficult time for the Danes. The 30 Years War gave King Christian IV of Denmark an opportunity to go on the offensive against Sweden by attacking the Bremen-Verden region. The Swedish king Gustavus Adolf the Great would enlist the help from

<sup>74</sup> Ulrich Lange, *Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, (Wachholtz, Neumünster. S.: Auflage 2003), 133.

Duke Frederick III and together they would counter-attack the Danes in Sweden.<sup>75</sup> Defeated, the Danes would sign the peace treaties of Taastrup and Roskilde, which concluded that the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp was no longer a vassal of the Danish Crown.<sup>76</sup> The 1658 Treaty of Roskilde confirmed the re-establishment of the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp in the Duchies.<sup>77</sup> Gustavus Adolf's descendent, Charles XII, would help Duke Frederick IV when Denmark attacked again in 1700. In 1670, King Frederick III would pass the old Roman law of *Lex Regia*, sacrificing all political power of its citizens in favor of the King.<sup>78</sup> This created absolutism in Denmark, which would be a major issue in the Duchies. The primary concern was when *Lex Regia* was signed into law it solidified the continuation of the ruling house under female succession.<sup>79</sup> The law, therefore, countered that of the previous established law of *primogeniture* signed into law in 1609 and 1621.<sup>80</sup> Duke Frederick IV would die at the 1702 Battle of Kliszów and his brother, Christian August would act as regent until Charles Frederick came of age in 1718.

The mid-to-late 18th century encompasses a wide variety of political disputes about succession and Denmark's role in the Duchies. In 1720 King Frederick IV passed a law that the royal line, now Glueckstadt, annexed the Gottorp Schleswig line (1720) and later the Gottorp Holstein line (1773).<sup>81</sup> This move would lead to the Duchies being ruled by the same Duke; yet the Duke was also the King of Denmark. The key element to take from the 1720 and 1773 Duchy incorporation into Denmark was that it was not a full implementation. This is understood by a simple exclamation: you cannot give away what is not yours. This means that the princely

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<sup>75</sup> Witt & Vosgerau, 157.

<sup>76</sup> Pfordten, 23; Witt & Vosgerau, 157.

<sup>77</sup> Thaler, 32.

<sup>78</sup> Solger, 17; Bunsen, XVI; Pfordten, 21.

<sup>79</sup> F. Max Müller, *The Schleswig-Holstein Question and Its Place in History*, "The Nineteenth Century," (1897), 708-709.

<sup>80</sup> Bunsen, 9.

<sup>81</sup> Solger, 18; Thaler, 32-33; Bunsen, 10-11.

portions of Schleswig and Holstein, under the House of Gottorp, were incorporated into Denmark; however, a third line, the House of Sonderburg, was not a part of the House of Gottorp so they had no right to insist on incorporation.<sup>82</sup> The incorporation statutes of the 18th Century were illegal because the 1658 Treaty of Roskilde confirmed the Duchies as sovereign states. Additionally, as the King of Denmark, Frederick IV had no legal jurisdiction over the Duchies; as the Duke of Gottorp of Schleswig and Holstein, Frederick IV had a personal union, not a political union with the Duchies.

To sum up the last 1800 years of history in the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, this author focused on the rule of the Duchies. This included the rightful inhabitation of the Cimbric Peninsula by the German Anglo, Saxon, Jute and Frisian tribes. Second, after the Dane migration from nearby isles, the border that separated the Danes and the Germanic tribes under Charlemagne was the Eider River. The Eider River is considered the historic border between the Germans and the Danish.

Through a string of continuous treaties lies the rights of the Duchies. Starting in 1326 with the *Constitutio Valdemaria*, and the ever important 1460 Treaty of Ribe, which continues with the 1608 *primogeniture*, the 1658 peace treaties of Taastrup and Roskilde, and the 1773 Treaty of Tsarskoye Selo, the Duchies established themselves as sovereign states. These treaties established:

- that the Duchies since 1658 were sovereign states;
- that the Duchies since 1326, were separate from Denmark, only relatable through a personal union with the House of Oldenburg which ended in 1863;
- that the Duchies since 1460 were inseparable;

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<sup>82</sup> Solger, 21-22; Bunsen, 20; Pfordten, 30.

- that the Duchies since 1608, under the law of *primogeniture*, could only be ruled by a male heir of the reigning Duke at the signing of the law.
- that the 1720 proclamation of incorporation was illegal and could not be enforced due to the previous established treaties.

Working up towards the 1848 and 1864 Schleswig-Holstein conflicts, the interests of Denmark, the Duchies and Prussia will link the complex history of the region with modern influences. The interests of each identity, along with the regional culture and the shaping of ideals would lead to the conflicts.

## INTEREST

The background chapter established the complex, intertwined history between the Germans and the Danes of Schleswig and Holstein. This period of ancient history established a ‘grandfathering’ in of the Germans on Jutland. The *Constitutio Valdemaria*, along with the 1460 Treaty of Ribe, the 1608 *primogeniture*, the 1658 peace treaties of Taastrup, and Roskilde that were signed during the 13th through the 18th centuries established independent governing states of Schleswig and Holstein. Yet, through the Danish *Lex Regia* and the illegal incorporation proclamations during the 18th Century, the Duchies found themselves ruled by a Danish king. This occurred through dynastic intermarriages between the Duchies and Denmark. It is within this semi-macro history that the context is set for this chapter’s contribution. It focuses on the important relationships within the micro dynastic history. It will focus on the types of marriages, the marriages in question and the resulting implications to the weddings. It will cover the Danish interests in region and their role in the Nordic Wars. It will also cover Prussia, its interests and set the stage for the macro history events of the 1848 and 1864 Schleswig-Holstein Conflicts.

### **Marrying into Madness**

The dynastic question in the Schleswig and Holstein Duchies were a complex issue of intermarriages between the ruling families in Europe, the structure of rules established in the Treaty of Ribe, *Constitutio Valdemaria* and the *primogeniture*, as well as the concern of unequal marriages in the Duchies. Each of these influential aspects lead to the dynastic question, which within themselves, warrant extensive analysis; the ruling structure is analyzed earlier in this work and will be referenced extensively throughout the analysis of the ruling families and unequal marriages. In respect to brevity, the exact intermarriage relationships will focus on in their

contexts to draw relevance to the subject. The unequal marriage aspect will be utilized to show the necessity for intermarriage within the ruling class and how it complicated the issue.

The marriages between ruling families of different countries are as listed below:

- King Haakon VI of Norway \*1340 +1380 oo1363 Margaret of Denmark +1412
- Carl Peter Ulrik of Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp, also the Grand Duke and Emperor of Russia \*1728 +1762 oo1745 Sophia Augusta Friedrika, Katarina II, Empress of Russia \*1729 +1796<sup>83</sup>

The first marriage between King Haakon VI and Margaret is especially important when discussing dynastic succession in the Duchies. While her marriage did not immediately affect the rule of the Duchies, it would lead to a change in rule. Her father and mother were Heinrich I of the Holstein-Rendsburg line and Hedwig of Schleswig. Her father was also Valdemar IV of Denmark. After the death of her oldest brother, succession was to fall to her older sister's (Ingeborg) son. However, she died shortly after her father, leaving Denmark without an heir. It is through this line of events that her son would gain control of the crown. However, he would die in 1387, after gaining the Swedish and Danish crown, leaving Margaret as the de facto ruler of Denmark, Norway and Sweden.<sup>84</sup> Following the rules of succession in the *Constitutio Valdemaria*, established by her father Gerhard III, Ingeborg's grandson's, Henry II and Gerhard VI would inherit Duchy rule under the Holstein-Rendsburg line.<sup>85</sup> Gerhard VI would succeed Margaret as the King of Denmark after her death. What is important to note is the influence of

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<sup>83</sup> Bismarck, 30; Joachim, 213-214.

<sup>84</sup> Witt, 148.

<sup>85</sup> Bismarck, 22.

the *Constitutio Valdemaria*, the precursor to the 1608 motion of *Primogeniture*, and Margaret's influence as a regent in the Duchy.

The marriage of Carl Peter Ulrik, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp to Sophia Augusta Friedrika, Katarina II, Empress of Russia is an example of the influence of royal intermarriages. Carl Peter was the son to Karl Frederik and the Grand Duchess Anna Petrovna of Russia. Carl would solidify his rule in Russia by marrying Katarina II. However, he was predisposed to pro-Prussian sentiments and attempted to push his interests into the Duchies.<sup>86</sup> His wife would dispose of him and sign the 1773 Treaty of Tsarskoye Selo.<sup>87</sup> This treaty signed over Duchy rule to Denmark for control over the Duchy of Oldenburg. This would effectively end any dispute of Russian control in the Duchies. However, the treaty did considerably complicate the situation in the Duchies. By signing over rule of the Duchies, which Katarina II had authority, she essentially violated the Treaty of the Ribe, and certainly the *Constitutio Valdemaria*.

The marriages between royal families were critical as they kept power within the ruling families; they also caused issues such as the breaking of previous treaties, influential politics to disrupt successional rule, and pitted one country against the next for military advantage and territorial gains. Another aspect to royal marriages between families was the concern of unequal unions between families in the Duchies. It was a concern that the Dukes of Schleswig-Holstein were unfit to rule because of their lineage. The questioning of unequal marriages was a concern for Otto von Bismarck when detailing the lineage of both the Duchies and Danish crown. He kept a large amount of information about the ruling class marriages. He sent the marriage material to Lord Palmerston of Great Britain. The focus on marriage was to ensure that the ruling

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<sup>86</sup> Witt, 192.

<sup>87</sup> Witt, 192.



families were, in fact, qualified to control the Duchies as well as to legitimize Prussia's actions in the Duchies during the 1848 and 1864 conflicts.

The issue of dynastic succession relies on more than just inheritance to the son, also it is compounded by multiple aspects of family lines, ancient law and social status. The first aspect consists of family history. When a child was selected for succession his family must come from high nobility, be free, legal and consistent within noble family ties, the latter specifying that the family must have noble ties that have been established within the kingdom.<sup>88</sup> The second aspect is of ancient law, specifically the ancient Salic Law. This law states, according to succession that:

- “1. If any man die and leave no sons, if the father and mother survive, they shall inherit.
3. If the father and mother do not survive, and he leave brothers or sisters, they shall inherit.
3. But if there are none, the sisters of the father shall inherit.
4. But if there are no sisters of tile father, the sisters of the mother shall claim that inheritance.
5. If there are none of these, the nearest relatives on the father's side shall succeed to that inheritance.
6. But of Salic land no portion of the inheritance shall come to a woman: but the whole inheritance of the land shall come to the male sex.”<sup>89</sup>

The Salic Law was followed exclusively by the Holy Roman Empire and included the Holstein Duchy. This law began in 6th Century France and spread into the German states including the Schleswig Duchy with the *primogeniture*. The repetitiveness of the law was essential to the Danish as the German counts in Schleswig already followed the Salic Law. The importance of this Law to families is that it requires a strict structure to the succession of land, titles and

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<sup>88</sup> Bismarck, 7.

<sup>89</sup> Ernst F. Henderson, *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/medieval/salic.asp>.

statutes. When the law was not followed it could be disputed that the succession of a family was invalid which caused the child to lose succession rights.

The third aspect to succession is social status, which in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century context, was extremely important as it immediately declared the rights and acts of successional rule. When a ruler was elected or achieved rule through succession, his lineage must not be in question or else it would leave doubt on the successional line. This doubt was clear when they handled the successional rights of Denmark and the Duchies which led especially to the 1848 Conflict. The conflict is a prime example of the possible ‘what if’ when succession was in doubt. Therefore, when Denmark’s successional rights were analyzed during the 19th Century, Otto von Bismarck would examine the “high nobility family aspect” of the House of Oldenburg which focused primary on the latter of the 12th and 13th Centuries.<sup>90</sup> He concludes that multiple marriages within the House of Oldenburg line including the lineage of the Kings of Denmark, were suspect to multiple marriages that were not of ‘high nobility’. The marriages in question are:

- Duke Joachim Ernst to daughter of Dutch Marguis of Westerloo in 1677.<sup>91</sup>
- Rudolf Fredrich, Duke of Norburg and Countess of Prön in 1680<sup>92</sup>
- Ernst Casimir, son of Duke August Philipp and Holstein Berk and an unnamed mistress.<sup>93</sup>
- Fredrich Wilhelm, Duke of Augustenburg and Countess Sophin Amalie of Braunau in 1694<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Bismarck, 7.

<sup>91</sup> Bismarck, 8. Bismarck proclaims that the marriage was “certainly not something to the high nobility could expect.”

<sup>92</sup> Bismarck 8, She was the grandmother to the hereditary prince of Plön.

<sup>93</sup> Bismarck, 8-9.

- Duke Philipp Ernst of Glücksburg and Countess of Braunau in 1729.<sup>95</sup>
- Duke Christian Karl and Dorothea Christina of Aichelberg 1702.<sup>96</sup>

In total, there were 20 marriages of questionable heritage and 2 - 3 civil marriages in question. In this case, without a doubt, marriages in the House of Oldenburg that did experience unions outside of nobility; yet, none of these marriages would influence the direct male lineage without an agreement or contract with the King of Denmark. Unequal weddings also concerned marriages of the same lineage. The lineage to the Danish kings disapproved of intermarriage between families, however, there were instances in which this was a concern. These instances were:

- The marriage of King Christian VIII with Princess Karoline Amalia, daughter of Duke Friedrich Christian of Augustenburg in 1815.<sup>97</sup>
- Duke Karl of Glücksburg and Princess Wilhelmine Maria, daughter of King Frederick VI in 1838.<sup>98</sup>
- King Frederick IV and Anna Sopfin Reventlan in 1721.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Bismarck, 9

<sup>95</sup> Bismarck, 9.

<sup>96</sup> Bismarck, 9-10. Duke Christian Karl would secretly sign away his successional rights to his brother, King of Denmark and Duke Hans Adolph of Plön, in exchange for the marriage. However, after the death of his brother without an heir, Christian Karl's son would eventually become the next successor. The agreement is specified "*pro legitimis et ex christiano et legali, non veroad morg anat icam contracto marti monis susceptis liberis.*" This is roughly translated to German as "*pro legitimis die Christen, und die Axt und den rechtlichen, nicht den veeroad morg Knochen Anat Armorica, die seine marti den Dämon konzentriert hatte, hat er die für ihre Kinder erhalten.*", In English, it solidified the child as being the born of the Duke and Duchess of Schleswig-Holstein, Stormarn and Dithmarschen, including Oldenburg and Delmenhorst.

<sup>97</sup> Bismarck, 13.

<sup>98</sup> Bismarck, 13.

<sup>99</sup> Bismarck, 13-14.

- Duke Peter Friedrich Ludwig of Oldenburg, and Countess Dohna, the wife of Duke Friedrich Wilhelm of Holstein-Beck, whom descended from the same maternal grandparents.<sup>100</sup>

In reflection to the quality of the Danish lineage concerning the Oldenburg line, there remains a concern for the nobility of the lineage, and the intermarriages within the line. However, these unequal influences would mostly influence the younger Oldenburg line along with other Dukes within Denmark, Oldenburg, Schleswig and Holstein, but particularly in the Danish royal line. The issues were not within the influential reach of the German ruling families and class.

### **“Denmark to the Eider”**

Denmark was intent upon incorporating the Duchies into the Danish Monarchy. Since the *Dani* migration of the 5th and 6th centuries CE, the German tribes in Jutland and North Schleswig experienced strong assimilation under the Danish rule. Settlements in those regions started to take Danish language characteristics such as the following suffixes: -by, -torp, -ing, -lev, -balle, -mark, -ager, -vang, -lykke, -lund, -skov, -um, -boi, -rup, -trup, and -strup.<sup>101</sup> Cultural aspects, such as family names, folktales, work habits, food, clothing, the farmstead layouts, and architecture, along with language solidified the idea of “national identity” for the regional Danes.<sup>102</sup> It has been found that Danish nationalism found its start in economics and led toward a centralized Danish government. This intellectual start began with Christian Paulsen and Christian Flor with their middle class national-liberalism in the early 19<sup>th</sup>-Century.<sup>103</sup> These politicians

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<sup>100</sup> Bismarck, 14.

<sup>101</sup> Norman Berdichevsky, *The Danish-German Border Dispute: Aspects of Cultural and Demographic Politics 1815-2001*, (Bethesda: Academica Press, LLC, 2002), 7.

<sup>102</sup> Berdichevsky, 7.

<sup>103</sup> Heinrich von Sybel, *The Founding of the German Empire, by William I*, Vol III., trans. Marshall Livingston Perrin, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1891), 20.

were influenced by German Romanticism and Danish reformer N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872) who was against the social opposition of German elites.<sup>104</sup>

After the French Revolution in 18th Century and the Napoleonic Era in the early 19th century, Danish nationalism would spark under the spread of liberal nationalism from France; however, the idea would not unite Denmark. It would divide the Danish Monarchy into two movements. The first movement was led by the liberal forces which wanted to strengthen Denmark's ties with its Scandinavian neighbors Norway and Sweden.<sup>105</sup> The second conservative movement wanted Denmark to officially assimilate Schleswig into the Monarchy and split its ties with Holstein. Holstein, after the end of the Napoleonic Era, was incorporated into the German Confederation along with Lauenburg.

The Danish concerns with their northern neighbors stemmed from a long history of war, dynastic rule and a push for economic superiority. Scandinavia's interest was not limited to Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The Finnish tribes would seek a home in the Northeast portion as they were pushed north starting in 1000 CE by the Slavic tribes that would eventually form Russia.<sup>106</sup> The Baltic tribes, who originally migrated as a Germanic tribe, established themselves on the Eastern Coast of the Baltic Sea. They will become the precursor to the Teutonic Order in the 13th Century which, would eventually, form into Prussia. These 'moving parts,' including Poland-Lithuania, would culminate in the Second Northern War (1655-1660).

The Second Northern War started with Swedish military advancement into Poland which sparked a response from Russia and the other Baltic countries. After great initial success known

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<sup>104</sup> Thaler, 71.

<sup>105</sup> "Denmark's National Struggle, 1864-1920", *Kongeastien*, <http://www.kongeastien.dk/en/content/denmarks-national-struggle-1864-1920>.

<sup>106</sup> Colin McEvedy, *The New Penguin Atlas of Medieval History*, (New York: Penguin Putnam, Inc., 1992), 51.

as “The Deluge” which covered all of Poland and finally ended at the border between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, the Swedes would conquer the majority of Scandinavia including all of Finland, parts of Norway, Denmark, Russia, and Brandenburg.<sup>107</sup> However, success is often exaggerated by the number of countries one attacks. Sweden would be pushed back and eventually had to sign numerous peace treaties to establish the present-day borders of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. What is important to note from the Second Northern War is that it led to the Treaty of Roskilde, confirmed royal ties between Sweden and the Duchies, and showed regional countries that Denmark was no longer a regional powerhouse.<sup>108</sup> The latter point would be a powder keg for Danish nationalists who wanted Denmark to return to prominence.

Recent Danish interests in the Duchies have experienced a shift in national borders and idealism. In 1920, a plebiscite was established to determine the lasting border between Denmark and Germany.<sup>109</sup> The plebiscite established two zones, the first being Zone 1 which consisted of lands north of Flensburg, and Zone 2 which included the town of Schleswig to the southern border between Schleswig and Holstein.<sup>110</sup> These zones were based on the cultural aspects of languages spoken, written and their traditions. After votes were tallied, Zone 1 voted heavily in favor of incorporation into Denmark while Zone 2 voted heavily in favor of remaining German.<sup>111</sup> The border abolished during the Nazi Reich but as Schleswig-Holstein fell under the British Zone post World War Two and during the Cold War, the border returned to its 1920 location. Yet, Danish nationalists continued to push by creating a ‘bandwagon’ in Southern

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<sup>107</sup> Witt, 172.

<sup>108</sup> Witt, 173.

<sup>109</sup> Jan Baltzersen, “The Reunification of North Schleswig with Denmark in 1920,” *Dansk Center for Byhistorie*, (Aarhus Universitet, 2005), <http://dendigitalebyport.byhistorie.dk/monumenter/artikel.aspx?xid=re-unification>.

<sup>110</sup> Baltzersen.

<sup>111</sup> Baltzersen.

Schleswig to oust the zones that heavily favored Germany. England quelled the antagonism that the Danes attempted to create, and focus was narrowed on keeping the Kiel Canal protected from the Communists in Eastern Europe.

### **The Rise of Prussian Influence**

The rise of Prussian influence in the Duchies involved both economic and political aspirations. Prussia was a small Duchy under the Marquis of Brandenburg and was ruled by the House of Hohenzollern. During the 18th century, King Frederick William and his son, King Frederick II would bring Prussia to prominence. After the 1740-1763 Silesia War with Austria, Frederick would secure multiple provinces and Duchies across the Northern German States. As Prussia continued its rise in Europe, it was also interested in seeking control over the German States as the Holy Roman Empire continued its downward spiral. With its decline, Austria and Prussia would fight over the German states and exert their influence in the German Legislative Assembly. The German States were not the only concern for Prussia.

Prussia would be highly concerned with Russia's influences in the region. Since the Act of Renunciation and Cession in 1767 and 1773, Denmark would remain independent from Russia and all ties between Russia and dynastic succession in Schleswig and Holstein would be cleared.<sup>112</sup> However, Russia and Denmark were in a close alliance during the signing of the 1767 and 1773 Acts, and Denmark would later furnish ships for Russia in the fight against Sweden during the Second Northern War.<sup>113</sup> Further involvement between the two countries consisted of exempt Russian vessels in the Danish Sound, advantages in the navigation of Russia, and the

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<sup>112</sup> Christian Friedrich Wurm, *A Letter to Viscount Palmerston: Concerning The Question of Schleswig-Holstein*, (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1850), 11.

<sup>113</sup> Wurm, 11.

October 14, 1831 Act that framed the trade of Finland.<sup>114</sup> It was a large concern, not only for Prussia, but also England, Norway, Sweden and other countries near the Baltic Sea to have such a large Russian influence in the region.

The 1815 Congress of Vienna was an important piece of international legislation for Prussia. During the Congress the major powers of Europe such as Prussia, Austria, Great Britain, France and Russia would cut up Napoleon's French empire and divide it among these powers. The primary regions of concern were along the Rhine river, where France wanted to restore its historic boundaries, the Polish lands where Prussia and Russia fought over control and Italian provinces where Austria pressed for control over debated historical lands.<sup>115</sup> Prussia would gain control of Westphalia and parts of Württemberg along the Rhine River to maintain a buffer between France and the German States. This also increased the Prussian influence throughout the German states. Russia would gain control of more Polish lands and Austria would regain the northern Italian states of Tyrol and Venice.<sup>116</sup>

Prussia was concerned with the Duchies as the Kiel Canal brought solid and continuous economic stability to Prussia. Economic trade throughout Europe was essential for the Prussia's heavy agricultural lands and their economic alliance with the German Federation, which all were based on their 'shared interests and natural foundations'.<sup>117</sup> The alliance, led by the Prussian Customs Union, was sought after by Bavaria and Saxony; the Central German Commercial Association was mindful of the Prussian economic hegemony and opposed an alliance. The alliance was to fix the primary problems which were stated by the Prussian Minister of Finance: "were not to be solved by individual German states on their own; they required the cooperation

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<sup>114</sup> Wurm, 11-14.

<sup>115</sup> Blackbourn, 70-71.

<sup>116</sup> Blackbourn, 70-71.

<sup>117</sup> Schulze, 77.



of all the German states, but, given her inner disintegration, her growing economic backwardness and her involvement in the trade outside Germany, the exclusion of Austria.”<sup>118</sup> Economic integration in the German states would build a strong bond throughout the states under Prussian leadership.

Economic stability contributed to the outcome of the 19th Century “German Question”. The answers included a small Germany (*Kleindeutschland*), which was introduced and supported by the Prussian leadership, and large Germany (*Großdeutschland*) which was introduced and supported by the Austrian leadership.<sup>119</sup> Geographically, small Germany included Prussian lands, the German Confederation, and established borders north at Schleswig, west at the Rhine, south at the Swiss, and Austrian and Russia borders to the east. Large Germany encompassed all of the German-speaking states including the previous established states plus Austria.

Austria favored a large Germany and argued that it had ruled the Holy Roman Empire for the past 400 years under the Habsburgs.<sup>120</sup> Austria turned to Prince Clemens Wenzel Lothar von Metternich as foreign minister after the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire and the weakening of the composite monarchy.<sup>121</sup> Metternich was interested in keeping the status quo for the Habsburg Monarchy and was a key member in drafting the Congress of Vienna in 1815. During his conservative appointment, he played a large role in European politics despite Austria’s slow power decline in the German Confederation. However, he would secure northern Italian provinces where Austria had been fighting to retain control and founded the Quadruple Alliance between Austria, Prussia, Russia and Great Britain.

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<sup>118</sup> Schulze, 78.

<sup>119</sup> William Hagen, *German History in Modern Times: Four Lives of The Nation*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1012), 143.

<sup>120</sup> Hagen, 144.

<sup>121</sup> Jarrett, 73.

Prussia favored a smaller Germany, had a higher population of German speakers and a newer European power. This issue was magnified by the liberal ideals spread from the French Revolution in the 18th Century, and culminated into the March Revolution of 1848 which was held in Berlin.<sup>122</sup> Many protesters were rallying for large Germany; however, after multiple violent outbreaks that were stopped by the military, the taste of the revolution soured and the German Confederation chose to go with Prussia. Unfortunately, King Frederick William IV of Prussia would honorably decline the invitation. In private, his correspondence with a relative in England would reveal that he was insulted because the invitation was "from the gutter" and, "disgraced by the stink of revolution, defiled with dirt and mud."<sup>123</sup> Therefore, by the end of the March Revolution, not only had the liberal revolutionists discredited the German Confederation's reputation and undermined Prussia's acceptance for the title, but they were also disowned by their countrymen.<sup>124</sup> What is important to take away from the March Revolution is that, by the start of the Three Year War (1848 Schleswig-Holstein Conflict) later that year, European countries including Prussia, Austria and the German Confederation looked hesitant on their earlier revolutions. Also, all the reforms that the revolutionists attempted to pass were dissolved.

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<sup>122</sup> Hans Joachim Hahn, *The 1848 Revolutions in German-Speaking Europe*, (London: Pearson Education Co., 2001), 92.

<sup>123</sup> Alan Farmer, *Access to History: The Unification of Germany and The Challenge of Nationalism 1789-1919*, Fourth Edition, (Hodder Education, 2015), 67.

<sup>124</sup> Magnus Grafe von Moltke-Grünholz, *Die Schleswig-Holsteinische Frage*, (Hamburg: Perthes - Besser und Mauke, 1849), 119; GStA PK, III. HA, Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, I. Nr. 4644/1, 127, Prussia's role in the upcoming Three Years War is a heated debate: "Those who are genuinely hostile to Prussia thus reserve the right, at the appropriate moment, to make the accuser against them. And if Prussia really did conclude a peace as lukewarm as the July 10 Convention [First Armistice] puts it in perspective, they would have an easy time with it, because Prussia waged war on behalf of Germany. Of the German states, contingents were well equipped and ready to strike in the duchies. No German state, as far as we know, had pushed for peace, and neither had the central power. The accusation that Prussia had ended a war which it waged in the name and with the troops of Germany only for selfish interests and sacrificed to it a cause which was regarded as a German cause in the whole of Germany would be near."

## THE FIRST SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN CONFLICT

### Buildup to War

The primary causes for the following conflicts have been established in the previous chapters, and the interests of multiple countries establish the context in which these conflicts began. The Danish-English War in 1807 pitted England against Denmark and France, but also both the Germans (hesitantly) and the Danes in the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies.<sup>125</sup> The English War placed the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies with Napoleon and the Duchy Germans found themselves fighting against the Swedes, Germans and Russians. At War's end in 1813, the Duchies were occupied by the Swedish and German troops. The military required the Duchies to supply and house the troops during the winter and this period would later be known as the 'Cossack Winter'.<sup>126</sup> The Duchy citizens were required to house and support the Russian troops during the winter.

Napoleon's fall, and the decline of France, in 1814 led to the Congress of Vienna and peace on May 30th, 1814.<sup>127</sup> All dominant European powers were invited to the Congress, which included Denmark. The Congress had four general aims:

- Restore Europe to *status quo ante bellum*, a return to the *ancien regime*.<sup>128</sup>
- Aggrandizement of the four great European powers.<sup>129</sup>
- The creation of a durable 'balance of power'.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Nick Svendsen, *The First Schleswig-Holstein War 1848-1850*, (England: Helion & Company, 2009), 19.

<sup>126</sup> Svendsen, 19.

<sup>127</sup> Svendsen, 19.

<sup>128</sup> Mark Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy after Napoleon*, (New York: I. B. Tauris & Co. LTD, 2013), 84, 85.

<sup>129</sup> Jarrett, 85.

<sup>130</sup> Jarrett, 85.

- The redistribution of territories based on popular self-determination and nationality.<sup>131</sup>

The Congress would redistribute lands with influence from all sides. The result would leave Prussia with more lands along the Rhine River, half of Saxony, Swedish Pomerania and the western portion of Poland.<sup>132</sup> Russia would receive the rest of Poland, except for Krakow, which Austria would receive along with the eastern province of Tarnopol.<sup>133</sup> The two most important aspects of the Congress would be the creation of the German Deutscher Bund, which followed the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire by Napoleon in 1806, and the incorporation of Holstein into the Confederation.<sup>134</sup> Denmark declined the incorporation of Schleswig into the Confederation and received Lauenburg in trade with Prussia for the Swedish Pomerania. This mega-macro perspective of Europe creates a larger understanding of European politics during the early 19th century.

When focusing on the Duchies, the three primary reasons that led to military action were the end of the Danish dynastic line, the forceful Schleswig incorporation by Denmark and the ‘Open Letter’. The first reason was the end of the Oldenburg line with the 1848 death of King Frederick VII.<sup>135</sup> His death passed succession to the sole remaining male heir of the Glueckstadt or Royal line to his uncle, Ferdinand. However, there were female lines that were closer in relation, especially the King’s aunt, Charlotte who was married to the Landgrave of Hessen-Cassel. If the laws of succession under *lex regia* were to be followed she would fleetingly be made Landgravine Charlotte of Hessen, Queen of Denmark until her son Prince Frederic of

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<sup>131</sup> Jarrett, 86.

<sup>132</sup> Jarrett, 97, 130.

<sup>133</sup> Jarrett, 97.

<sup>134</sup> Jarrett, 131.

<sup>135</sup> Bismarck, 25.

Hessen took the Danish crown.<sup>136</sup> However, by the laws passed in 1608, 1633, and 1650 no woman or her heir shall wear the ducal crown in either Schleswig or Holstein.<sup>137</sup> The ducal crown must pass to the Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg line with Prince Christian; he would resign his right to the ducal crown and leave the successional line to Landgrave Charlotte effectively ending Danish rule in the Schleswig and Holstein Duchies.

The second reason is the illegal Schleswig incorporation by the Danish through the Ussing motion, also known as the “Letter Patent,” which overthrew the *personal* order of succession and annexed of the Duchies as Danish provinces.<sup>138</sup> The Ussing motion allows for the Danish perspective to be established before the conflict. As Solger explains:

“The Danes, it will be observed, did not pretend to say that the Duchies *were* parts of a Danish hereditary kingdom, nor that they *were* subject under the Danish law of succession. On the contrary, by calling upon the King *to make* them so, they distinctly acknowledged the fact of the Duchies not being part of “one hereditary Danish kingdom, inseparable and indivisible.””<sup>139</sup>

To clarify, by passing the Ussing motion they acknowledged that the Duchies were not subject to the Danish law of succession or under Danish rule.

The Danish ‘Open Letter’ called for Schleswig to finally be fully incorporated into Denmark. The ‘Open Letter’ caused a large upheaval in the Duchies especially by German Schleswigers that earlier were declined to be incorporated into the German Confederation. The

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<sup>136</sup> Solger, 33.

<sup>137</sup> Solger, 33.

<sup>138</sup> Nielsen, 4.

<sup>139</sup> Solger, 35.

Germans saw the letter as an attack on their independence and vested rights.<sup>140</sup> The letter states that:

- “The *lex regia* is in full validity and force in the duchy of Schleswig,” although he counters his own statement by saying “to certain portions of the duchy of Holstein, there are facts which prevent us from pronouncing with the same certainty respecting the rights of our heirs to the succession of that Duchy.”<sup>141</sup>
- The King desires to “bring about the full and entire acknowledgment of the integrity of the Danish Monarchy” yet proclaims that “that it was in no way his intention by this Letter Patent to encroach upon the independence of the duchy of Schleswig”; “or to introduce any modification in the relations which united said Duchy at present with the duchy of Holstein.”<sup>142</sup>

The letter clarified that Denmark desired to incorporate Schleswig by changing the rule of succession from a *personal* union with the King of Denmark into a *real* union as a province of Denmark. They solidified the motion by pressing their rights through the *lex regia*, and the illegal acts of 1720, 1721, 1767, and 1773. Therefore, by claiming rights on Schleswig through these acts, not only was their claim invalid, but they were illegal by the earlier acts of the Treaty of Ribe in 1460, the 1608 *primogeniture*, the 1658 peace treaties of Taastrup and Roskilde.

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<sup>140</sup> Solger, 36.

<sup>141</sup> Solger, 36-37.

<sup>142</sup> Solger, 37.

## Personnel

Before covering events and actions one must acknowledge and learn who was involved in the Conflict. To maintain a strict adherence to brevity, personnel, weapons and tactics will be confined to lists while important facts will be discussed afterwards.

The Danish, Schleswig-Holstein and Prussian forces are as follows.

- 1848/Outbreak of War
  - The Schleswig-Holstein Army (S/H Army)
    - Commanding General: Prince of Nør
      - 1st Brigade: Major General Krohn
      - 2nd Brigade: Duke Carl of Glücksburg
      - 1st Dragoon Regiment: Major Fürsen-Bachman
      - 2nd Dragoon Regiment: Major Hansen
    - Total Number of Men: 6,150
    - Total Number of Ships: 0
    - Total Number of Artillery: 16 (still in production)
  - The Danish Army
    - Commander in Chief: Major General Hedemann
    - Chief of Staff: Captain Læssøe
    - Commanding Artillery Officer: Major de Meza
    - The Main Danish Army “Nørrejyske Armeekorps”
      - 1st Brigade: Colonel Büllow
      - 2nd Brigade: Colonel Meyer
      - Cavalry: Major General Wedell-Wedelsborg

- Total Number of Men: 7,200
    - Total Number of Ships: 15
    - Total Number of Artillery: 14
  - The “Schleswig Flank” Division “Flankekorpsset”
    - Commanding Officer: Colonel Schleppegrell
    - Chief of Staff: Captain Caroc
    - Total Number of Men: 3,800
    - Total Number of Artillery: 6
- Addition of Prussian and German Confederation forces to Schleswig-Holstein Army on April 23, 1848.
  - Commander in Chief: General Wrangel
  - The Eastern Division: General Möllendorff
  - The Western Division: General Bonin
  - The Confederation Division: General Halkett
  - Total Number of Men:
    - Prussian Forces: 12,000
    - Confederation Forces: 10,000
  - Total Number of Guns: 50
- 1849
  - The Schleswig-Holstein Army (S/H Army)
    - Commanding Officer: General Bonin
      - Vanguard: Lieutenant Colonel Zastrow
      - Supply Units: Colonel Count Baudissin



- 1st Brigade: Colonel St. Paul
  - Total Number of Men: 19,000
  - Total Number of Artillery: 46
- The German Army
  - Commanding Officer: Lieutenant General Prittwitz
  - Chief of Staff: Major General Hahn
  - 1st Division: Prince Eduard of Sachsen Altenburg
  - 2nd Division: Major General Wynecken
  - 3rd Division (Prussian): Major General Hirschfeld
  - Reserve Division: Major General Bauer
- Total Number of Men: 46,700
- Total Number of Artillery: 107
- The Danish Army
  - Commander in Chief: General Krogh
  - Chief of Staff: Captain Læssøe
  - Als Division
    - 1st Brigade: Colonel Krabbe
    - 2nd Brigade: Major General Moltke
      - Royal Guard: Lieutenant Colonel Thestrup
  - Als Flank Division
    - Commanding Officer: Major General Bülow
    - Chief of Staff: Lieutenant Colonel Flensburg
      - 3rd Brigade: Major General Schleppegrell

- 6th Brigade: Colonel de Meza
  - Jutland Division
    - Commanding Officer: Major General Rye
      - 5th Brigade: Major General Rye
      - 1st Cavalry: Colonel Juel
      - 2nd Cavalry: Colonel Flindt
  - Total Number of Men: 41,000
  - Total Number of Ships: 15
  - Total Number of Artillery: 10 Batteries
- 1850/End of War
  - The Schleswig-Holstein Army
    - Commanding Officer: Lieutenant General Willisen
    - Chief of Staff: Colonel von der Tann
    - Vanguard: Colonel Gerhardt
    - Main Army
      - 1st Brigade: Major General Count Baudissin
      - 2nd Brigade: Colonel Abercron
      - 3rd Brigade: Major General von der Horst
      - 4th Brigade: Colonel Garrelts
      - Reserve Cavalry: Colonel Fürsen-Bachmann
      - Reserve Artillery: Major Dalitz
  - Total Number of Men: 42,000
  - Total Number of Ships: 9

- Total Number of Artillery: 12 Batteries
- The Danish Army
  - Commanding Officer: General Krogh
  - Chief of Staff: Colonel Flensburg
  - 1st Division: Major General Moltke
  - 2nd Division: Major General Schleppegrell
- Total Number of Men: 42,000
- Total Number of Ships: 13
- Total Number of Artillery: 12 Batteries<sup>143</sup>

## **Course of The War**

### ***Rendsburg***

The first war begins on March 24, 1848 when the Prince of Nør, together with the garrison of Kiel, and 50 civil guardsmen took a train to Rendsburg and surprised the Commander in Chief at the Rendsburg Fortress.<sup>144</sup> The fortress was taken through negotiation and allowed for a stronghold to attack northward through Jutland. These events were a direct result of written word that reached Kiel describing how the National Liberals in Copenhagen had illegitimately formed a new government.<sup>145</sup> The concern was that the new government would press its military through Schleswig in hope of incorporating the Duchy. Therefore, more arms and supplies were needed and Rendsburg was heavily stocked leading to the decision to ‘capture’ the fortress. Afterwards, the Provisional Government that was established in the Duchies reached out

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<sup>143</sup> Johs. Nielsen, *The Schleswig-Holstein Revolt 1848-1850*, Trans. Marianne Henriksen, (Haderslev: Tøjhusmuseet, 1993), 11, 15, 16, 30, 40, 47, 48, 54; Svendsen, 123-126, 129, 130.

<sup>144</sup> Nielsen, 6-8, A map of Schleswig Duchy with town names can be found on page 3.

<sup>145</sup> Nielsen, 5.

to them about the coup and suggested that the S/H Army press northward to gain the support and respect of the Duchies.<sup>146</sup>

Despite the concerns of the Prince to send such a small force north Colonel Krohn took the men and settled just north of Flensburg. The Danes had landed a force on the peninsula of Holnis and the official first battle of the 1848 Schleswig-Holstein Conflict began with the Battle at Bov. The Schleswig-Holstein forces would lose the Battle of Bov and retreat towards Rendsburg where a Prussian contingent of 22,000 men plus 9,000 Schleswig-Holsteiners were in wait.<sup>147</sup> However, the entire contingent was not fully prepared to attack. Yet, General Wrangel would attack north on April 23 and the German army, consisting of both Prussian and S/H forces, would drive the Danish army just south of the town of Schleswig.<sup>148</sup> The Danes were forced north past Flensburg and settled just west of the town of Sønderborg. The German forces would win the Battle of Schleswig and set up the next assault, the Battle for the Als.

### ***Sundeved and the Als***

The Battle for the Als Islands, which was fought on the Sundeved Peninsula, changed the entire context of the conflict. The primary cause of the change was that the German forces (Prussian, Confederation and Schleswig Holstein) passed the Southern Jutland border into Denmark. This meant that it was no longer a Ducal conflict, but rather turned into a full-blown war. The change in the War's status greatly concerned Russia and Sweden. Sweden would send

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<sup>146</sup> Nielsen, 12-13; Svendsen, 24.

<sup>147</sup> Nielsen, 16; Svendsen, 54; GStA PK. I. HA Rep. 75D, Bevollmächtigter der Bund Bundesmilitär Kommission Nr. 177, 611, 679, 680.

<sup>148</sup> William von Gründorf, *The Danish Campaign of 1864: Recollections of an Austrian General Staff Officer*, (England: Helion & Company, 2010), 69,

4,500 soldiers to Funen which is the group of islands north of the Als.<sup>149</sup> Russia sent correspondence to Prussia warning of potential hostilities if Prussia did not remove its forces from Denmark. General Wrangel, with the Prussian forces and threats from Russia, would reform near Schleswig.<sup>150</sup> However, the German forces (Confederate and Schleswig Holstein) would continue to push the Danes into the Als creating chaos in Flensburg (in route to the Als) and gained a reputation for ferocity.<sup>151</sup>

The Battle for the Als consisted of a multitude of skirmishes at *Nybøl, Nybøl Mølle, Dybbøl, Dybbøl Mølle, Sundeved, Ragebøl* and 5 other nearby locations.<sup>152</sup> The German Forces, under the leadership of General Halkett, fought against the Danish who had overestimated the German Forces. General Wrangel and the Prussian forces had underestimated the Danish forces, did not see them as an immediate threat and remained just north of Schleswig. The Danes, outnumbering the Germans 2 to 1, pushed them back to the west but the opposition held valiantly until they were flanked by the Danish Schleswig Holstein 'Flankers' led by Colonel Schleppegrell. General Wrangel used a birthday parade for the Hanoverian king as a disguise to pass into the Sundeved and pushed the Danes back. However, he was unable to clear them.<sup>153</sup> The Battle for the Als was the largest fight during the War and is claimed as a Danish victory.

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<sup>149</sup> Nielsen, 21; Svendsen, 68; Halvdan Koht, *Die Stellung Norwegens und Schwedens im Deutsch-Dänischen Konflikt, Zumal Während der Jahre 1863 und 1864...*, (Kristiania & Jacob Dybwad, 1908), 14.

<sup>150</sup> Dennis Showalter, *The Wars of German Unification*, Kindle Edition, (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), 1055.

<sup>151</sup> Nielsen, 20.

<sup>152</sup> Nielsen, 22-26.

<sup>153</sup> Svendsen, 73.

### *First Armistice*

In August 1848, after the Battle for the Als, both sides (Prussia and Denmark) agreed to an armistice period of seven months until April 1849.<sup>154</sup> During this time the Danish naval blockade ended and both sides withdrew their armies from the Schleswig Duchy and the Prisoners of War were returned to their sides.<sup>155</sup> The boundary between the sides was established from Husum in the west and Flensburg in the east.<sup>156</sup> The Schleswig troops were to be separated from the Holstein troops and a government of five peoples were elected to rule the Duchies. Two people were elected by the Danish King, two were elected by the Prussian King and one by both.<sup>157</sup> Both sides also sent a commissioner to insure the convention was followed and Britain was asked to be a guarantor. The armistice, in Article One, clarifies that “The Duchy of Schleswig, as regards its legislative power and internal administration, is to receive a separate constitution without being united with the Duchy of Holstein and without prejudice to the political connection which The Duchy of Schleswig attaches itself to the crown of Denmark: The legislation and administration of the Duchy of Schleswig shall therefore be a separate one (sic), without prejudice, however, to its political connection with Denmark.”<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Svendsen, 78; G. B. Malleson, *The Refounding of The German Empire 1848-1871*, (Lexington, Kentucky: First Rate Publishers, 2016), 14.

<sup>155</sup> “Der Waffenstillstand mit Dänemark,” *Frankfurter Journal*, Vol 2, (No. 242: Dienstag, den 5. September 1848), 1-3; GStA PK, I. HA Rep 75B, Provisorische Zentralgewalt Nr. 36, 96-97, This source provides all the articles for the armistice.

<sup>156</sup> GStA PK. I. HA Rep. 753 Preußischer Bevollmächtigter bei der provisorischen Zentralgewalt Nr. 38, 20.

<sup>157</sup> Svendsen. 78.

<sup>158</sup> von Moltke-Grünholz, 11; GStA PK, III. HA, Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, I. Nr. 4644/1, 117, While this seems like a new set-up for the Duchies, it only reaffirms the political situation in place before the war.

## *Eckernförde*

The convention was not peacefully accepted in the Duchies and the German Confederation was up in arms. The Duchies were such a violent place that the electors from Denmark had to hide in Hamburg to conduct their business.<sup>159</sup> The Frankfurt Parliament protested the convention and amongst multiple cities in the German states rioting was experienced. Despite attempts to end the feud hostilities resumed on March 26, 1849 and Denmark took positions at Sundeved; German forces were stationed in Flensburg and Rendsburg.<sup>160</sup> Surprisingly, it was the Danish navy that took the offensive.<sup>161</sup> The convention allowed for Denmark to amass Baltic naval forces including one ship of the line, four brigs, two smaller sailing vessels, five steamships and 18-gun barges. The ship of the line carried 84 guns while the frigate had 48. The Germans had gathered two batteries for shore defense, 10 guns in total with ovens to heat the balls. Once the Danish ships were spotted the Schleswig Holstein army called up two battalions with guns to position near the original north and south batteries allowing for additional defensive support against the ships. Henceforth, the Eckernförde Affair commenced and by 18:00 hours on the same day and the Schleswig Hosten army had achieved a great victory.<sup>162</sup> Multiple ships were lost including the frigate and the ship of the line was heavily damaged. The battle was an embarrassment to a seafaring country like Denmark, and General Krogh and his Chief of Staff Captain Læssøe lost their command.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Svendsen, 78.

<sup>160</sup> Authentischer Abdruck, *Pro Memoria mit der Königl. Preußischen Regierung über die Dänische Ungelegenheit. Nebst den Betreffenden Aktenstücken*, (Berlin: Verlag von W. Moeser und Kühn, 1849), 22; Schleswig-Holstein Landesarchiv, Abt. 399.8, Nr. 2, 31.

<sup>161</sup> von Moltke-Grünholz, 2; GStA PK, III. HA, Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, I. Nr. 4644/1, 108.

<sup>162</sup> Svendsen, 83-87.

<sup>163</sup> Svendsen, 87.

The defeat at Eckernförde caused the Danish forces to retreat to the Als Islands and Kolding. Taking advantage of the morale boost the Schleswig-Holstein army attacked north taking the town at the Battle of Kolding. Meanwhile, the Prussian forces attempted to draw the Danish forces off the Als island but were unsuccessful. However, the Danish forces continued to split as the Jutland divisions took refuge in the Fredericia fortress. This would set up the Battle of Fredericia which experienced a long-term Schleswig-Holstein siege on the fortress.<sup>164</sup> However, the Danes would use their ships to reinforce their numbers in the fortress and in July they would attack north which pushed the Schleswig-Holstein army back to the Elbodal river.

Parallel to the hostilities peace negotiations were being held in London.<sup>165</sup> Neither side was willing to give and take while British Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, headed the talks. Both sides resisted in giving up rule to the Schleswig Duchy. After crushing a liberal rebellion in November 1848 King Friedrich Wilhelm requested to initiate negotiations in May 1849.<sup>166</sup> Danish negotiator Lord in Waiting Reedtz and Prussian negotiator Freiherr Schleinitz would begin the talks with British ambassador Lord Westmoreland as their mediator.<sup>167</sup> A ceasefire was agreed upon on July 7, 1849 and after a year of negotiations, and Russian pressure, a peace treaty was signed on July 4, 1850.<sup>168</sup> The peace treaty required all Prussian forces be removed from

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<sup>164</sup> Svendsen, 92-95.

<sup>165</sup> *The Express*, Saturday Evening, (London: January 26, 1850; GStA PK, III. HA, Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, I. Nr. 4644/2, 141. The *Express* writes about the callous sentiment against Prussia and the acknowledgement of Russian influence during and after the conflict.

<sup>166</sup> Svendsen, 103.

<sup>167</sup> Svendsen, 104; *The Morning Chronicle*, (Wednesday, January 23, 1850); GStA PK, III. HA, Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, I. Nr. 4644/2, 140. This source also shows the English sentiment towards the Prussians, especially for attempting to promote 'revolutionary' causes and attempting to stop the Danes from controlling the "ancient Danish province."

<sup>168</sup> Svendsen, 105; von Moltke-Grünholz, 14; GStA PK, III. HA, Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, I. Nr. 4644/1, 121, "If Prussia cannot improve the position of the duchies, it must not exacerbate it. For this, but only for it, we believe it is liable with his honor."



Schleswig and Holstein within 22 days while the Danish were allowed to use their army to force the German Schleswigers to accept the treaty.

### *Isted*

Obviously, the Schleswig and Holstein Duchies objected to the treaty and hostilities continued. Eventually the Schleswig Holstein army would lose the support from Prussia and the German Confederation. The Danish forces moved south towards Schleswig after receiving notifications that the Duchies would not agree to the terms. The Schleswig Holstein army would move north to meet the Danes and the two forces collided at Isted which is northwest of the town of Schleswig. The 39,000 Danish troops were led by General Krogh while the 27,000 Schleswig Holstein troops were led by General Willisen.<sup>169</sup> The Battle at Isted was an exhausting victory for the Danish, so much so that the marching infantry were too tired to follow after the retreating Schleswig Holstein army. At the time it was the largest land battle ever fought in the Nordic countries, both sides totaling roughly 70,000 troops.<sup>170</sup> The Schleswig-Holstein army, consisting of Ducal forces, retreated to Schleswig, and reorganized then fell back to Rendsburg.

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<sup>169</sup> Svendsen, 107.

<sup>170</sup> Svendsen, 114.

## The End of The War

The Schleswig Holstein army would continue to fight on for 6 months fighting skirmishes each day throughout the period. All the skirmishes, land battles and navy battles were fought between Rendsburg in the south to Flensburg to the north. Battles included east to west: *Mysunde, Jagel, Friedrichstadt Nordstrand* and *Pelworm*.<sup>171</sup> It was not until October 26, 1850 that a peace treaty was signed. Both the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies and Danish leaders agreed to reduce the size of their armies. Denmark claimed all the army and naval equipment and they would occupy Schleswig down to the Eider River.<sup>172</sup> The rest of the Duchy would remain under martial law and in 1852 the Danes declared that they would not try to incorporate Schleswig or Holstein into the Danish Kingdom.<sup>173</sup>

The issues over dynastic succession was resolved and the Ducal rulers were expelled from the Duchies. The Duke of Augustenburg, Christian August, was expelled from Denmark, his estates were confiscated but he would be compensated 3,650,000 *Rigsdaler* for them.<sup>174</sup> The Prince of Nör was able to keep his estates but was required to live outside of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>175</sup> He would reside in Egypt until his death in 1865. Christian of Glücksburg was elected as successor to Frederik VII and remained loyal to the Danes throughout the war.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Svendsen, 117.

<sup>172</sup> Svendsen, 121.

<sup>173</sup> GStA PK, I. HA Rep 81, Paris II (Nach 1807), Nr. 37 Band 2, 129-132.

<sup>174</sup> Svendsen, 121.

<sup>175</sup> Svendsen, 121.

<sup>176</sup> Svendsen, 122.

## THE DANO-PRUSSIAN WAR

### Precursor to War

The period between 1852, the end of the first Schleswig-Holstein War in 1851, and the start of the Dano-Prussian War in 1864, also known as the Second Schleswig-Holstein War, was filled with controversial legislations.<sup>177</sup> During the time between the conflicts, Prussia rose to power in central Europe and made military adjustments. It also experienced multiple revolutions and the establishment of new alliances while testing the strength of old ones. Most importantly, it saw the spread and reinforcement of nationalism both as a part of and despite liberalism and its revolutionary side-effect. In Schleswig and Holstein, the hatred for the Danes flourished as the Duchies' unfortunate losses during the First Schleswig-Holstein War weighed heavily on them. The weight was felt through Danish occupation of the Duchies, the pressure of political adaptation to the Danish system and the German identity struggle against the Danish cultural incorporation. The memory of the first war remained fresh in the minds of the Schleswig-Holstein population as seen here:

“All along the road, by land and water, we met hundreds of old soldiers, chiefly from Schleswig, who obeyed order lately issued by the Danish Government, calling under arms all the men bound to service up to thirty-five years of age. Most of these men seemed aware that there is a language spoken among the gods and one used among mortals. They conversed in German among themselves and were ready with their Danish whenever there was a chance of being overheard by strangers. Some of them were old sailors, familiar with the Western and Southern Ocean; they spoke English almost as well as their native language; they were an intelligent, well-informed set of men. They told me it was not without repugnance that they undertook this weary journey, that their hearts were with the Germans, and that it was very hard they should have to bear arms against their own friends and countrymen.... That on the first shot being fired they would all pass over *en masse* to the enemy [German side]; that the whole of their Duchy was German to the core, and that even some of those belonging to the Northern Provinces

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<sup>177</sup> Thaler, 37, One of the legislations is the 1852 London Protocol which secured the Danish monarchy line of succession and the German rule over Holstein and Lauenburg.

[Jutland] who actually speak nothing but Danish were still devoted to the German cause.”<sup>178</sup>

The quote speaks volumes in establishing the context of the Duchies and the mindset of the Schleswig-Holstein people during the period. German nationalist sentiment was outspoken throughout the German speaking states as seen in a chant:

“Schleswig-holstein, meerumschlungen,  
Deutscher Sitte hohe Macht,  
Wahre treu, was schwer errungen,  
Bis ein schön'rer Morgen tagt,  
Manke nicht, mein Vaterland!”<sup>179</sup>

“Schleswig-Holstein, sea-entwined,  
Of German custom high power,  
Defend faithfully, the hard ones gain  
Until a better morning meets,  
Do not waver, my country!”<sup>180</sup>

It was a response to the Danish call-to-arms for the eminent hostilities between the Danes and the Germans from the Schleswig-Holstein, Prussia, Austria, and the German Confederation. It was also in response to three major legislative acts: The March Patent, the Federal Execution and the November Constitution which were enacted starting in 1863.<sup>181</sup>

The first was the March Patent announced on March 30, 1863 and took effect January 1, 1864 which established a joint constitution between the Danish government and crown; but set Holstein and Lauenburg on a different legal basis than the rest of the country This defined the

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<sup>178</sup> Michael Embree, *Bismarck's First War: The Campaign of Schleswig and Jutland 1864*, (England: Helion & Company, 2006), 33,34.

<sup>179</sup> August Trinius, *Geschichte des Krieges gegen Dänemark 1864*, (Berlin: Verlag Rockstuhl, 1891), 5. This source provides the entire song within its text; I have examined this small primary source in a manner consistent with Andre Calilhanna's article "How to legally quote song lyrics in your book", (October 30, 2013), <http://blog.bookbaby.com/2013/10/lyrics-in-books/>.

<sup>180</sup> Translation by Christian Ahlers, Master's Student, North Dakota State University, March 28, 2018.

<sup>181</sup> Embree, 23, 24, 25,

Danish intentions to incorporate Schleswig as an inseparable part of the Danish Kingdom.<sup>182</sup> The March Patent caused obvious German outrage, although it was not presented to the German confederation until April 16 and was not forwarded until mid-June and addressed until July 9th.<sup>183</sup> The German Diet did not agree with the March Patent and issued Denmark a six month deadline to withdraw the ordinance or face 'Federal Execution'. Prussia's Prime Minister Otto von Bismarck, while addressing the Prussian Lower House, called for immediate military action against Denmark and further decided that the action would be conducted with or without the approval of the Lower House.<sup>184</sup>

It was not until August 27, 1863 that Denmark denied withdrawing the March Patent. They had received support from Sweden who had been interested in the separation of the Schleswig and Holstein Duchies. England was also perceived as pro-Danish in the situation because of a marriage between the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra, daughter of Prince Christian of Glücksburg, heir to the Danish throne.<sup>185</sup> England's Prime Minister Lord Palmerston, in a speech to the House of Commons stated, 'if anyone threaten to interfere with Denmark's rights and independence, that it would not only be Denmark they would have to deal with.'<sup>186</sup> Austria called a Congress of Princes to discuss reformation to the German Confederation to include Schleswig in the Confederation. On October 1, 1863 the 'Federal Execution' passed the German Diet and requested that Frederick VII, as the Duke of Holstein,

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<sup>182</sup> Embree, 24.

<sup>183</sup> Embree, 25.

<sup>184</sup> von Gründorf, 58.

<sup>185</sup> Embree, 24.

<sup>186</sup> Embree, 26.

abided to the previous resolutions and soldiers from Hanover and Saxony were called upon to occupy Holstein in the event of hostilities and to support the Civil Commissioners.<sup>187</sup>

In Denmark the new constitution was passed through the *Rigstinget* and just required the signature of King Frederick VII. However, even on his deathbed two days later he would refuse to sign the constitution.<sup>188</sup> Prince Christian of Glücksburg, without strong political support, would sign the constitution allowing for the Danish government to disband the *Rigstinget*.<sup>189</sup> The dissolution of the *Rigstinget* caused alarms for both England and Russia while additionally creating political discord for King Christian IX.<sup>190</sup>

Bismarck utilized the issue with the Duchies to seek cooperation with Austria and spark the Dano-Prussian War. The two countries, under the leadership of Bismarck and Count Rechberg, agreed to uphold the Treaty of London in Schleswig while Austria, the sitting ruler in the Confederation, agreed not to push anti-Prussian sentiments.<sup>191</sup> They worked together in pushing the German Diet to pass the execution of the ‘Federal Execution’ as soon as possible. They also attempted to pass a measure to allow the German Confederation to occupy Schleswig but it was denied; using their bilateral power they acted and occupied Schleswig and sent a final ultimatum to Copenhagen. The ultimatum states:

“...They address [Governments of Austria and Prussia], therefore, to the Danish Government once more an express summons to withdraw the Constitution of the 18th November 1863, which rests upon no legal foundation, and thus, at any rate, to restore the preceding *status quo* as the necessary preliminary to any further negotiations.

Should the Danish Government not comply with this summons, the two above named Powers will find themselves compelled to make use of the means at their

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<sup>187</sup> Embree, 26; Malleon, 69.

<sup>188</sup> Embree, 27.

<sup>189</sup> Embree, 27.

<sup>190</sup> von Gründorf, 58.

<sup>191</sup> Embree, 28.

disposal for the restoration of the *status quo*, and the security of the Duchy of Schleswig against the illegal union with the Kingdom of Denmark...”<sup>192</sup>

Diplomacy ended and the context for war was set with this ultimatum. The Danes would deny the request on the 18th of December and miscalculated the situation earlier by voluntarily retreating which allowed the Hanover and Saxon forces to occupy Schleswig and Holstein north to Rendsburg and Kiel which conceded their first line defenses, such as the *Danewerk*, to the Germans.<sup>193</sup>

## Personnel

- Combined Allied Force Command
  - Commander: Field Marshal Baron von Wrangel
  - Chief of Staff: Lieutenant-General Vogel von Falckenstein
  - Senior Quartermaster: Colonel von Podbielski
  - General Staff Officers: Lieutenant-Colonel von Schönfeld
    - Major von Stiehle
    - Captain Count von Hardenberg
    - Premier-Lieutenant von Gottberg
    - Premier-Lieutenant von Roon<sup>194</sup>
- Prussia
  - 9 Guard Infantry Regiments
    - 4 Foot Guards
    - 4 Guard Grenadiers
    - 1 Guard Fusilier

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<sup>192</sup> Embree, 28, 29.

<sup>193</sup> Embree, 28.

<sup>194</sup> Embree, 368.

- 2 Guard Battalions
  - Guard Jäger
  - Guard Schützen
- 72 Line Regiments
  - 12 Grenadier Regiments
  - 52 Line Infantry Regiments
  - 8 Fusilier Regiments
- 8 Line Jäger Battalions
- 8 Guard Cavalry Regiments
  - Garde du Corps
  - Guard Cuirassier
  - 2 Guard Dragoons
  - Guard Hussar
  - 3 Guard Uhlans
- 8 Line Cuirassier Regiments
- 8 Line Dragoon Regiments
- 12 Line Hussar Regiments
- 12 Line Uhlan Regiments
- 1 Guard Artillery Brigade
- 8 Line Artillery Brigades<sup>195</sup>
- Austria
  - 80 Infantry Regiments

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<sup>195</sup> Embree, 36; Ferdinand von Pflug, *Der Deutsch-Dänische Krieg*, (Leipzig: Verlag von J.J. Weber, 1865), 29-31.



- 14 Frontier Infantry Regiments
- 1 Frontier Infantry Battalion (independent)
- 1 Tiroler Jäger Regiment (6 Battalions)
- 32 Feldjäger Battalions
- 12 Cuirassier Regiments
- 2 Dragoon Regiments
- 14 Hussar Regiments
- 13 Uhlan Regiments
- 12 Field Artillery Regiments
- 1 Coast Artillery Regiment
- 4 Fortress Artillery Companies
- 2 Engineer Regiments
- 6 Pioneer Battalions<sup>196</sup>
- Denmark
  - Army Commander: Lieutenant-General Ch. J. de Meza
  - Chief of Staff: Colonel H. A. T. Kauffmann
  - Deputy Chief of Staff: Captain L. C. Rosen
  - Naval Liaison Officer: Captain F. Frøhlich<sup>197</sup>
  - 1 Battalion of Royal Life Guards Infantry
  - 17 Battalions of Line Infantry
  - 5 Battalions of Light Infantry - Jæger Korps
  - 1 Squadron - Life Guard Cavalry

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<sup>196</sup> Embree, 38.

<sup>197</sup> Embree, 356.

- 2 Squadrons - Guard Hussars
- 6 Dragoon Regiments
- 2 Artillery Regiments
- 2 Engineer Companies
- 1 Bridging Train Company
- Quartermaster General's Department<sup>198</sup>

### **Course of War**

The location of the battles and the course of the war significantly mirrors that of the First Schleswig-Holstein War. Many of the battles of the second war were in the same locations as they were in the first war. The biggest reason for this was the natural environment of the peninsula which dictated defensive positioning and the availability of resources. The eastern side of the peninsula hosts most of the larger cities such as Kiel, Schleswig, Rendsburg, and Flensburg. Secondly, ports at Flensburg, Schleswig and Kiel provide ample opportunities to ship in resources. The land on the eastern side is a bit easier to navigate. The western marshes and bogs make troop movement nearly impossible. Centrally, most of the roads and allowed for quick movements. Additionally, most of the population resided in the eastern side as the central and west sides host more farmland and natural resources.

The conflict begins with a show of mutual respect between Field Marshal Wrangel and Lieutenant-General de Meza.<sup>199</sup> While considered an ultimatum, the following shows an emphasis on acknowledging each side and opening a potential for dialogue. Wrangel wrote:

“...the undersigned has been given orders to occupy the Duchy of Schleswig with the allied troops of Prussia and Austria, unified under his command, and also to take over its provisional administration. In notifying you of this, I ask you to

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<sup>198</sup> Embree, 31; GStA PK, I. HA. 90A, Staatsministerium jüngere Registratur Nr. 4589, 67-79A.

<sup>199</sup> von Gründorf, 59,

inform me whether you have orders to leave Schleswig and withdraw the Royal Danish troops outside its borders.  
I herewith take the opportunity to ensure you of my highest regards.”<sup>200</sup>

Lieutenant-General de Meza responded:

“The undersigned does not accept the right of Prussian and Austrian troops to occupy any part of Danish territory and does not accept the accuracy of the document included in Your Excellency’s letter of 30th January. My government has instructed me to oppose your moves and to respond to any acts of violence with armed force.”<sup>201</sup>

The war began on February 1, 1864 as the Allied forces consisting of 50,071 infantries, 6,081 cavalries, 5,474 artillery, engineers and pioneers along with 158 artillery guns crossed into Schleswig.<sup>202</sup> By the end of the first day the allied forces had reached the town of Eckerförde. Minimal skirmishes were experienced by the allies and to insure a warm welcome by the Schleswig population Field Marshal Wrangel issued a proclamation:

“Inhabitants of the Duchy of Schleswig - Commissioned by His Majesty the King of Prussia, my most gracious master, to occupy the Duchy with Prussian troops, in conjunction with the forces which His Majesty the Emperor of Austria has been pleased to place under my command for the same purpose, I call upon you to receive these troops with friendship and hospitality.

We come to protect your rights.

These rights are violated by the common Constitution for Denmark and Schleswig sanctioned by His Majesty the King of Denmark upon the 18th of November last year, by which, in contravention of the agreements entered into in the year 1852, the Duchy has been incorporated into the Kingdom...”<sup>203</sup>

### ***The Danewerk***

The first major action was held at Missunde just southeast of the town of Schleswig. The battle consisted mostly of artillery while the infantry attacked the defenses at Kochendorf which had already been vacated by the Danes. Over 1,200 artillery rounds were shot during the battle

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<sup>200</sup> Embree, 41.

<sup>201</sup> Embree, 41.

<sup>202</sup> Embree, 42; William Carr, *The Origins of The Wars of German Unification*, (England: Longman Group UK, 1991), 84.

<sup>203</sup> Embree, 45.

but only 350 casualties were suffered by both sides.<sup>204</sup> The significance of the battle for the allied forces was to gain a foothold in the region so an attack on the *Danewerk* could commence. The *Danewerk* was a substantial defensive position in the region. Established around the 7th century CE, this Danish ‘wall’ was built to ward off potential threats from the south.<sup>205</sup> The *Danewerk* reaches west to *Friedrichstadt* across the peninsula east to Schleswig and ends at the Schlei River.<sup>206</sup> From 1852 and 1861, the Danish government went to extensive lengths to upgrade and fortify the *Danewerk*.<sup>207</sup> It was the primary and essentially the only intensively fortified Danish defensive position.

The Danes were positioned on the *Danewerk* as follows:

- Left Flank
  - Between Fahrtdorf (on the Schlei) and Haddeby
  - Total = Two Companies and Two Guns
- Central Position
  - Ober Selk, the southern slopes of the heights, on both sides of the Breckendorf Road.
  - Total = Ten Companies and Two Guns
  - In Reserve on and around Königshügel and Schwarze Berg
  - Total = Eight Companies, Two Squadrons and Two Guns
- Right Flank
  - Around the area near Jagel

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<sup>204</sup> Embree, 54, 56.

<sup>205</sup> Embree, 58.

<sup>206</sup> Embree, 58, 59.

<sup>207</sup> Embree, 58.

- Total = Eight Companies and Four Guns<sup>208</sup>

These positions covered the advancing Allied forces to the front of the *Danewerk*. The Austrians attacked the Danish left flank while the Prussian and the rest of the allied forces would attack the Danish central forces and right flanks. After heavy fighting throughout the day each side suffered successes and failures but by the end of the day the allied forces gained successful footholds at *Jagel*, *Ober Selk* and *Königshügel*.<sup>209</sup> The next day experienced light skirmishes but heavy artillery duels. The Danish army, at large, was kept at the ready for the attack on the *Danewerk*. However, it was not planned by the allied forces to attack the *Danewerk*. This plan was not the cause of heavy casualties but did have a profound effect on the Danish troops. The weather conditions were extremely cold and morale was diminishing after the multiple losses of the forward positions. The military tactics for the period consisted of small units which were precisely positioned to forward or flank attack the enemy. The typical unit size was no larger than a company contrasted against an enemy unit that was preferably smaller in numbers. During the Dano-Prussian War, Allied military leaders realized that battle successes required larger units. Larger units led to larger casualty numbers as artillery was utilized in most battles, which was a new development as artillery was developing into more devastating weapons.

General de Meza, concerned for the irreplaceable Danish army, held a meeting amongst the leaders of the army. The meeting was to discuss the risk of keeping verse giving up the *Danewerk*. According to Moltke there are four processes to managing risk. They are the time

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<sup>208</sup> Embree, 64.

<sup>209</sup> Embree, 67, 68, 72.

horizon, scenarios, risk measurements and benchmarks.<sup>210</sup> The army's leaders would discuss such situations, and the roll call is as follows

- Commanding General - Lieutenant-General de Meza
- Army Artillery Commander - Lieutenant-General Lüttichau
- 4th Division Commander - Lieutenant-General Hegermann-Lindencrone
- 2nd Division Commander - Major-General du Plat
- 3rd Division Commander - Major-General Steinmann
- Infantry Reserve Commander - Major-General Caroc
- Chief of Staff to General de Meza - Colonel Kaufmann
- Army Engineers Commander - Lieutenant-Colonel Dreyer
- Chief of Staff to General Lüttichau - Major Wegener
- Chief of Staff to Lieutenant-Colonel Dreyer - Major Schröder
- Deputy Chief of Staff to General de Meza Captain Rosen, took minutes.<sup>211</sup>

It was decided amongst the leaders to voluntarily retreat from the *Danewerk*. The seven primary reasons are:

- The integrity of the Danewerk was in jeopardy because of the ice on the Schlei and Eider River was to be solid within two days, allowing for the allies to flank the position.
- The positions that required to be held only had buildings for 2,000 men and the season prevented further billeting.

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<sup>210</sup> Arden Bucholz, *European History in Perspective: Moltke and The German Wars, 1864-1871*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 55.

<sup>211</sup> Embree, 79.

- The Danewerk was built to house 40-50,000 men, but the Danish army only numbered 35,000, causing excessive spreading of the army.
- The composition of the army did not meet the requirements of a fully trained army.
- The allied forces had over 50,000 men and the forward positions were not capable of being overrun. Additionally, within two days the allied artillery could position and successfully shell the Danish artillery.
- A retreat would be impossible if the position was overrun.
- The War Ministry's instructions to General de Meza were conditional as to only defend the position if the army's survival was not compromised.<sup>212</sup>

On February 5th, the Danish army retreated from the *Danewerk* giving up the most defensible position on the peninsula. They would retreat north to Flensburg. The same day experience allied forces crossing the cold Schlei and the Liechtenstein Hussars were tasked to give pursuit of the Danish forces.<sup>213</sup> The allied forces cleared the town of Schleswig and the Schleswig-Holstein flag was hosted throughout the town and the troops were welcomed in the town. The allies suffered 432 casualties while the Danes suffered 419 losses.

The allies pursued the Danes north and the next battle started near the town of *Oeversee* which was just east of Sankelmark Lake along the stormy road to Flensburg. Weather played a large part in the battle as it had been extremely cold and stormy ever since the Danes retreated from *Danewerk*. Attacks and counter-attacks were experienced on both sides of the skirmish lines. The Austrians were along the west side of the road while the Prussian's other forces were on the east. As the forces on both sides succumbed to fatigue, coldness and darkness, the Danes

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<sup>212</sup> Embree, 80.

<sup>213</sup> Embree, 89.

continued to retreat north as the allied forces camped for the night. The Austrians fought violently against a tough Danish defensive but suffered a heavy 434 casualties while the Danes suffered over 932 casualties.<sup>214</sup> Many of the Danish men were prisoners of war, and fact testifies to the deteriorating cohesion of the Danish army.

### ***Sundeved and The Als***

The next major conflict in the war was the Battle for the Als, which, like in the first war was fought at *Nybøl*, *Nybøl Mill*, *Dybbøl*, *Dybbøl Mill*, *Ragebøl*, and *Bøffelkobbøl*.<sup>215</sup> Forces were spread throughout the *Sundeved* region which hosted these skirmishes. A much-improved Danish artillery system was installed at the Redoubts in the region. After two weeks of extensive reconnaissance both sides took 6 days to regroup and the primary battles at *Dybbøl* and *Ragebøl* commenced. While over 6,000 Prussian infantries and 8,200 Danish troops fought in the battles, the Danes were pushed into defenses from *Vemmingbund* to the Als Sound.<sup>216</sup> The second skirmish for *Dybbøl* commenced however it was mostly the artillery fire that caused the most damage as each side suffered less than 300 casualties. It was clear to the allies that a siege of *Dybbøl* was necessary and after 51 days of battle the siege commenced.<sup>217</sup>

The allied forces dug ditches in parallels setting up artillery lines. Continuous artillery fire fell on the Danish positions and the allied army was placed on rotating duty. During the two-week siege of *Dybbøl* over 7,900 artillery rounds were fired on the Danish lines.<sup>218</sup> The Danish rebouts were in poor shape and it was, at this time, that the Storm of *Dybbøl* commenced. The

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<sup>214</sup> Embree, 106, 108.

<sup>215</sup> Embree, 120, 126, 175.

<sup>216</sup> Embree, 184.

<sup>217</sup> Embree, 201.

<sup>218</sup> Embree, 245; Bucholz, 92.



allied forces set up small units to storm positions along the Danish lines.<sup>219</sup> The allied forces would start the attack on Danish positions with overwhelming support from their artillery. Danish forces, while stubbornly holding their positions, were overwhelmed due in part to their artillery being subpar compared to the allies. The allies suffered 1,200 casualties while the Danes experienced 4,820 casualties.<sup>220</sup>

### ***Jutland and Fredericia***

On March 6 Field Marshal Wrangel received authorization to invade Jutland and it would shortly commence. He ordered the 7th, II and III Corps of the army to attack the fortress at Fredericia.<sup>221</sup> The allied forces would drive the Danes around Fredericia into the fortress while the Austrians would take the town of Vejle after fierce house to house combat. The allies would start a two-day bombardment on Fredericia. Afterwards a surrender proposal put out by the allies was denied and the allied continued to siege Fredericia. It was not until the fall of Dybbøl that Fredericia was abandoned and its troops utilized to defend the islands of Fumen. After Fredericia was manned by the allies General Moltke wrote to Colonel Blumenthal, “Up to now, nobody knows how to solve the riddle of Fredericia...”<sup>222</sup> North of Fredericia a new division called the Münster was tasked to clear North Jutland. By April 29th, after experiencing little to no resistance they had pushed the Danish opposition under Ritmeister Hegermann-Lindenchrone across the Limfjord near the bridgehead at Aarhus.<sup>223</sup> It was at this point that the Danes had effectively been removed from key positions on the peninsula’s mainland south of Vejle and west of the Als.

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<sup>219</sup> Theodor Fontane, *Der Schleswig-Holsteinsche Krieg im Jahre 1864*, (Berlin: Verlag der Königlichen Geheimen Ober = Hoshuchdruckerei, 1866), 160.

<sup>220</sup> Embree, 269, 270.

<sup>221</sup> Embree, 133, 147, 159-160.

<sup>222</sup> Embree, 291; von Gründorf, 58,

<sup>223</sup> Embree, 157.

### *The London Conference*

The London Conference took place on April 25th and representatives were as follows:

- Great Britain        Earl Russell and Lord Clarendon
- Russia                Baron Brunnow
- Austria                Count Apponyi and Privy Councilor Biegeleben
- France                Prince de Latour d' Auvergne
- Prussia                Count Bernstorff and Privy Councilor Balan
- Denmark              Baron de Bille, M. Quaade, Councilor Krieger
- German Confederation    de Beust, Count F.
- Sweden                Count Wachtmeister
- Secretary             The Honorable William Stuart
- Observers             The Schleswig-Holstein Estates and the Duke of Augustenburg<sup>224</sup>

The Conference would not sign an armistice until May 9th and allowed for one month of ceasefire as well as the lifting of the Danish blockade.<sup>225</sup> The following month saw sharp and often harsh discussions. On May 12th the Conference ended with the 1852 Treaty of London and Austro-Prussian proposals suggested either an independent Schleswig-Holstein state under the leadership of either the Prince of Augustenburg or the Russian favorite, the Grand Duke of Oldenburg.<sup>226</sup> After a negative response from Denmark the powers then offered a split Schleswig down the border from Tønder to Flensburg. This was also denied by Denmark who wanted the border to be across from the Schlei at the town of Schleswig. The powers disagreed with this

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<sup>224</sup> Embree, 291.

<sup>225</sup> Embree, 292-293.

<sup>226</sup> Embree, 292.

counter-proposal and concluded that the Danes would accept nothing north of the Schlei. On June 27th, a day after hostilities commenced, Lord Palmerston of Great Britain stated: “Whatever wrongs Denmark has sustained - and they are many - she had, in the beginning, been wrong herself.”<sup>227</sup>

### **The End of The War**

On June 29th the attack on the Als started at 1:45AM. The allies had set up a system to ferry their troops in waves across the sound in cover of darkness. Amphibious landings, such as the Als’s invasion, was a large shock to defending troops. According to Alfred Vagts “...the attacker intends them to be exactly what the defender fears most. The psychological shock of the water landing may be as great as the actual battle casualties caused after the landing.”<sup>228</sup> It was not until the second wave that the Danes caught on and it was not until 4AM that they could respond. By 5:45AM the Danes were retreating and evacuating from the Als. The allied forces suffered 372 casualties while the Danes experienced over 3,092 casualties.<sup>229</sup>

After the taking of the Als the allies focused on North Jutland and the North Frisian Islands the last two remaining strongholds of the Danish. While Prussia wanted to attack the island of Funen the Austrians were against it. Small skirmishes were experienced in North Jutland, and after a Danish company suffered 50% losses just south of Aalborg the Danes chose to evacuate all forces from North Jutland to Frederikshavn and by July 12th the allied forces occupied all North Jutland.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Embree, 293.

<sup>228</sup> Bucholz, 91.

<sup>229</sup> Embree, 322, 323.

<sup>230</sup> Embree, 329, 331; Bucholz, 100, A heartfelt story about a Swedish Guard, Lieutenant Conrad Betzholz, attached with a Danish Jutland unit, gives a strong perspective of a war lost, yet, driven by pride and honour, keeps a man going. A skirmish outside of Lundy contextualizes the scene. He was first shot in the shoulder, then the left arm, shattering it and knocking him to the ground. After pleas and requests from the Prussians, he would continue to lead his troops until he sank

The North Frisian Islands offered more resistance than North Jutland as they were under strong leadership of Lieutenant-Commander Otto Hammer.<sup>231</sup> He used the Danish Fleet to secure the islands. The first attempt to land on the main island of Sylt was a disaster as the Danish ships tore into the allied troop carriers. It was not until August 13th that Prussian gunboats arrived near the islands and under the cover of the *Blitz*, *Basilisk* and *Seehund* was an invasion possible.<sup>232</sup> The island shortly succumbed to the invasion force; Commander Hammer had moved to the island of Rømø and shortly after signed a surrender.

The Danish government, after the loss of the Als, resigned under the request of the Danish King. A new ministry under Council-President Count Bluhme was formed and the following day, July 11th, an armistice was proposed.<sup>233</sup> July 20th it was agreed upon by the allies and the Dano-Prussian War was officially over.

The following Treaty of Vienna, closed on October 30, 1864, clarifies the future status of the Duchies. Specifically, Articles III, IV and V state:

“Article III

His Majesty the King of Denmark renounces all his rights to the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein and Lauenburg in favor of your King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria Majesties by committing yourself to recognize those decrees, and meet with your aforementioned Majesties regarding the duchies.

Article IV

The assignment of the Duchy Schleswig includes all associated islands, as [near] the mainland.

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helpless to the ground. Pleading for a battlefield death, the Prussians took him to an aid station where they tried to save him, but he contracted infections and died. The Prussians held a torchlight procession and over a hundred-people attended the ceremony. Prussian Captain von Schlutterbach would retain his silver dagger, a gift from the King of Sweden, until it was requested back by his family. He was happy to give it back and in return the Officers of the Swedish Guards Regiment ‘Queens’, which was Betzholz’s unit, sent Schlutterbach a beautiful dagger in return.

<sup>231</sup> von Gründorf, 62,

<sup>232</sup> Embree, 336-337.

<sup>233</sup> Embree, 342; von Gründorf, 62.

To facilitate the delineation and to have the inconveniences which arise from the situation of the Frisian enclaves in Schleswig's territory, His Majesty the King of Denmark informs to Their Majesties the King of Prussia and Emperor of Austria the Jutland region south of the southern border of the district of Jutland [with] the islands of Föhr, Sylt and Rømø.

In contrast, Their Majesties the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria [concede] one where an equivalent part of Schleswig which include except the island of Amrum area parts which are intended to establish the relationship of the above mention district of Ribe with the rest of Jutland and [to rectify] Jutland and Schleswig in Kolding, branched off from the Duchy of Schleswig, and the King of Denmark will be incorporated.

#### Article V

The new border between the Kingdom of Denmark and the Duchy of Schleswig will take the center of the mouth of the Haderslev Fjord in the Little Belt to the starting point and after they go through this bay, now the southern border of the parishes... form the new frontier, which will go in the North Sea in the same distance between the islands of Mandø Rømø therethrough.

As a result of this new limit will be from both sides as mixed claims and rights, both secular declared a spiritual nature, which previously existed in the enclaves, the islands and the mixed parishes, as having lapsed. As a result, the new state power is in each of the separated by the new frontier area part in this regard the full extent of their rights.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> GStA PK, III. HA Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten I. Nr. 4644/1, 106-107, This source, in German, provides all the articles of the Treaty.

## ANALYSIS

In 1868 Lord Palmerston said, “If Germany were to awake, let us take care that it does not find so splendid a horse ready to ride as the Holstein grievance [Schleswig-Holstein Conflicts].”<sup>235</sup> Unfortunately for the British Prime Minister, it was the Holstein grievance that awoke the German sleeping giant. The giant had long been nudged but awoke in a momentous series of wars: Dano-Prussian in 1864, Austro-Prussian in 1868, and the Franco-Prussian in 1871. This allowed for Prussia, under the careful leadership of Otto von Bismarck, to utilize the Holstein grievance to bring about German unification. Yet, if one only focuses on the change itself, one misses out not only on why and how the change occurred but the profound effects of the change, the history pattern of ideas and the ability to spot future change. As has been evident throughout this work, establishing and acknowledging the patterns for change were methodically at the forefront and the change itself steps to the side. First, during this analytical chapter a new type of nationalism is established by drawing it out from previously established units and interlacing it with previously established events. Secondly, this thesis returns to the changes and their lasting influences. Third, the events guided by the new nationalism will be contrasted by the change against the established revolutionary dialogue to present evidence on ‘real’ changes that came from the Schleswig-Holstein conflicts instead of the ‘perceived’ changes during the period’s revolutions. Through the three applied lenses this chapter will bring everything together to establish German dynamic nationalism and acknowledge the ‘real’ change brought about with these conflicts.

### **Primordialism? Ethno-symbolism? Constructivism?**

Where does Dynamic Nationalism fit into the already established field of theoretical nationalism? It sets itself at a new level above the essential components and subsets of

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<sup>235</sup> Müller, 707.

nationalism. This is because it contains elements of the previously established components that make up the entire field. Before explaining why Dynamic Nationalism fits on its proposed level, an illustration is necessary to express the different levels of nationalism.

- Macro-Level Nationalism: Dynamic
- Semi-Macro Nationalism Components: Primordialism, Perennialism, Modernism, Postmodernism, Ethno-Symbolism, Constructivism, Instrumentalism
- Semi-Micro Nationalism Elements: Ethnic, Civic, Cultural, Romantic, Religious, Liberal
- Micro-Level Nationalism Aspects: Religion, Politics, Culture, Economics, Ethnicity.

To clearly define each of these aspects, starting from the bottom up will provide a base while outlining the parameters of each aspect. The first to be defined is the Semi-Macro Nationalism Components. Primordialism explains group solidarity through genetic links and culture: such as language, religion, territory, and kinship.<sup>236</sup> Perennialism establishes that nations have existed over long time-spans and have psychological bonds, kinship, and ethnic identities rooted since antiquity.<sup>237</sup> Modernism presents nationalism as a completely modern identity by founding itself after the 18th Century French Revolution and evolving from social-economic or political changes.<sup>238</sup> Postmodernism perceives nationalism as a group of shifting or fragmented

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<sup>236</sup> John Coakley, “‘Primordialism’ in nationalism studies: theory or ideology?”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol 24 Issue 2, (ASEN/John Wiley & Sons Ltd, October 4, 2017), 327-347; Anthony Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, (London: Routledge, 1998), 145-153, 223.

<sup>237</sup> Coakley, 327-247; Smith, 159-169, 223-224.

<sup>238</sup> Coakley, 327-247; Smith, 18-24, 224.

patterns of expression.<sup>239</sup> Ethno-symbolism establishes that identities form as a coping mechanism for modern problems by rediscovery and reinterpretation of ethnic symbols, myths, memories, values and traditions.<sup>240</sup> Constructivism sees nations as a social construct based on newly invented traditions and perceptions of the past.<sup>241</sup> Instrumentalism creates nationalism as an effort for elites to highlight cultural aspects as a means to separate outsiders from the group solely for self-interest and promotion.<sup>242</sup>

It is within these outlines that the definition and explanation of where Dynamic Nationalism exists. Each level of nationalism consists of at least one, if not all, of the nationalism elements and the elements appear to have at least one, if not all, of the nationalism aspects. Therefore, Dynamicism, being first coined here, consists of at least one component, element and aspect. Dynamicism consists of all the aspects and elements along with Primordialism and Perennialism. It establishes that nationalism is founded from ‘primordial’ ties amongst a group of people that have existed over a long time-span and compounded with enduring psychological bonds, kinship and pre-modern ethnic identity. A key component of Dynamicism is the identity of the group does not change; what changes is the outside influences and pressures. The inner aspects of the group’s identity are subject to change such as when the Dithmarschen religion changed from the ‘old religion’ to Christianity or even further to Lutheran. Economics were fluid as was the Hanseatic League. Politics were also fluid as this thesis expressed earlier with the political ties and dynastic succession between the Duchy’s ruling class and the Danish crown. These aspects give Dynamicism the ‘dynamic’ aspect; although the continuous pre-modern identity of the group does not change throughout the historical pattern.

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<sup>239</sup> Coakley, 327-247; Smith, 131-142, 224-225.

<sup>240</sup> Coakley, 327-247; Smith, 170-198, 224.

<sup>241</sup> Coakley, 327-247; Smith, 117-123, 129-131.

<sup>242</sup> Coakley, 327-247; Smith, 153-159.



## Dynamic Nationalism

To understand dynamic nationalism and recognize it in the historical pattern nationalism must be defined. To begin a common basic definition is applied, “self-centered collective resistance to foreign rule to preserve the group and its culture.”<sup>243</sup> A more defined definition of nationalism is as follows:

“The term “nationalism” is generally used to describe two phenomena: (1) the attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their national identity, and (2) the actions that the members of a nation take when seeking to achieve (or sustain) self-determination.”<sup>244</sup>

What is important to draw from both definitions is that nationalism involves the collective understanding and acknowledgement of an identity larger than the individual. This ‘larger identity’, known as the ‘German identity’, is confirmed when Charlemagne established the Saxon count after the religious fights against the Dithmarschen (Background Chapter, page five).<sup>245</sup> The appointment of the Saxon Count fulfills the assumption that a greater political identity, although rudimentary, identified the larger German identity. This identifies civic nationalism in the region. Ethnic nationalism establishes a country’s ‘larger identity’ by forming a collective understanding of hereditary foundations.<sup>246</sup> A basic understanding to this is legitimizing nationalism through birth, i.e. being born to a Dithmarschen family in the case of this author, allows one to have political and cultural legitimacy. Civic nationalism is formed through the collective agreement of a political and/or ruling ‘larger identity’ throughout the

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<sup>243</sup> Anthony Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1971), 164.

<sup>244</sup> Nenad Miscevic, "Nationalism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Winter 2014 Edition, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/nationalism/>.

<sup>245</sup> The idea of a ‘larger identity’ feeds into a plethora of different concepts such as collective memory.

<sup>246</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *On History*, (New York: The New Press, 1997), 5. Hobsbawm makes two profound statements when addressing the past. One: “The past is an essential element, perhaps *the* essential element, in these ideologies [nationalism].” Two: “The past legitimizes.”

populous.<sup>247</sup> This is often found in conjunction with ethnic nationalism as legitimacy is formed through birth. Cultural nationalism is legitimacy through a shared and accepted culture.<sup>248</sup> It often forms an unbreakable relationship between ethnic and civic nationalism. Yet there are instances when they do not, such as when the German Schleswigers were under Danish rule but kept their German culture. A prime example of all three subsets together were the Dithmarschen's actions during the Battle of Børnhoved. Their return to the German side not only showed their ethnic and cultural loyalty to the Germans but also the civic support in their defense of the German nation state. A later example that expresses the attitude of defending the German nation state is found on the Great War memorial at Knivsbjerg. Two inscriptions are written into it one referencing the Three Years War "*Jungs holt fast*" (in Plattdeutsch) - Hold Tight Boys(!) and Bismarck's speech to the German *Reichstag* "*Wir Deutsche fürchten Gott und sonst nichts auf der Welt*" (We Germans fear God but nothing else in the World!)<sup>249</sup>

Coupled with the definition dynamic nationalism can best be understood when united with the historical pattern. This pattern starts with Charlemagne's appointment of the Saxon count which established legitimacy under ethnic nationalism for the German identity. To support the ethnic legitimacy there was the ducal dynastic succession that while testing the connectivity from generation to generation through birth showed the importance of ethnic nationalism. Ethnic nationalism is coupled with civic nationalism through the numerous proclamations. These included the *Constitutio Valdemaria* (June 7, 1326), the Treaty of Ribe (March 2, 1460), *Primogeniture* (February 28, 1608), the peace Treaties of Taastrup and Roskilde (1658), *Lex*

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<sup>247</sup> For a definition of civic nationalism, refer to Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging*, (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1993), 5-9.

<sup>248</sup> Thaler, 7. A good example for the Schleswig-Holstein duchies is the theory of *Kulturnation*, the cultural or ethnic nation which has personal rather than institutional foundations. Another aspect of cultural nationalism is language; it is not necessarily, however, the primary attribute.

<sup>249</sup> Berdichevsky, 55.

*Regia* (1670), the Congress of Vienna (1814), and the Treaty of Vienna (October 30, 1864).<sup>250</sup> These proclamations give political legitimacy to the larger German identity. Civically the desire in Schleswig and Holstein for a provincial government also shows nationalism. Then there is the legitimacy of cultural nationalism. This is evident through the German resilience against the expanding Danish culture. The Germans cultural resilience against the Danish influence can be seen in the Germanized city and town names, regional languages spoken, and cultural traditions and rituals. The counter-influence movement against the Danes helped to spark nationalism and keep the Duchies independent. The primary examples of this are the Battle of Børnhoved (July 22, 1227), the Battle at Hemmingstedt (1473), *Lex Regia* (1670), the Ussing motion, also known as the “Letter Patent” (1848), the Open Letter (1848), The London Protocol (1850), The March Patent (March 30, 1863), and The November Constitution (November 18, 1863).<sup>251</sup> The attempt of the Danes to expand their influence into the region sparked German cultural nationalism leading to the 1848 and 1864 Schleswig-Holstein Conflicts as seen in the previous chapters. By sparking cultural nationalism, the German Duchies established the provisional government in the beginning of the first conflict. The ethnic nationalism followed when the Germans pushed for the ducal crown to go to the Duke of Augustenburg. These aspects form dynamic nationalism which is the idealism that encompasses the different forms of nationalism in the Duchies. Dynamic nationalism stabilizes the changing civic and ethnic aspects within the Duchies that contributed to the start of the Schleswig-Holstein Conflicts.

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<sup>250</sup> The events and treaties stated here are the primary examples of civic and ethnic nationalism as they are the most profound and influencing acts of the ideology.

<sup>251</sup> This list may be a bit confusing to the reader as it lists the primary political acts forwarded by the Danish in addition to the two major German victories. These were brought together to show Danish counter-influence motion and attempts to ‘reclaim’ Schleswig while also showing the German resilience against said movement. Both are crucial in explaining the foundations to German nationalism.

Dynamic nationalism is the fluid idea that connects different aspects of the casualty, nature, and operation of nationalism in a broader perspective. It changes over time but with the same fundamental components of ethnic, cultural, and civic nationalism; it receives and emits stimuli and evolves, especially in form. The institutions include the acknowledgement of the larger German identity (cultural and ethnic) and the legal legitimacy of the German populous (civic). Now, the institution of this idea must be placed into a more profound structure to show how it changed over time but kept the same aspects. Norman Berdichevsky provides a prime example of this structure. He uses a four-stage structure to demonstrate historical stages of the concept of 'nation'.<sup>252</sup> These stages are:

“Stage One: Tribal Assemblies, Earls and elected King 800-1000; kingship based on the concept “First among equals”.

Stage Two: Feudal times and the Middle Ages from ca. 1000-1500; mutual obligations involving land, invested nobles and king at top of hierarchy.

Stage Three: Loyalty to the King 1500- ca. 1830; trend towards “absolute monarchy”.

Stage Four: Modern Era of the Nation-State, 1830 to the present; the state embraces a distinct people defined by ethnicity, language, history and common loyalty.”<sup>253</sup>

In stage one, cultural and ethnic nationalism is confirmed through the need for a bigger identity. Civic nationalism is formed through the establishment of earls and kings. In stage two mutual obligations created civic nationalism while invested nobles and the populous remains culturally nationalistic and the king remained the ethnic aspect. In stage three, loyalty to the king under Absolute Monarchy contains ethnic and civic nationalism while the supporting population kept the cultural portion. In stage four the state maintains civic nationalism while ethnic and cultural aspects are found in the distinct grouping of people by common loyalties, history, ethnicity and language. Through this system the aspects of a 'nation' change over time yet the aspects of

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<sup>252</sup> Berdichevsky, 3.

<sup>253</sup> Berdichevsky, 3.

cultural, ethnic and civic nationalism remained the same. Therefore, dynamic nationalism connects the basics of cultural, ethnic and civic nationalism to the changing idea of 'nation', proving connections between different stages of the 'nation'.<sup>254</sup> Dynamic nationalism is sometimes confusing when referring to the Schleswig-Holstein historical pattern. The dynastic issues involved the loyalty to the king, the democratic idea of the Dithmarschen and the changing of cultural influences back and forth between the Germans and the Danes due to the continual changes of the ruling class complexify the situation; yet, the ethnic and cultural identity of the Germans in Schleswig-Holstein continued to flourish during the Danish occupation.

### **Influence and Unification**

How did the 1848 and 1864 Schleswig-Holstein conflicts influence the German speaking states and trigger the unification of modern day Germany? The first part of the answer is simply: they stirred a sense of cultural, ethnic and civic nationalism that is primarily found in the German Confederation. Throughout the course of these conflicts the German population responded to the different political and military outcomes.<sup>255</sup> German nationalism informed part of Bismarck's plan - to build up Prussian power throughout the German states. The second was pitting Austria against the German states and the third was to turn the foreign nations against Austria.<sup>256</sup>

The first two are intertwined as German nationalism fueled the animosity against Austria. This was difficult for Bismarck to accomplish as German sentiment for nationalism raged against Prussia primarily because of the decision to joint rule the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies instead of

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<sup>254</sup> Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to The Present*, (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), 35. Iggers sheds lights on a similar expectation from Herder: "History, he insists, is constant movement. Nevertheless, within the flux of history, there are certain centers with at least relative stability: the nations. They possess a morphology; they are alive; they grow. They are not rational in character, but dynamic and vital; things in themselves, not means."

<sup>255</sup> Blackbourn, 113. Blackbourn states that popular impatience also contributed to the "nationalist anger over the Schleswig-Holstein crisis."

<sup>256</sup> Binkley, 266-267.

handing rule over to the Duke of Augustenburg, the last remaining legitimate heir to the ducal crown.<sup>257</sup> Another issue for Prussia, and Bismarck, was when he bargained with the Duke of Oldenburg to have the Duchies awarded to him and later had the Duke sell the Duchies to Prussia.<sup>258</sup> The ruling issue of the Duchies ended in the Gastein Agreement (August 14, 1865) but still left sovereignty undetermined.<sup>259</sup> Bismarck continued with his plan by signing treaties with Russia (1863) and Italy (1866).<sup>260</sup> The Constituent Convention was called in by the German Confederation to reorganize Germany for the introduction of universal suffrage; although Bismarck considered it the greatest mistake of his career it did allow him to effectively hold military demonstrations in Holstein.<sup>261</sup> This sparked a withdrawal of Austrian troops from Holstein, dissolved the German *Bund*, started the second war of German unification the Austro-Prussian War.<sup>262</sup>

## **Liberalism**

The Schleswig-Holstein conflicts created a direct cause and effect correlation for change. Wilhelm von Humboldt noted in 1815 that the change in politics, especially liberalism, in the German Confederation. He pointed out the change that the individual was no longer the basic unit in politics but rather the purpose for which the nation existed.<sup>263</sup> He clarified his point in 1817:

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<sup>257</sup> Binkley, 264; *The Morning Chronicle*, (Wednesday, January 23, 1850); GStA PK, III. HA, Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, I. Nr. 4644/2, 32;

<sup>258</sup> Binkley, 265.

<sup>259</sup> Breuilly, 145-146. Breuilly notes the marginalized response to the dualistic rule of the duchies in 1864 “German nationalists were appalled at how Berlin and Vienna disavowed Augustenburg and treated the issue as a matter of treaties rather than national interest.”

<sup>260</sup> Binkley, 266.

<sup>261</sup> Breuilly, 146. He draws upon a key element to the rise of the Austro-Prussian War “War removed treaty obligations.”

<sup>262</sup> Binkley, 269.

<sup>263</sup> Iggers, 55.

“Believe me. There are only two good and benevolent forces (*Potenzen*) in this world, God and the nation (*Volk*). Everything in between is useless and we are of use only to the degree that we are close to the nation (*Volk*).<sup>264</sup>

He also stated that:

“All national energy, life and spontaneity rests in the nation (*Volk*). One can accomplish nothing without the nation and needs it constantly. Man is nothing but by virtue of the power of the whole and only as long as he strives to be in accord with it.”<sup>265</sup>

What is important to note is that the perspective of liberal nationalism had changed prior to the 1848 conflict concluding that the individual was no longer the focus on the nation, rather the opposite. The conflicts would be a trigger for this new theoretical nationalism, although, as previously stated nationalism in the sense of nation over individual was already in existence. The liberalism that founded its beginning during the 1790s French Revolution was contained to revolutions (liberal populous) which continued to exist through the mid to late 19th century.<sup>266</sup> However, their civic contributions to the German Confederation ended with the Prussian dissolution of the German *Bund* in 1866.<sup>267</sup> Outside of universal suffrage, liberalism separated from liberal nationalism and was only evident during the revolutions. The conclusion that French liberalism influenced German nationalism ended in the 1810s and is contrary to many historical hypotheses such as Timothy Baycroft who has stated that until 1870, “European nationalist movements were closely associated with the doctrine of liberalism.”<sup>268</sup> European

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<sup>264</sup> Iggers, 54.

<sup>265</sup> Iggers, 54-55.

<sup>266</sup> Otto Pflanze, *The Unification of Germany, 1848-1871*, (Florida: Krieger Publishing Company, 1979), 86. Pflanze states that “The year 1848 proved in Germany that union could not be achieved through discussion and by agreement; that it could be achieved only by force; that there were not sufficient revolutionary forces in Germany to impose it from below; and that therefore, if it was to be, it had to be imposed by the Prussian army.”

<sup>267</sup> Burt Estes Howard, *The German Empire*, (USA: The Macmillan Company, 1913), 5.

<sup>268</sup> Timothy Baycroft, *Cambridge Perspectives in History: Nationalism in Europe 1789-1945*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 19.

nationalist movements and liberalism were perceived as being closely associated with one another because of the idea of popular sovereignty.

### **Power Politics**

The conflicts contributed to a new system of European and global politics. The French rule and conquest of Napoleon while ushering in a new European mindset was founded on a system of conquest and total war.<sup>269</sup> French politics followed suit during the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon setting him up as the common enemy for the opposing countries. Revolutionary fear followed Napoleon and continued to influence European politics.<sup>270</sup> The conflicts were set in a different context and addressed a new set of political issues. First, the conflicts brought attention to the enduring issue of intermarriages between ruling families. A prime example of this was the Russian influence on the Schleswig-Holstein dynastic lineage issue during the mid-18th century that led to the 1773 Treaty of Tsarskoye Selo.<sup>271</sup> A second dynastic influence was the English pro-Danish sentiment because of Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra, daughter of Prince Christian of Glücksburg, before the Dano-Prussian War.<sup>272</sup> The intermarriage between ruling families would continue until World War One, and the

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<sup>269</sup> David A. Bell, *The First Total War*, (New York: Mariner Books, 2008), 7. Total war is defined as “a war involving the complete mobilization of a society’s resources to achieve the absolute destruction of an enemy, with all distinction erased between combatants and noncombatants.” The push towards a condition of total engagement, established in 1792 France, was multiplied by revolutionary ideology that conflict grew out of incompatible belief systems. Self-consciousness of nations, fueled by nationalism, brought awareness to the potential of a total European war, which set the broad European context which the Conflicts exist. This is important to note because it shows how thin the period’s ice was regarding the potential for a European-wide conflict.

<sup>270</sup> Stan M. Landry, *Ecumenism, Memory, and German Nationalism, 1817-1917*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014), 2.

<sup>271</sup> Bismarck, 30; Joachim, 213-214.

<sup>272</sup> “Alexandra”, Encyclopædia Britannica, (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., January 31, 2018), <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Alexandra-queen-consort-of-Great-Britain>.



conflicts demonstrated the potential ‘domino effect’ that would ultimately be a primary cause for World War One.

Wilhelm Friedrich Ludwig von Hohenzollern, also known as Wilhelm I, was crowned the King of Prussia in 1861 and in 1871 would be crowned Kaiser Wilhelm as the ruler of both Germany and Prussia.<sup>273</sup> He oversaw Bismarck’s power politics when unifying Germany; yet he was apprehensive to some of Bismarck’s moves. He was a stout conservative who was a key figure in ending the Berlin 1848 Revolutions in the German Confederation.<sup>274</sup> He felt antipathy against the French after fighting as a soldier in the Wars of Liberation. After suffering from multiple assassination attempts, he passed the anti-socialist laws which prevented organized mass movements.<sup>275</sup> During the Austro-Prussian War, he pressed to march his troops into Vienna but Bismarck advised against it as Bismarck wanted to ally Prussia with Austria against Russia and later France.

The use of power politics, although not a new concept, would magnify with Bismarck during and after the conflicts. Power politics are tied into dynastic succession and Bismarck utilized the influence of the ruling families to achieve his goals. However, they are not limited to use by one individual, rather a country such as Russia, can utilize power politics to influence the outcome of a conflict or war. An example is the Russian interference during the first Schleswig-Holstein Conflict causing Prussia to stagnate at the Eider River and ultimately ended in Prussia’s withdraw from the Conflict and a German defeat.<sup>276</sup> They do not require a global common

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<sup>273</sup> Dorlis Flower, “Wilhelm I. 1797-1888,” Deutsches Historisches Museum, (Berlin, September 10, 2014), <http://www.dhm.de/lemo/biografie/biografie-wilhelm-i.html>.

<sup>274</sup> Flower.

<sup>275</sup> Flower.

<sup>276</sup> William Carr, *The Origins of The Wars of German Unification*, (England: Longman Group UK, 1992), 80. During the Dano-Prussian War, Russia did not approve of the democratic

enemy. Russia sided with Denmark to prevent the overwhelming Prussian influence in the Baltic region while Italy sided with Prussia to gain control of the Province of Vienna from the Austrian Empire.<sup>277</sup>

### **Military Innovations**

The Napoleonic Wars proved to Prussia and Austria that military changes were necessary. Infrastructure needed to be built but not just roads. Railways were proving to be a more efficient way to transport troops and military equipment.<sup>278</sup> In Austria, the old system of calling up soldiers to respond to threats was no longer an effective means of defense. A standing army was necessary because of an ongoing need for both defensive and offensive situations. The conflicts provided an opportunistic situation to not only test the new military systems but also be a catalyst that was needed for leaders to request additional funding for the new systems.

During the conflicts, Prussia, the German Confederation and Austria acknowledged both strengths and weaknesses to their systems. Prussia learned that, through an effective railway system, troops could be transported from one side of the country to the other.<sup>279</sup> It learned that quicker rates of fire on breech-loading rifles made a substantial difference when storming the ramparts at Dybbøl during the Battle for the Als.<sup>280</sup> It also realized that the rifling of artillery bores allowed them to be more accurate and have a larger range.<sup>281</sup> Troop movement and size also changed. Full frontal attacks were to be avoided and company sized units no longer worked.

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tendencies in Denmark nor the November Constitution; what was important to them was to maintain the Helstat in leu of Russian interests in the Baltic.

<sup>277</sup> Malleon, 110.

<sup>278</sup> Bucholz, 23-24.

<sup>279</sup> Bucholz, 65. Bucholz draws light on Moltke's idea that railroads were highly interactive systems. Scheduling had to be precise and timetables met.

<sup>280</sup> Bucholz, 85-86, 107.

<sup>281</sup> Bucholz, 85-86; Embree, 345.

Units must be battalion and even brigade sized.<sup>282</sup> It learned that a well-built Navy had a large effect on land battles such as the battles for the North Frisian Islands, Eckernförde and Als, when the forces on land had to maneuver under heavy ship fire. It also understood the stifling difficulties a naval blockade could have on a country.<sup>283</sup>

The Austrians, like the Prussians, learned that the loss of men through the continuous rotation of ending contracts was a big loss to the cohesiveness in the units and army. To adjust for the losses, Austria lengthened the contract time of all men serving in the forces from two years to three and provided more time for the experienced men to train new recruits before leaving service.<sup>284</sup> The German Confederation realized that it could not stand on its own without the military and political support from Prussia or Austria.

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<sup>282</sup> Bucholz, 107-108.

<sup>283</sup> Embree, 292.

<sup>284</sup> Bell, 11. Bell notes the changes in the military perspectives in the era. A new 'military' world formed, establishing distinct rules and values, "ran by men whose experiences cut them off from civilian peers, take shape for the first time."; Bucholz, vi. A prime example of this was Helmuth von Moltke, a professional soldier who was known as the "most competent professional war leader of the mid nineteenth century European world."

## CONCLUSION

The 1848 Three Years War and the 1864 Prussian-Danish War were the denouement to a lengthy dispute between Denmark and the German Schleswig-Holstein Duchies. This is established through the complex legality of Danish succession, the establishment of ancient and illegal treaties signed before and throughout the 15th century, and a German ideology of nationalism that sparked the response to the expansionist Danish influence in the Schleswig and Holstein Duchies. To exemplify the dispute's significance, the Three Years War created a volatile environment that led to the start of the Prussian-Danish War which was also the beginning with the 1864-1871 German Wars of Unification. The 1848 conflict set up the use of power politics by Bismarck and pitted Austria against the German Confederation sparking intense nationalism for the following 1864 conflict.

The conflicts were essentially a 'testing ground' for new ideologies, political contexts and military innovations. The foundation of dynamic nationalism is viewed through the conflicts. European politics drastically changed as the self-consciousness of nations grew. Previous dynastic relationships between ruling families took on a new meaning as once long-term allies turned against each other. After the Wars of Liberation against France 'militarism' grew as the threat of total war and revolution spread throughout the continent. New weapons had profound effects during the conflicts and new tactics were being implemented into what were now obsolete systems. The world was changing.

With change comes uncertainty and one aspect of the change was the revolutionary ideology that was spreading throughout Europe. While the revolutions brought awareness to human rights and constitutional rule the revolutions did not have the effect as previous historians have expressed. This is because of the political systems already in place, the self-consciousness of nations, and their ability to identify where the revolutions were taking place. In the German

Confederation their influence was merely ‘perceived’ as all their constitutional gains were removed when the *Bund* was dissolved and the states were absorbed into the North German Confederation. After the Wars of Unification, Germany turned to Prussia for direction. This work explains in detail the ‘actual’ effects of the Schleswig-Holstein Conflicts and resolves the misinterpretation of the historical timeline that goes back into ancient times.

“Wahr di, Bur, de Garde kummt! Wahr di, Garde, de Bur de kummt!”<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> Lübbing, 88. The calling out to the Dithmarschen in the hills and the guard after the leader of the Black Guard had fallen during the Battle of Hemmingstedt.

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