

# **A POPULATION DIVIDED:**

Agrarian and School Reforms and the Emergence of Nationalism in the Kingdom of Denmark

1784-1849

By

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## **ABSTRACT:**

The aim of this thesis is to investigate how the Agrarian Reforms of 1788 and School Reforms of 1814 influenced the emergence of nationalism within the Kingdom of Denmark 1784-1849. The peasants came to enjoy new rights as the feudal structures were abolished, and an inclusion into the society of which they had previously been excluded. Schools were built and a new Pro-Patria curriculum spread the concept of the nation to the peasant class, thus enabling them to become political actors. The first chapter will describe the research methodology to be used, and the rationale behind the use of specific theories, as well as the scope of research. The second chapter will contribute with a literature review of relevant research that is of significance to the thesis. The third chapter will provide an in-depth study of events and reforms taking place in the Kingdom of Denmark in general, but also focusing on the Language Cause in Northern Schleswig – a region caught in between German and Danish interests. The fourth chapter will contribute with an analysis of the development taking place in chapter three by use of theories and concepts from the nationalism studies discipline.

Keywords: Denmark, Schleswig, Holstein, Nationalism, National movement

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## INTRODUCTION:

For those unfamiliar with the Schleswig-Holstein question, a question of belonging and a conflict between two political ideologies, it can seem daunting to investigate a conflict so fundamental in the Danish national narrative. This thesis will look into the changes occurring during the period of enlightened absolutism and how the reforms undertaken came to affect the emergence of nationalism in the Kingdom of Denmark.

First, it will be explained briefly how we came to the situation in which the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and later Lauenburg became part of the Danish Kingdom. As Count Adolph VIII died in 1459, the Danish King Christian I was elected to inherit the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. At the ceremony it was proclaimed that Schleswig and Holstein should be forever together and undivided [*ewich tosamde ungedelt*]<sup>1</sup>. With this proclamation came also a guarantee to the nobility of Schleswig and Holstein that they would have the monopoly on official positions within the Duchies. Low-German was guaranteed as the official language and was later replaced by high-German in the 1600s. Despite all this, the Danish language still survived in agrarian communities in the northern- and central parts of Schleswig<sup>2</sup>.

This thesis is concerned with the time-period in Danish history known as the *enlightened absolutism* beginning in 1784 and lasting until 1849 when the Kingdom of Denmark transformed into a Constitutional Monarchy. The focus will be on the two major reforms issued; the Agrarian Reforms in 1788 and the School Reforms of 1814, and how these increased the economic prosperity and enrolled peasants into schools. Within the schools, a change in

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<sup>1</sup> Hans Valdemar Gregersen, *Slesvig Og Holsten Indtil 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein until 1830)* (Politiken, 1981), 458.

<sup>2</sup> Lars N. Henningsen, *Sydslesvigs Danske Historie (Southern Schleswig's Danish History)* (Studieafdelingen ved Dansk Centralbibliotek for Sydslesvig, 2013), 17.

curriculum was introduced to politically influence the peasants and mobilize them in favor of the absolute monarchy. This emphasis on a patriotic identity was the result of previous rivalries and animosities between Danish and German identifying bourgeoisie during the “German Feud” in 1788; a literal struggle in newspapers and pamphlets posing Danish and German identifying subjects in the kingdom against one and another.

The German Feud came as a consequence of Johannes Friederich Struensee’s ruling in place of the mentally ill King Christian VII, and as he introduced many advisors born outside of the kingdom this was met with resistance from the bourgeoisie born within the kingdom. In order to calm down the conflict the Law of Birthright [*indfødsretten*] was introduced in 1776; ultimately dictating that only subjects born within the kingdom could seek higher office. While it worked to immediately calm the tensions between Danish and German speaking communities in the kingdom, it also provided a platform in which subjects born in the German speaking Duchies Schleswig and Holstein could seek office within the capital something they had previously not been allowed. This introduced a flow of new ideas and skilled bureaucrats to the capital, but challenged the established Danish speaking elites position in society.

The first chapter will describe the research methodology to be used, and the rationale behind the use of specific theories, the scope of research and its limitations. The second chapter will contribute with a literature review of relevant research already conducted, and elaborate on relevant concepts in nationalism used throughout the thesis. The third chapter will provide an in-depth study of events and reforms taking place within the Kingdom of Denmark; in the general aspect and with a focus on the Duchy of Schleswig, as caught in between German and Danish interests. The fourth chapter will contribute with an analysis of the development taking place in chapter three by use of theories and concepts from the nationalism studies discipline.

## CHAPTER 1 (METHODOLOGY):

### 1.1 DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS:

Before presenting the background of the research and other chapters, it will be necessary to explain a few concepts, which are often used without much thought. This is to clarify how concepts such as the nation, government and homeland have changed over time; and how the meaning of the concepts was different from the concept that we are more familiar with today. According to Hobsbawm the concept of the nation [*Natie*] was previously understood as a group of inhabitants in a region, province or kingdom<sup>3</sup>. The vagueness of the concept was perhaps its greatest strength, as it did not categorize or exclude members because the nation was based on territory and not traits. This concept later developed into being seen as a collectivity of common traditions, aspirations and interests<sup>4</sup>.

The change of the nation from being based on territory towards traditions, aspirations and interests were fundamental for the “ethnically” based types of nationalism gaining ground in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. With nations being understood as a group of people sharing interests and traditions, it should be no surprise that the political aspect of these groups was about securing power. This could be either by rebelling against a ruling central power controlled by another nation, or by devout support to an empire or a nation-state built on mythical beliefs. Hobsbawm notes that the government originally was not linked with the nation, as the nation indicated an origin or descent, it was first later that the two became fused<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780 : Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1992 c1990, n.d.), 14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 15–17.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 15.



Those who formed the government or state were unlikely to be of the same “kin”, as the emphasis was on the territory and not the nation; it was a later occurrence that the nation and state became entwined. At last, the homeland [*Patrie*] was at first a universal term defined as the place, whether it was the region, township or land (country) where one was born. According to Hobsbawm, this changes as the “Patrie” became attached to the state, and would further gain an emotional value connected to the homeland<sup>6</sup>. The changes of the definitions that Hobsbawm proposes appears to happen with a bit of hindsight, as in the case of the first Schleswig war, with Europe being influenced by the ideals from the French revolution and the myths of ancient people. It is hard to imagine that prior to the period of national romanticism that people solely viewed their homeland as a place of residence, without being politically or emotionally invested in their *Patrie*. The school reforms of 1814, which is important in this thesis, did however target these feelings and promote or create them. The political consideration behind a Pro-Patria curriculum was that the *Patrie* was reliant on an invented nation or myth behind it in order to awaken an emotional value to its citizens; which could be used in conscription and for the population to claim a stake in the nation.

The concept of the *Volk* [people] will also need to be clarified, as this concept is essential in both the German and Danish nationalism present in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Schleswig war was taking place. According to Hobsbawm the concept of *Volk* appeared as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>7</sup>. The original meaning of *Volk* was very similar to that of the *Natie* [nation], centered around the group of descent, but later the meaning changed into including “self-contained” groups; such as merchants, craftsmen and farmers. These groups tended to enjoy certain rights and privileges and organized themselves in order to protect these.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 15–16.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 16.

Using the definition from the encyclopedist Johann Heinrich Zedler, the author of the “*Grosses Vollständiges Universal-Lexicon*” (1740), the nation and Volk consists of a group of *Burghers*, that is citizens who share customs, traditions and laws<sup>8</sup>. He stresses that the nation and Volk has no territorial meaning, and thus it is likely that there are several nations and Volk within a country<sup>9</sup>. This perception of the Volk is the core essence of the German nationalism; that a Volk is divided by their way of life [*Lebensarten*] but that they all constitute a greater German “nation”.

To understand how the situation developed from the literary nationalism consisting of newspaper articles, poems and pamphlets as under the German Feud, towards a political nationalism where the general population were mobilized, we need to investigate the segment that was being courted by this ideology. Where the German Feud was a “struggle” between intellectuals taking place within newspapers and by use of pamphlets, it was largely confined to that segment of society. It had not yet, or to a small extent, created an awareness among the general population, that is those who did not belong to the upper-class, of national consciousness.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 16–17.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 17–20.

## 1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION:

How did the Agrarian Reforms of 1788 and School Reforms of 1814 affect the emergence of nationalism within the Kingdom of Denmark under the period of enlightened absolutism 1784-1849?

## 1.3 METHODOLOGY AND THE SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH:

This thesis will provide a historical analysis of the emergence of nationalism within agrarian reforms of 1788 and school reforms of 1814, which led to changes within the Kingdom of Denmark. The peasant class was freed from adscription, and it became wealthier, educated and experienced a political inclusion. It is the intent to investigate the impact of the Agrarian Reforms of 1788 and School Reforms of 1814 on the emergence of nationalism, with a special emphasis on the *Language Cause* in the Duchy of Schleswig. Through use of historical sources and theories from the fields of history and nationalism studies, and by collecting data from primary and secondary sources it is the goal to undertake an analysis. The analysis will make use of two theoretical frameworks: Modernization theory and a Marxist Historical analysis.

There are a few points to be confronted before the beginning of the thesis. The research focus in the thesis is on the agrarian and school reforms and their consequences. More importantly, how these reforms came to affect the development of nationalism in the Kingdom of Denmark, and especially in the case of Northern Schleswig where a majority of Danish speakers resided. For those wishing a greater research of the two wars; the First Schleswig War of 1848, the Second Schleswig War of 1864 and the following period, it will not be found in this thesis. The two wars, that ultimately followed the period investigated in the thesis, has been covered thoroughly in both Danish and German literature.

The Schleswig Question; a question about whom the culturally and ethnically diverse region should belong to and the following wars to solve this question, has found a solid audience and achieved a familiarity among scholars. Yet, less research has been done on the events and reforms leading to this turbulent period. One might pose the philosophical statement, that people have been more interested in the “question” itself, rather than the thoughts leading to it.

Those familiar with the Schleswig region will know that there are three prominent groups or nations if we are to follow the viewpoint of equating the nation with language; Danes, Germans and Frisians. The main emphasis in the thesis is on the Danish part, more notably the Danish Kingdom, Northern Schleswig and the national-liberal movement. Not devoting greater emphasis on the German and Frisian parts are largely a choice based on the writer’s capabilities of reading German and Frisian vis-à-vis Danish. Thaler points out that the Frisians in Schleswig had early on integrated into the Schleswig-Holstenian movement, and thus held no aspirations of an independent Frisian nation<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, it is important to stress that place names and of historical people featured in this thesis are written according to their present affiliation. During the Schleswig conflict, national borders were changing and people were caught on either side. Following the Bonn-Copenhagen Treaty of 1955, the borders have been agreed upon, as well as the names to be used (even if these often have a Danish, German and Frisian variant). The choice of sources and literature used, is also without a political intention. The author of the thesis’ native language are first and foremost Danish, thus the access to primary and secondary sources has been important for the research conducted.

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<sup>10</sup> Peter Thaler, *Of Mind and Matter : The Duality of National Identity in the German-Danish Borderlands*, Central European Studies (West Lafayette, Ind. : Purdue University Press, c2009, 2009), 69–72.

Several of the authors included, most notably Lorenz Rerup, have their own background from the region of Schleswig-Holstein or Southern Jutland. Rerup comes from the Danish minority situated in Flensburg, Germany, and managed to produce several works on Danish-German history in his time as a professor of History, and later as General Consul for the Danish minority in Flensburg.

#### 1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The first approach to be used will make use of modernization theory. Ernest Gellner, a former professor at London School of Economics and Central European University, and a central figure behind the Nationalism Studies discipline, originally developed the theory in his attempt to explain the occurrence of modern nationalism. The theory in short stresses that the birth of modern nationalism came with the development of printing press and mass literacy. The agro-literate communities were being transformed, from once being isolated and backwards. The spread of common education and urbanization meant an increase in workforce traveling to the urban centers. This in turn allowed for the spread of ideas to previously isolated regions and pushed the ideas of the intelligentsia within arm's reach of the common people. Much emphasis in this thesis has been dedicated to the agrarian and school reforms issued during the period of enlightened absolutism. Through use of the modernization theory it is the aim to find similarities as well as challenges to the viewpoint presented by Gellner.

The second approach to be used will make use of Eric Hobsbawm's concept of *Power Structures* and Miroslav Hroch's *Phases of Nationalism*. Hroch's ambitious framework make use of various strata and periodization allowing for a categorization by looking at the core elements of a national movement. Hroch proposes five strata that needs to be clarified before an analysis of a national movement and placement within his *Phases of Nationalism* can be undertaken. These five strata are used to look into the social characteristics of those initiating a national movement. The framework uses the approach of a Marxist historical analysis<sup>11</sup>, yet has been included to cover the class foundations behind the studied national movement in Northern Schleswig. The first stratum to consider is the social status, which is the occupation of the

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<sup>11</sup> Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe : A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge [Cambridgeshire] : Cambridge University Press, 1985, n.d.), 17.

members in the movement. The second stratum looks into the social origin of the members within a national movement. The emphasis are on those who belong to a group which hold little or no share in the political or economic power. The third stratum takes into consideration the location and territorial distribution of the members of the national movement. The fourth stratum accounts for the background of the members in the national movement. If they come from an upbringing in the countryside, small town or an urban center. The fifth and last stratum looks into the educational background of the members in the national movement. Once these strata have been investigated, it is the goal to undertake in the attempt to place the research conducted in the thesis within Hroch's Phases of Nationalism.

The Phases of Nationalism covers three phases of development that takes place when a national movement is seeking to transform itself into a nation<sup>12</sup>. The first phase (A) also called *the period of scholarly interest*, marks the beginning of a national movement. In this phase scholars have found an interest in the movement, yet there is a lacking in popular support and a weak structure of the organization overall. The second phase (B), also called *the period of patriotic agitation*, covers the development in which the national movement transforms itself from a scholarly idea into popular idea. During this phase a national program is developed and the movement is romanticized, thus spreading its narrative beyond its previously isolated location. The third and last phase (C) also known as *the rise of a mass national movement*, accounts for the offset when this movement has become successful in mobilizing its members into political action. It is the goal of the research to place the context of early Danish nationalism into these phases in an effort to shed further light on this period in history within the field of nationalism studies.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 20–23.

## CHAPTER 2 (LITERATURE REVIEW):

H. V. Gregersen's book titled *Slesvig Indtil 1830* [Schleswig until 1830] and Lorenz Rerup's book titled *Slesvig Efter 1830* [Schleswig after 1830] are important works to consult when looking into the History of Schleswig. They share many of their observations concerning the shared German-Danish history of Schleswig. One such observation, is the conclusion that Denmark-Norway together with Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg – stretching from Alta in Northern Norway to Altona near Hamburg, despite being in political unity never amounted to an administrative unit<sup>13</sup>. This was evident in the fact that Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg kept German as their administrative language, while Denmark-Norway and its territories had Danish as its administrative language. This eventually came to be a point of conflict – whether Schleswig should become integrated into a Danish nation state, or remain as an autonomous unit.

Another proof of this imbalance, or counterweight, to the Danish influence was the continued practice in Schleswig of requiring two years of studies at the German speaking Kiel University in order to seek employment within bureaucracy or pursuing office. Furthermore, a royal reassurance was given to the aristocracy in Schleswig and Holstein that it would to keep its privileges regardless of reforms and changes in the Danish Kingdom<sup>14</sup>. This tactic of accommodation, which Gregersen describes, secured temporary stability and sidelined differences between Danish and German communities in the Kingdom. As the news of the French Revolution in 1789 reached Schleswig and Holstein there was recordings of a public and aristocratic support of these ideals.

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<sup>13</sup> Gregersen, *Slesvig Og Holsten Indtil 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein until 1830)*, 422–25.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 423.



Gregersen explains how aristocratic women would adore themselves with the tri-colore at festive events, and how dinner receptions would cheer to liberty and the Jacobins<sup>15</sup>. This changed, however, when revolutionaries executed the French King Louis XVI in 1793. The Danish King issued a royal decree in 1795 in order to water down revolutionary sentiments. This served as an official warning against participating in events or contributing to works considered against the interest of the Kingdom; that is revolution. This royal decree led to the encouragement of the aristocracy in Schleswig and Holstein to organize themselves in various societies or guilds; patriotic, royalist or regional. These societies would serve a political purpose, thus he points out that this was the meagre beginning of political organization within Schleswig and Holstein<sup>16</sup>.

Schleswig as a region was the borderland between Danish and German speaking communities; with the northern part being inhabited mainly by Danish speaking communities, the south by German speaking communities, and with the central part as a more undefined mix of both. Jeremy King's book *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans* presents an interesting dilemma that both Schleswigers and Budweisers shared. In both cases there was a tendency leading to the development of a dual, or tertiary identity of belonging – based on citizenship rather than ethnicity. Subjects saw themselves as Schleswigers or Budweisers first and then according their lingual or ethnic community<sup>17</sup>. King's book explains how the Budweisers settling in Prague were able to navigate between *being* German and Czech according to the interests and benefit to their community.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 434.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 435–38.

<sup>17</sup> Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948* (Princeton University Press, 2002), 34–36.

Peter Thaler's book *Of Mind and Matter: the Duality of National Identity in German-Danish Borderlands* analyzes national identity along the German-Danish border and puts special emphasis on the changeable nature of these identities. Thaler aims to look into the motives behind individuals identifying themselves as German or Danish in the wake of events taking place in the region. He quotes Danish South-Schleswiger Martin Klatt for stating that: "*Seldom has so much been written about so few...*"<sup>18</sup> This observation holds merit, at least within Danish and German academia and literature. The author of this thesis would argue that there is a lack of more recent literature. Literature that does not stem from times when there was political intentions behind, and literature looking into not only the two Schleswig wars and the following period under Prussian rule, but rather the period leading to the conflict. Thaler notes that the German interest in the Schleswig-Holstein conflict has waned after the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations in 1955, leaving very little recent contributions overall.

The Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations allowed the political climate to cool down and guaranteed equal rights to the German and Danish minorities situated in the border region after nearly 100 years of conflict and discrimination. This also affected research and literature, which today has largely moved away from the political agenda that previous works had in justifying or glorifying their side in the conflict<sup>19</sup>. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the scholarly focus was on the constitutional aspect of Schleswig; that is, its connection with Holstein vis-à-vis the Kingdom of Denmark. By stressing the shared history since 1459 when the duchies (Schleswig and Holstein) became hereditary to the Danish Royal family, the Danish side would construct their arguments in favor of an absorption of Schleswig into the Kingdom of Denmark. On the other hand, the German side would emphasize the close relationship and unity with Holstein as integral to its citizens,

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<sup>18</sup> Thaler, *Of Mind and Matter*, 3–5.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 3–6.

while depicting the Danish Kingdom as a ‘foreign’ ruler.

Smith claims that it is common for historians to treat nationalism as an ideology of post-medieval Europe. There is a general uncertainty of what could be considered as the beginning of a political nationalism<sup>20</sup>. Common for most cases, however, was that revolution served as an enabler, or melting pot, of various ideas and viewpoints. Nationalism is an ideology, in which its origin and development can be pinpointed. According to Smith this is a task to be undertaken by historians and scholars. It is this goal that will be undertaken in this thesis, in explaining the period leading to the First Schleswig War in 1848 through use of theories from the field of Nationalism Studies. Where other researchers of Danish and German history has focused on the two wars within Schleswig in 1848 and 1864 and the later period under Prussian rule, less attention has been given to the Danish Kingdom and the Duchy of Schleswig following the introduction of the agrarian and school reforms; this is also case within the studies of nationalism.

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<sup>20</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (New York, NY : Holmes & Meier, 1983, n.d.), 27.

## CHAPTER 3 (BACKGROUND):

### 3.1 THE GERMAN FEUD AND THE LAW OF BIRTHRIGHT:

Within the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg, German was the *lingua franca* used when conducting trade, artistry, administration, attending church, and the language of instruction within schools. A majority of Danish speakers inhabited Northern Schleswig, thus it was the only region exempt from having German as the language of education. The language of education in schools was Danish, however, the language used within administration, church, and judicial affairs remained German, even in areas where the language was not widely understood<sup>21</sup>. A special law had existed in the Duchy since 1768, which dictated that in order to pursue employment within administration or as an official in the Duchy it was necessary to have studied at least two years at Kiel University<sup>22</sup>. This policy meant that Danish in most cases were spoken at home or within Danish communities, with German outcompeting Danish in most aspects. This very same period saw another development that would have appeared just as groundbreaking to the contemporary citizens of that time: the Law of Birthright [*Indfødsretten*].

In 1776, the Law of Birthright was issued; which granted subjects born within the kingdom a Danish citizenship and the right to pursue offices and employment within the kingdom, no matter which language they spoke and where in the Kingdom they were born. This law came as a consequence of Johann Friederich Struensee's regency as he de-facto ruled in place of the mentally-ill King Christian VII in the years 1770-1772. Born in Halle, Struensee was seen as a *foreigner*, but he was nonetheless appointed the private doctor of the king in 1768.

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<sup>21</sup> Henningsen, *Sydslesvigs Danske Historie (Southern Schleswig's Danish History)*, 20–26.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

Through clever political manoeuvres, he managed to secure great influence within the council, pushing for reforms and attempting to modernize society by inspiration of the Prussian state. During his short reign, the officials and bureaucrats born within the Kingdom felt alienated, as many German-speaking officials were brought in from abroad. Struensee had developed a romantic relationship with the queen, and when she had become pregnant it was no longer possible to keep it a secret. In 1772 a coup was staged against Struensee, by the king and his council, resulting in Struensee being sentenced to be *drawn and quartered*. The Law of Birthright was issued to prevent the same thing happening again – that perceived outsiders would take control of the kingdom.

At the same period the first nationalistic outbursts between German and Danish speaking intellectuals in the kingdom; those who felt alienated during Struensee's reign, and of the German speaking communities who were increasingly met with hostility. This showdown became known as The German Feud [*Tyskerfejden*] and took place in newspapers and on pamphlets. *Kinderspiele und Gespräche* was an anonymous pamphlet originating from Leipzig in 1776. Though innocent in name, this pamphlet was seen as an attack on the Danish language. In the pamphlet, there was a comparison between the German and French *geist* [spirit] and wine. It states the following: "The German *geist* is like the German wine; modest, fiery, strong and pure. The French *geist* is light and bubbly, but there is one people who has neither *geist* nor wine and that is the Danes"<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Ole Feldbæk, *Dansk Identitetshistorie 2 - Et Yndigt Land 1789-1848*. (*The History of Danish Identity 2 - A Lovely Country 1789-1848*), 1. (C. A. Reitzels Forlag, 1991), 16.

Furthermore, Danish writer Vibeke Winge raises the example of a small pamphlet titled: *“Thoughts on the Old Saying: Is There not a Limit to what the German will do for Money?”* The title of this work promoted an old saying and made it a commonly used anti-German slogan. This was used in similar fashion, as another slogan originating from the Danish poet and writer Johannes Ewald stating: *“All our Misfortune is German”*<sup>24</sup>. At this time the conflict was mainly confined to pamphlets and arguments in newspaper articles.

These outlets worked primarily as political pieces, and thus served the function of promoting differences between the two groups. The German Feud shows that there were already tensions between Danish and German speaking communities. Within the kingdom there was an increasing suspiciousness raised against German speakers and aristocrats who were influenced by German culture and fashion. The conflict was largely confined to the upper-class intellectuals and urban bourgeoisie, as it had not yet mobilized among commoners and peasants. It did however present a threat towards the unity of the kingdom introducing the concept of *them and us*. These early ideas of what would later become national-liberalism had started to take form within the bourgeoisie and aristocracy, and will be examined further later in the chapter.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 120.

### 3.2 ENLIGHTENED ABSOLUTISM:

This part of the chapter will look into the period of “enlightened absolutism” within the Kingdom of Denmark in the years 1784-1849. The enlightened absolutism began in Denmark when prince Frederik VI at the age of fourteen staged a coup against his father king Christian VII, who suffered from mental illness. The king suffered from schizophrenia and was increasingly reliant on the help of various advisors who would rule in his place. Prince Frederik succeeded in the coup d’état and took control of the king’s council, yet he kept his father as the king and instead served as the de-facto ruler of the kingdom. The foreign secretary A. P. Bernstorff and treasurer of the Crown’s finances C.D. Reventlow became the most trusted advisors of the prince, and helped him undertake ambitious reforms inspired by the rationalism that was in fashion among the upper classes of contemporary Europe<sup>25</sup>.

Through use of commissions, they issued the Agrarian Reforms of 1788 and the School Reforms of 1814. Both came to shape and influence the later developments that the small kingdom underwent internally as in the case of the German Duchies – and especially Schleswig which focused upon in this thesis, and externally when neighbouring countries or political opponents would attempt to intervene in this process of transition. The Agrarian Reforms of 1788 and the School Reforms of 1814 sought to change important aspects of agrarian, military and educational institutions within the kingdom<sup>26</sup>.

The Agrarian Commission was created in 1786 with the goal of further reforming agricultural production in the kingdom. The Agrarian Reforms came as a result of the agricultural output

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<sup>25</sup> Christian Larsen, “A Diversity of Schools: The Danish School Acts of 1814 and the Emergence of Mass Schooling in Denmark,” *Nordic Journal of Educational History*, Vol 4, Iss 1, Pp 3-28 (2017), no. 1 (2017): 6–9.

<sup>26</sup> Niels Reeh, *Secularization Revisited-Teaching of Religion and the State of Denmark* (Springer, 2016), 102–5.

and productivity being low. Only 10 per cent of the agricultural output came from estates with the intent on exporting, the remaining 90 per cent came from tenant farmers who lived in small villages or on manor farms<sup>27</sup>. High productivity and export was not the goal for these farmers nor was it an option. They produced mainly for self-consumption and supply in case of food shortages. The use of three-field farming, a system where the farmer would rotate between the crops grown in the soil, proved inefficient and outdated, and left the peasants without the means to invest and increase their production by buying new land and equipment.

The agrarian reforms necessitated a breakaway from this outdated approach, to be achieved by gathering together plots of lands and moving farmers to houses on their plots of land. This was intended to increase the output, but would also result in peasants having to leave their villages thus raising new demands for schools, churches and other fundamental institutions in society. These agrarian reforms were gradual undertakings and began in 1787 when a law was issued aiming at strengthening the rights of the peasant vis-à-vis the estate owner. This law was followed up by the abolishment of adscription [*stavnsbåndet*] on 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1788<sup>28</sup>. Adscription was a decree that dictated male peasants in the age 16-36 years were to remain at the farming estate at which they were born, turning them into the property of the estate owner. Because of the reform, the peasants were now allowed to rent land on other estates and were no longer confined to their birth estate. Furthermore, they could buy plots of land thus enabling them to invest and reap the benefits of their production. Overall, this proved a valuable tool to secure better rights from estate owners and a more fair treatment. Reeh states that following the abolishment of adscription, a development occurred in which 60 per cent of those peasants who

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>28</sup> Lars Hovbakke Sørensen, *En Europæisk Danmarks Historie: Fra Oldtiden til i dag. (A European Danish History: From the Past til Present)*, 1st ed. (Denmark: Gyldendal, 2014), 453–59.



previously had worked as tenant farmers instead became landholders – ultimately changing the power relations between tenants and estate owners<sup>29</sup>.

Another important aspect of this reform was a change in the system of conscription, which had previously been the duty of the estate owner. He could use this to his own influence against the king; by withholding conscripts or use it as a punishment against unruly peasants or those who attempted to leave the estate to which they belonged. It now became the responsibility of the state to conscript peasants, and these were now to be conscripted according to the population of an area and not the productivity of the estate. It provided a valuable tool for the state to do physical checks of the peasants and to register the population for tax and census purposes<sup>30</sup>. More importantly, the new system of conscription created a direct relationship between the peasant and the state - where the estate owner was eliminated as the middleman. As every man in theory could be conscripted, the estate owners increasingly looked towards buying from small landholders; peasants owning their own plots of land, as this proved a more secure way to supply the needed produce<sup>31</sup>.

Following the Agrarian Reforms of 1788 came the School Reforms of 1814. The intention of these reforms were in the words of the Agrarian Commission to “*bring temporal and eternal happiness to the population.*”<sup>32</sup> The school became a platform that provided an opportunity to influence the population: teaching them to love their king, fear God and to become productive members of society<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Reeh, *Secularization Revisited-Teaching of Religion and the State of Denmark*, 102.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>31</sup> Knud JV Jespersen, *A History of Denmark* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 134–35.

<sup>32</sup> Joakim Larsen, *Skolelovene Af 1814 Og Deres Tilblivelse, Aktmæssig Fremstillet (The School Reforms of 1814 and Their Forthcoming)* (JH Schultz, 1914), 7.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 9.

While this narrative might seem philanthropic, the economic aspect held as great influence as the political. The king and his advisors knew that the only way for the absolute monarchy to survive was through linking the interests of the state and its citizens – increased welfare and prosperity. According to Reeh, the now king Frederik VI stated the following as the school reforms of 1814 were issued:

*”...it continually becomes an important object for our national fatherly care that the state’s youth, as they grow up, can learn in timely fashion to know what every person owes to God, to himself, and to others, and how he can correctly use his abilities to become beneficial for the civic society...”*<sup>34</sup>

This underlines the considerations and intentions made behind issuing this reform; to involve, enable and politically influence the new generation in a view favorable to absolutism.

Another important tool introduced with the reforms were the issuing of a *certificate of good conduct* [*skudsmål*]. This certificate was necessary when applying for work<sup>35</sup>. It worked as a notebook, in which the teacher could write remarks about a students conduct, abilities and its character. It proved to be a powerful tool for the teacher, the school committee and the vicar in securing compliance and control of students.

The most important aspect with the reform, relevant for both this thesis and my field in general, was that the reform saw to the introduction of books intended to influence the school children and students; promoting loyalty and approval of the absolute monarch. The lectures and books used in these took a more political direction with the intention of *awakening* a patriotic spirit among students<sup>36</sup>. With the expansion of the amount of schools and this new curriculum, there

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<sup>34</sup> Reeh, *Secularization Revisited-Teaching of Religion and the State of Denmark*, 104.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Tine Damsholt, *Fædrelandskærlighed Og Borgerdyd: Patriotisk Diskurs Og Militære Reformer I Danmark I Sidste Del Af 1700-Tallet (Patriotic Love and Civil Service: Patriotic*

was also a change in the structure of schools. Previously, the schoolmaster would adhere to the parish or clergy, and when this position became vacant, the parish or clergy would nominate a new candidate. With the reforms, the schoolmaster now adhered to the large landholders, estate owners and the king<sup>37</sup>. This proved an opportunity to promote candidate favorable to the monarch and system of rule, and likewise of pushing out dissident schoolmasters who did not agree with the new pro-patria curriculum. With the increase of schools, and appointment of schoolmasters who were sympathetic to the king and establishment, came the spread of union-state patriotism [*helstatspatriotisme*], a political ideology of much importance in this thesis.

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*Discourse and Military Reforms in Denmark in the Latter Part of 18th Century*), vol. 6 (Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000).

<sup>37</sup> Reeh, *Secularization Revisited-Teaching of Religion and the State of Denmark*, 107.

### 3.3 UNION-STATE PATRIOTISM:

One aspect that I find important to cover is the difference in national sentiment between the bourgeoisie when compared to that of the farmer. Starting with the bourgeoisie, that is the upper as well as middleclass living in urban centers, there had already since the 1700's been practiced a form of political patriotism which equated the king with the nation. This type of *landes patriotismus* was also institutionalized under Frederick the Great's Prussia. As an absolute monarch, the king and his council was involved with everything taking place, yet the Danish monarchy had been eager to issue reforms and better living conditions for the common people, viewing the French monarchy as lavish and old-fashioned.

This was to be achieved through a political patriotism; that is the union-state patriotism [*Helstats-patriotisme*]. It was used by the absolute monarch in an attempt to maintain popular support and define the nation not just as Denmark, but rather as a union-state [*Helstat*] consisting of Denmark, Schleswig, Holstein and oversea territories. The union-state in many ways resembled a federation; with the king as the focal point and with a citizenship based identity. This was reinforced with the Law of Birthright, which secured the right to pursue office in the Kingdom by officials and bureaucrats born in the German speaking Duchies. The narrative of the union-state as a national identity, stretching across borders and languages, was promoted in the schools present within German and Danish communities<sup>38</sup>. Within the German and Danish Bourgeois circles we saw an increasing challenge of this viewpoint by national-liberal movements, seeking to define the nation by language rather than just its monarch.

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<sup>38</sup> Feldbæk, *Dansk Identitetshistorie 2 - Et Yndigt Land 1789-1848. (The History of Danish Identity 2 - A Lovely Country 1789-1848)*, 320.

This movement manifested itself within the Duchy of Schleswig as well, with the rise of a Schleswigian movement wanting its own constitution. Yet the influence of the King still remained contested among the segments of the national-liberal movement favoring increased self-governance but not a dissolution of the union-state<sup>39</sup>. It is by the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that we see the beginning politicization of the farming communities within the kingdom. While the thoughts of the French Revolution had spread to the bourgeoisie, these very same ideals had been suppressed and met with resistance after the execution of the French King Louis XVI and aristocrats<sup>40</sup>.

The ideals of *liberté*, *égalité*, and *fraternité*, had not manifested itself among the conservative agricultural communities, but that is not to say that there was not a strong mistrust against the upper class, often of German origin, within the Duchies and Denmark. For the commoners this raised the question of whose reality counts. The one of the community, which promoted the village as a unit vis-à-vis the hostile or untrustworthy outsiders, or the Kings' *union-state patriotism* taught in school that was an attempt to educate the homogenous communities in more cosmopolitan views. The anti-elite sentiment, or mistrust, fitted together with the *union-state patriotism* was successful in portraying the king as a protector of the common people contrary to his French counterparts that had been dethroned earlier through revolution<sup>41</sup>. The absolute king was seen as a beneficent ruler who would secure the welfare of his subjects, leaving the loyal subjects able to voice their concerns through the Estate Assembly.

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<sup>39</sup> Lorenz Rerup, *Slesvig Og Holsten Efter 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein after 1830)*, vol. 5 (Politiken, 1982), 74–76.

<sup>40</sup> Feldbæk, *Dansk Identitetshistorie 2 - Et Yndigt Land 1789-1848. (The History of Danish Identity 2 - A Lovely Country 1789-1848)*, 323–25.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 324.

This image of the King was increasingly being strengthened in the schoolbooks provided for the commoner schools in the 1814 reform. The school reform succeeded in increasing enrollment and providing education for the population. Along with it came also the meeting of two national consciousnesses within the schooling system; the national-liberal idea of the nation state bound by language, and the commoners *union-state* bound by the King. The concept of the *Volk* or *Folk*, that is the German and Danish people, became fundamental in the early attempts of discussing differences or similarities between peoples. It also added an additional dimension into the perception of belonging by promoting thoughts of the *Volksgeist* and *Folke-aand*, a historical and mythical spirit unique to a people or nation. Within German and Danish communities, this contributed to an awareness of difference that could be used in the pursuit of political influence as it was the case in the 1840s leading to the First Schleswig War<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 315–20.

### 3.4 THE NATIONAL-LIBERALS IN SCHLESWIG:

[*“The language of the people is not refined by intellectuals, they do not understand the people clearly, and the people understand them even less...”*]<sup>43</sup>

Flensburger Christian Paulsen became an important figure in the struggle for a national-liberal constitution for the Duchy of Schleswig. He came from a Danish family, but like all other Schleswigers pursuing an education he went to Kiel University and was taught in German. During his studies Paulsen became part of the *Burschenschaft* at Kiel University, a student community influenced by nationalistic and liberal ideas following the French revolutions. Paulsen argued in favor of a constitution for the Duchy of Schleswig; not as a traditional nation-state centered around an influential ethnic group, but rather with the emphasis on citizenship as its foundation<sup>44</sup>.

One important observation that Paulsen makes is that he found it peculiar that more than half of the population in Schleswig Duchy spoke Danish, yet only a third of the population could attend education and church sermons held in the Danish language. Within bureaucracy and judicial matters in courts the lingua franca was German within the entire Duchy, he therefore suggested the introduction of Danish in areas where Danish was the school or church language. His commitment on this issue eventually gained the attention of the Danish king. In 1840 a language decree was issued stressing that Danish should have an equal status to German in areas where the population spoke Danish. Furthermore, Danish was to be recognized in all major cities in the Duchy, except for the city of Tønder (named Tondern in German)<sup>45</sup>. The argument behind the language decree was that it was not practical for the Danish speaking population to have German as the sole judicial and bureaucratic language. Rerup points out that

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 350.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 348.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 348–50.

it was mainly the prospect of education and bureaucracy becoming available for Danish speakers, thus leaving them with an increasing influence on these institutions that was the overall goal.

Christian Flor, a lecturer who taught Danish at Kiel University, was inspired by the ideas proposed by Grundtvig of an awakening of the people; by use of education in history, language and religion, and would travel around Northern Schleswig and advocate these ideas within Danish agricultural communities<sup>46</sup>. Flor was an important figure within the Language Cause and managed to use the frustration felt among farmers, on basis of not understanding German, in order to mobilize them in favour of the Danish Language vis-à-vis German.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 352–53.



### 3.5 THE LANGUAGE CAUSE IN NORTHERN SCHLESWIG:

In 1831 came the introduction of the Estate Assembly (*Stænderforsamling*), a regional political assembly with elected members to advise the king on matters within the realm. These were placed in Roskilde on Zealand, Viborg in Northern Jutland, Schleswig city in Schleswig and Itzehoe in Holstein. Although the amount of people being able to vote for the Estate Assembly in Schleswig was limited to 2-4% of its population, it nevertheless provided a platform for the discussion of politics for common citizens, as long as it abided to the strict censorship rules<sup>47</sup>.

The Language Cause [*Sprogsagen*] began when a farmer from Haderslev (in German Hadersleben) named Nis Lorenzen raised a legal demand in the Estate Assembly of Schleswig [*Slesvigs Stænderforening*]. He demanded that Danish was to be recognized on par with German, and as a judicial language in areas where Danish was already, the language of instruction within schools<sup>48</sup>. This demand was presented in 1836, and helped him gain the support of Christian Flor and Christian Paulsen, two prominent national-liberals arguing in favour of a schleswigian constitution securing greater rights for the Danish communities in the duchy.

Lorenzen achieved the political support needed for further raising the awareness of the Language Cause, and presented a formal application to make Danish language equal to the German language within Schleswig. Andreas Petersen, the representative for the areas north of Christiansfeld, an area situated well into the Danish speaking areas had according to Rerup suggested the introduction of a German language exam and German language classes for

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<sup>47</sup> Rerup, *Slesvig Og Holsten Efter 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein after 1830)*, 5:63–70.

<sup>48</sup> Feldbæk, *Dansk Identitetshistorie 2 - Et Yndigt Land 1789-1848. (The History of Danish Identity 2 - A Lovely Country 1789-1848)*, 356.

teaching staff, in areas where Danish was the language of instruction within the schools<sup>49</sup>. Petersen is quoted on the same page for commenting on the proposal of Lorenzen, who took the opposite stance and demanded Danish to replace German within bureaucracy and judicial affairs. Petersen stated that most inhabitants in the Northern region of Schleswig would not object to this proposal of Lorenzen, as long as they were not forced to participate in Danish language institutions.

The German-born historian Lorenz Rerup argues of a *Schleswigian Stance* on the issue; one that looks more to propose an equilibrium between the two sides, than putting one ahead of the other. I agree with this observation and would argue that this liberal stance predates the national-liberalism, which came forth once the liberal position to this matter were increasingly challenged by other ideologies. Both Petersen and Lorenzen could agree upon the practical aspect of further introducing Danish in areas with Danish speaking communities. As Lorenzen increasingly worked together with Flor and Paulsen his arguments began to change from language being a practical matter, towards a more Herderian perspective where language became the means to an awakening of the people.

This awakening was to be achieved by propagating the thoughts of N. F. S. Grundtvig, a Danish priest and historian much inspired by the thoughts of Herder and Fichte. He invented the concept of the Danish *Folk* and *Folke-aand*, similar to the contemporary idea of a *Volk* and *Volksgeist*, but more religious in its framing and with a political framing in support of the Danish monarch. Being both conservative and religious, and in favour of the monarchy, this concept took a class aspect as an *ideology of the people* – opposing it to the bourgeoisie and its liberal

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<sup>49</sup> Rerup, *Slesvig Og Holsten Efter 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein after 1830)*, 5:64.

tendencies<sup>50</sup>. The stances taken by the two sides symbolizes the rift occurring in Schleswig and the essence of what was later to ignite the civil war of 1848. The approach of Lorenzen relied heavily on Pathos by promoting the language of the people and its' spirit, it was countered by Petersen and his more bureaucratic approach, which would allow change where it was seen as necessary<sup>51</sup>. The state bureaucrats in Schleswig supported the stance of Petersen, in seeking a more practical solution.

Rerup speculates that this was done in an attempt to counter the increasing nationalistic tendencies growing within the isolated farming communities of Northern Schleswig. It was, however, a reluctant decision, as it was seen by the bureaucrats as a high expense to set up new schools and hiring bi-lingual teaching staff that could accommodate both the German and Danish speaking pupils. He points out that despite the good intentions of altering the judicial language, whether in favour of Danish or German, it would be equally foreign to the agrarian population<sup>52</sup>.

Paulsen and Flor, who worked towards spreading a *national awareness* among the farming communities, published an article in the nationalistic periodical the Fatherland [*Fædrelandet*] in order to gain support for their cause. By help of this article they managed to draw attention towards the situation in Northern Schleswig, ultimately raising capital and awareness in Copenhagen, the capital of the Danish Kingdom. The Association for Free Press [*Trykkefrihedsselskabet*] was an organization supported by liberals situated in Copenhagen; who unlike their Schleswigian compatriots had more of a national-liberal viewpoint supporting

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 5:49–54; Lorenz Rerup, “Grundtvigs Indflydelse På Den Tidlige Danske Nationalisme (Grundtvig’s Impact on the Early Danish Nationalism),” *Grundtvig-Studier* 43, no. 1 (1992): 20–32.

<sup>51</sup> Rerup, *Slesvig Og Holsten Efter 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein after 1830)*, 5:65–66.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

the side of Paulsen and Flor. It was decided to extend its resources and influence towards the Danish speaking communities in Northern Schleswig, communities that had previously held little importance to the Kingdom. Orla Lehmann, a prominent figure among the national-liberal movement in Copenhagen, claimed that: “... *it was not just the historical right of the Danish people [to protect the language], but also the wish of half of Schleswig’s population and in accordance with the spirit of the times.*”<sup>53</sup> While this claim was more fiction than fact, it showed the intentions of the Association for Free Press and Lehmann in Northern Schleswig.

From 1839 a number of initiatives were initiated in Northern Schleswig including the introduction of reading societies [*læseklubber*], donations of books, and from 1839 forward the creation of libraries with Danish language literature. The goal was to promote the Danish language and equate it to German, but also to assert influence among the commoners and upper class residing in Northern Schleswig. Rerup states that 36 reading societies were created in the first year of this new cooperation, and over the following four years this doubled to 60-70 reading societies, with over 20.000 Danish language books donated<sup>54</sup>.

The ultimate goal was not just to provide Danish literature to Northern Schleswigers, but using it to spread the language within the Duchy and thus oppose it to German. The donations of books reinforced the position of the Danish language and helped institutionalize it within the agrarian and urban communities of Danish speakers. It proved an efficient tool in gaining political influence and securing the lingual border until the First Schleswig War erupted in 1848.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 5:65.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 5:66.

## CHAPTER 4 (ANALYSIS):

### IDEOLOGY AND NATIONALISM:

The construct of a Danish nationalism was in many ways a reaction to German nationalism. There was a shift from admiration and a sense of fraternity between the two peoples, to a growing suspiciousness and ultimately hostility towards the Germans living within the kingdom. The very same ideology that had linked Germanic peoples across national and cultural borders against the Barbarian, a concept invented by Fichte against the *outsider*<sup>55</sup>, was used in creating differences among Danes and Germans. The Nordic people was *invented* in the Danish narrative, as a contrast to the increasing influence of Napoleon in the Germanic world, stemming from ideas that had migrated across the border<sup>56</sup>.

A change in German nationalism had come with Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* in 1806, and this work came to influence the early nationalism in Denmark immensely. This change came as Fichte made his own interpretation of Herder. Fichte's theory of the state portrayed the state as an organic body organized and exemplified by its citizens; a relationship which maintained and reinforced itself<sup>57</sup>.

Fichte built unto the ideas of Herder in categorizing nations as "natural" or "artificial". This was in Fichte's perspective determined by the purity of the language of the people that constituted a nation. According to Smith, Herder saw cultivation of one's identity as the supreme task of the individual. Fichte built unto this very same idea and equated the identity with the

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<sup>55</sup> Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Gregory Moore, *Addresses to the German Nation*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge, UK ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2008, n.d.), 164–68.

<sup>56</sup> Ole Nyborg, "Grundtvig, Kristendom Og Politik," *Dansk Tidsskrift for Teologi Og Kirke* 2 (2011): 55–66.

<sup>57</sup> Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 32.

language of the individual, claiming that that the identity was pure, if the language had not been influenced by foreign ones<sup>58</sup>. Thus came the inevitable fusion of the nation, state, and language, all of which came to define the ideas behind the early German nationalism.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 33.

## POWER-STRUCTURES:

Hobsbawm proposes two observations related to the development that occurs in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the challenges that the state or ruling classes were facing<sup>59</sup>. First, was the shift of power towards national or urban centers this trend was also witnessed in Denmark. Although about 70-75 per cent of the population still lived in the country side, the demography was changing from the 1840s as Denmark was undergoing urbanization<sup>60</sup>. Second, was the increased involvement of citizens that in turn necessitated loyalty to the state or nation. The creation of a new state system demanded participation from its citizens; whether political, social or economic everyone had to contribute. A national consciousness was necessary in order to draft the lower and middle classes to fight for this system. To ensure identification with the state or nation there was a need for a “common” language, which all layers of society spoke and understood.

Schleswig was, just like Denmark, undergoing big changes in this period of history. It had always been situated in the periphery of both the Danish Kingdom and the German principalities and states, where it had developed into an economic powerhouse. Economic development during this time period was still based on Mercantilist policies, and although “industrialization” would start to spread from the 1850s, most countries at the time were territorial states. Autonomy coupled with being able to dictate your own economic policies were a fundamental part of the Mercantilist policies<sup>61</sup>.

For the Schleswigan elite whom had witnessed the former glory of the Hanseatic League in the

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<sup>59</sup> Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 80–83.

<sup>60</sup> Sørensen, *En Europæisk Danmarks Historie: Fra Oldtiden til i dag. (A European Danish History: From the Past til Present)*, 514–15.

<sup>61</sup> Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 25.

previous centuries, the continuation of these policies were crucial. Records say that the population within the German-speaking Duchies (Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg) in 1848 held about 40 per cent of the population within the Danish Kingdom, yet accounted for 60 per cent of the national economy<sup>62</sup>. With the dissolution of the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway in 1814, an uneven relationship had developed. Copenhagen was no longer the undisputed economic center of the kingdom.

The inclusion of Schleswig into a Danish state was challenging the power and influence of the German merchants and political elites ruling Schleswig. Just as in any other region at the time there was a noticeable income disparity between the farmers and the burghers (bourgeoisie) living in Schleswig. There were certain tendencies in Schleswig, such as the farmers living in the countryside identifying themselves as Danish and those living in the urban centers identifying themselves as Germans. The Burghers, or common citizens, living in Schleswig city was far more difficult to categorize; most had to have knowledge of both Danish and German for daily purposes, thus they could end up defining themselves as either<sup>63</sup>.

Explaining the growing tensions as a result of income disparities and change in power structures as being the culprit behind this development holds merit, yet it is not a sufficient explanation. One argument supporting this could be the fact that different national identities, which were the essence of the conflict, emerged within the same classes and that these theories does not sufficiently account for the role of language.

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<sup>62</sup> Palle Laurings, *Danmarks Historie (The History of Denmark)*, 4th ed., vol. 2002 (Denmark: Sesam, 1998), 233–35.

<sup>63</sup> Sørensen, *En Europæisk Danmarks Historie: Fra Oldtiden til i dag. (A European Danish History: From the Past til Present)*, 515–18.



### MODERNIZATION THEORY:

While the changes within power structures, both political and economic, definitely contributed to the escalation in Schleswig, there is another important factor to look into. That is language and its instrumental role in both the Danish as well as the German nationalism of the time. The words of Herder: “Language is the soul of a Nation” catches the essence of the early ethnic nationalism, which gained ground during this time<sup>64</sup>. The nationalistic movements were incapable of defining what a *Volk* was beyond a shared language, and in the Danish and German case invented an ethnic identity based on supposedly ancient or mythical values. As in the case of Schleswig, the perceived threat towards the German or Danish language, culture and aforementioned factors provided a central emotional component in the already present forms of nationalism<sup>65</sup>.

The Danes and Germans living in Schleswig had intermarried over generations; most spoke both Danish and German, and had lived in relative peace since the integration of Schleswig as an autonomous region into the Danish Kingdom in 1449<sup>66</sup>. The fact that this sudden outburst of hostility had erupted within the Duchy of Schleswig could be seen as the consequence of this type of “linguistic nationalism” which gained foothold amongst both groups. With urbanization unfolding came a mass migration from traditional rural villages towards the literate urban centers. There was a small chance of lingual conflict in the rural villages due to homogeneity but in the cities, the chance of conflict was higher due to the awareness of differences<sup>67</sup>. Language had become a political decision - a social institution, from which some were excluded and others could benefit from the safety that it could provide through a group identity.

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<sup>64</sup> Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 95.

<sup>65</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford : Blackwell, c1983, n.d.), 4–6.

<sup>66</sup> Laurings, *Danmarks Historie (The History of Denmark)*, 2002:101–3.

<sup>67</sup> Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 95.

Society was changing rapidly and the agricultural communities, in which 70-75 per cent of the population resided was being uprooted as the younger generations sought towards urban centers<sup>68</sup>. The agricultural reforms and the economic upturn in the 1830's and 1840's meant that the living conditions for the Danish population in Northern Schleswig improved, leaving them with more economic means and political influence. The change from a survival based agriculture towards a market-oriented production led to a change in the mindset of farmers. This allowed them to turn their attention outwards towards the region and entire kingdom and not just their village<sup>69</sup>. To the farmer or peasant, their world had been the village, and to a smaller extent the city in which produce were sold. It was within this confined area that they would live, work and grow old. With the increased wealth and political involvement this worldview changed towards including the nation.

The ideology of union-state patriotism was increasingly opposed by that of national-liberalism. Feldbæk makes three important observations of how a national sentiment, otherwise largely held within the bourgeoisie, made its way to the common people<sup>70</sup>.

The first observation is the deconstruction of the old estate and manor farming system, and the abolishment of adscription. Life on the estates and manor farms had in a way sheltered, or excluded, peasants from participating and made them subordinate within society. The peasants increasingly began to own their own plots of land, they paid taxes, were conscripted and through use of newspapers they could witness the radical changes taking place in society. The

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<sup>68</sup> Sørensen, *En Europæisk Danmarks Historie: Fra Oldtiden til i dag. (A European Danish History: From the Past til Present)*, 514–19.

<sup>69</sup> Feldbæk, *Dansk Identitetshistorie 2 - Et Yndigt Land 1789-1848. (The History of Danish Identity 2 - A Lovely Country 1789-1848)*, 319.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 274.

Napoleonic wars, and especially the two wars with England in 1801 and 1807 that both resulted in defeat, had led to increased demands on the population by the Danish state; in the form of increased rates of conscription and taxes on the population.

The second observation was that from 1814, the old core of aristocrats and advisors to the king, who had been inspired by German culture and the reforms undertaken by Prussia, had slowly been pushed away from governing positions. Bernstorff and Reventlow, who were responsible for the agrarian and school reforms, were the most significant of these. Instead came an increasing influence of people who had worked their way up from the urban middle class. These people had been influenced by national-liberalism and would gradually gain power within society. This is best exemplified with the introduction of the *estate assembly*.

The final observation that Feldbæk presents is that there was an increased interest from the public when it came to the school and state. The population experienced an increased attachment to these institutions. Following the School Reforms of 1814, the number of schools situated in the countryside had increased to 5000<sup>71</sup>. This meant that the schools became accessible for those living outside of the bigger cities, and in turn this challenged the previous dilemma that schools were only for the wealthy or fortunate. Distance was no longer a discriminating factor and the general population would have a stake in the wellbeing of these institutions as their children started enrolling in schools.

The disruption of traditional communities, following urbanization, played an important role in the formation of the modern state and the creation of nationalism. In the agrarian community, the individual held many responsibilities – this was simply a matter of survival. The

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 275.

communities were hierarchical and isolated, and production was survival based as there was a low level of technology<sup>72</sup>. Gellner notes that with the standardized script and the spreading of this, comes the likeliness of a cultural and cognitive storage and centralization<sup>73</sup>. The once isolated segments living in agrarian societies could now read, write and follow events taking place elsewhere. They were no longer confined to the gossip of the village or words of the clerics. New thoughts and ideas could be introduced from abroad or manifest itself within the communities. With the transition to modern society these things were changed. The change towards an export economy, achieved by better technology and investments, meant that there was an increase in wealth and population growth. The population growth led to younger siblings seeking towards the urban centers in the attempt of gaining specialized knowledge<sup>74</sup>.

An important observation that Gellner makes, is that a small ruling elite holds the power in the agro-literate society. This elite exaggerated its power over the majority, by use of its privileges held in society. There was a great stress on culture as a way of separating themselves from the rabble<sup>75</sup>. He presents this as a defense mechanism that helps the upper class in securing wealth and influence. There are two political units in the agrarian age; local self-governing communities and large empires.

The first is made up of city-states or peasant communities, while the second is made up of semi-autonomous units all controlled by a single authority<sup>76</sup>. What makes the transition from an agro-literate society towards an industrial society relevant in this study is that there is a breakaway from the dependency of a strict hierarchy. This strict and often suppressive hierarchy in the

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<sup>72</sup> Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 42.

<sup>73</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 8.

<sup>74</sup> Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 42–43.

<sup>75</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 10.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

agro-literate communities were necessary for its survival. It needed peasants and servants as much as clerics and scholars. It would collapse if the former group became literate and homogenous<sup>77</sup>.

According to Gellner, this transition towards nationalism was a turbulent period, influenced by conflicts where political and cultural borders were readjusted to fit a nationalist narrative<sup>78</sup>. This was also the case when it came to the role of religion. The relationship between the Reformation and nationalism is not a new discovery. Yet the national framing of the church, with the sermon being held in the language of the people and not the clerics, and the spread of literacy and individualism (the individual and God) are too important not to mention in this thesis. It is necessary to stress, however, that there are no religious differences between Danes and Germans from Northern Germany, as they both belong to the Lutheran church. There was discontent with churches holding sermons in German, even if located in Danish speaking areas, yet this aspect is not the focus of the thesis<sup>79</sup>.

Smith proposes the *theory of imitation*, which shares similarities with Gellner's Modernization Theory. The mechanism of imitation is used to describe the great role that mass-literacy and the printing press played in promoting news of events, proclamations and ideas of the nation to be<sup>80</sup>. With the introduction of the printing press came not just an outlet for new ideas, but also the opportunity for the nationalist ideas to spread rapidly; by use of pamphlets, newspapers and letters. Through a tiny educated elite, ideas originally founded in France and England now spread to the intelligentsia of other nations in the making.

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>79</sup> Henningsen, *Sydslesvigs Danske Historie (Southern Schleswig's Danish History)*, 21–23.

<sup>80</sup> Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 30.

### PHASES OF NATIONALISM:

There can be no modern nation without a national consciousness<sup>81</sup>. This national consciousness is understood as a membership in the “group” that constitutes a nation, and the knowledge that this membership is looking to the best interests of the individual. When looking into this national consciousness, two processes are of interest to the observer. The process in which there is an increase in intensity of the social impact behind nationalism; such as rallying people to a cause. The other process is concerning the nature of material providing this change of intensity<sup>82</sup>. Literature, pamphlets, and songs can all be used to promote intellectual thoughts. These will spread and gain a foothold among the population once they accommodate the economic, social or political needs of the individual.

The first process was witnessed already in an early form during the German Feud. This intensification gained a popular audience, as this very same audience gained the economic and social resources to invest itself into the nation. The rise in economic means came largely as a result of the agrarian reforms mentioned earlier, and the changes these brought along. Peasants had the capability to look to their own interests instead of adhering to that of the estate owner. Furthermore, they gained through the school reforms not only an interest in the outside world, but the skillset necessary to read and study the changes occurring locally and on a European scale.

The second process came due to the very same school reforms. Besides the obvious necessity of learning to read, the schools also proved valuable for spreading political ideology; exemplified by the ideologies of union-state patriotism and national-liberalism mentioned in

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<sup>81</sup> Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, 13.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 13–15.

this thesis. The various associations, *burschenschaft*, reading associations and libraries all played a part in politicizing education and language.

It should be of no surprise that the national history provided in a Pro-Patria curriculum was of political character. It was used to justify borders, legitimizing the system of governance and to “awaken” (or invent) a forgotten past. This aspect of German and Danish nationalism holds many similarities. This stems from German philosophy and language, which held great impact on Danish culture in the nineteenth century<sup>83</sup>. By time, concepts from German philosophy such as *Volk* and *Volksgeist* became absorbed and adapted into the Danish national narrative by N.F.S. Grundtvig and other thinkers of the time.

In the pursuit of analyzing a national movement, Hroch proposes five strata that needs to be clarified before this analysis can be undertaken. These five strata are used to look into the social characteristics of those initiating a national movement. The framework uses the approach of a Marxist historical analysis<sup>84</sup>, and has been included to cover the social characteristics behind the studied national movement in Northern Schleswig.

The first stratum to consider is the social status, which is the occupation of the members in the movement. In this stratum Hroch emphasis that focus should be on the intelligentsia associated with the ruling elite. Within this stratum one should also consider bureaucrats and large landholders. It is important to clarify, that there is not one ruling class, but several – all present within the social structures of society. In the Schleswig case the emphasis are on the peasants living in the agrarian communities. The Language Cause itself was a reaction against those

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<sup>83</sup> Rerup, “Grundtvigs Indflydelse På Den Tidlige Danske Nationalisme (Grundtvig’s Impact on the Early Danish Nationalism).”

<sup>84</sup> Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, 17.

perceived not to be a part of their (the Danish speakers) nation<sup>85</sup>. It is relevant to look into whether there is a class aspect, as well as the framing of the movement. While the social status of Northern Schleswigers as peasants played a role, it is important to notice that this movement still relied on an intelligentsia. This did not at first come from its own region, but rather from Schleswig city and Copenhagen.

The second stratum looks into the social origin of the members within a national movement. The emphasis are on those who belong to a group, which hold little or no share in the political or economic power. The data provided by Hroch shows that members in national movements are from diverse backgrounds<sup>86</sup>. People of different professional backgrounds come together in the pursuit of a nation to call their own. The Schleswig case stands apart from the more general cases when comparing the background of supporters, even if the objectives are shared with other movements found in the Empires of Austria, Prussia and Russia. The main body of the Language Cause, the national movement found in Northern Schleswig, consisted of peasants and country folk.

The exact share of supporters with this social status are difficult to determine. However, data provided by Hroch shows that in The Schleswigan Association [*Den Slesvigske Forening*], the political organization behind the Language Cause, the social status of members categorized as peasants amounted to 62.5 per cent of the total members in the years 1843-1847<sup>87</sup>. That a majority of supporters were peasants is additionally backed up by a language rescript proposed in 1840 that had close to 3000 signatures. Of these 3000 signatures, 9 per cent had a social status as artisans, 2.5 per cent as part of the intelligentsia, the remaining signatures belonged to

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<sup>85</sup> Henningsen, *Sydslesvigs Danske Historie (Southern Schleswig's Danish History)*, 26–28.

<sup>86</sup> Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, 130.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.



people with a social status as peasants and country folk of various types<sup>88</sup>. This is different from other movements, such as the Czech national movement in Bohemia, which relied to a greater extent on social groups such as officials, burghers and clergy<sup>89</sup>.

The third stratum takes into consideration the location and territorial distribution of the members of the national movement. The Northern Schleswigers lived in isolated agrarian communities, in the borderlands of the Danish and German linguistic border. With the emergence of the peasants as an increasingly influential group within the Duchy of Schleswig, came also a mobilization in favor of the preservation and spreading of the Danish language (the Language Cause). The movement did not have an overwhelming amount of supporters if compared to the total population of the Duchy<sup>90</sup>. Its members did however have an advantage when it came to the territorial distribution, as they all lived concentrated in the same part of the region. Northern Schleswig developed into being a political extension of the Danish-minded intelligentsia and state. This proved a valuable tool to influence the otherwise autonomous Duchy of Schleswig and keep German nationalism at bay.

The fourth stratum accounts for the background of the members in the national movement. If they came from an upbringing in the countryside, small town or an urban center. The Kingdom of Denmark was an agrarian society with the majority of its population living in the countryside. The agrarian communities were isolated and self-sustaining. With the agrarian reforms came a change of the power relations between the peasant and landholder. Of importance are the abolishment of adscription, but also the relationship forming between the state and peasant through use of direct conscription.

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 52–53.

<sup>90</sup> Henningsen, *Sydslesvigs Danske Historie (Southern Schleswig's Danish History)*, 27–29.

In this period the cleavages between the traditional groups in society decreased. Both the farmers and urban bourgeoisie were getting wealthier, thus challenging the social hierarchy in society. In the case of Schleswig, the farmers situated in the north gained increased wealth following rising profits from selling produce. Increasing economic, social and political resources meant that the world-view of the peasant would expand. This was mentioned in the observations proposed by Feldbæk. Through education, conscription and increasing political influence, the world of the peasant came to encompass not just the village but also the nation, which it now had a stake in.

The fifth and last stratum looks into the educational background of the members in the national movement. With the school reforms of 1814 came a standardized curriculum, as well as the construction of schools and training of teachers<sup>91</sup>. This all helped modernize the national education by Prussian inspiration, and made the schools a platform for political ideologies<sup>92</sup>. The schools in Northern Schleswig became a facilitator of the nationalism that helped spark the Language Cause. The exempt from using German in the schools situated in Northern Schleswig, meant that the students capability of speaking and understanding German was affected.

This proved a challenge for the stability of the Duchy of Schleswig, considering that this was a time when the language spoken was perceived as the nation that the individual belonged to. The strengthened relationship with intellectuals in Copenhagen, as well as the establishment of libraries and reading societies, led to an influx of books in the Danish language. The provision of these books not only increased the Danish influence held in the region, but also worked

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<sup>91</sup> Christian Larsen, "A Diversity of Schools," 7–11.

<sup>92</sup> Rasmus Glenthøj, *1864 - Sønner Af de Slagne. (1864 - Sons of the Fallen)*, 1. (Gads Forlag, 2014), 76–81.

towards invoking patriotic sentiments towards a Danish nation. The Estate Assembly in Schleswig, and the increased economic means and political organization among Danish speaking farmers, enabled them to challenge the urban bourgeoisie<sup>93</sup>.

Having covered these five strata one can utilize these to further investigate fundamental phases of nationalism. Hroch's three phases (A-B-C) can be used to place a national movement according to a timeline, in which its traits and the stages of developments can be compared to other movements. This periodization has certain criteria that will need to be addressed, if one is to compare two or several types of national movements. It is important to be aware of which stage a national movement is at before undertaking a comparison. Hroch states that there are two stages which the national movement can be placed under<sup>94</sup>. The first stage, which holds the most relevance to this thesis, is the period of struggle against absolutism, bourgeois social revolution and the rise of capitalism. The latter of these stages is of little relevance to this thesis, this is the period of the success of capitalism, under which working class movements started to appear.

The Czech national movement in Bohemia has been added in this part as a comparative element. The intention is not to go in-depth with the several national movements, which has occurred, in Czech history. Certain key elements will be compared between the two movements, with an emphasis on placing the national movement in Northern Schleswig within Hroch's Phases of Nationalism.

The first phase (A) also called *the period of scholarly interest*, marks the beginning of a national

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<sup>93</sup> Reeh, *Secularization Revisited-Teaching of Religion and the State of Denmark*, 103–5.

<sup>94</sup> Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, 23–26.

movement. Hroch states that all national movements are founded due to a genuine concern that the whole movement or parts of it are being discriminated, or even persecuted, on a basis of language, culture or history<sup>95</sup>. In the beginning these movements are isolated, without political influence and with no means of starting a patriotic agitation. The organizational basis of these movements are very weak, and they rely heavily on intellectuals and scholars in organizing and proposing a national program.

These criteria fit well unto the Language Cause in Northern Schleswig. There was a perceived threat towards the Danish language by German culture and influence. At the creation of the Language Cause the amount of Danish speakers in the region were declining, those seeking towards the urban centers had to learn German as it was the *lingua franca*. Whether Danish should be accepted as a judicial and official language in Northern Schleswig was also a contested question. There was a feeling of discrimination, as people with little or no ability to speak German still had to use this<sup>96</sup>. This aspect of practicality remained focal at the start of the movement.

Lorenzen, and the other farmers from the region, who led the Language Cause had little clout on politics, pragmatics and philosophy. It was not until the involvement of Flor and Paulsen that the movement became organized. Flor and Paulsen were inspired by German philosophy, and this came to influence the ideological construct behind the language movement. The movement at this phase lacked the support to evolve further, as the intelligentsia in Copenhagen had not yet become involved.

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>96</sup> Rerup, *Slesvig Og Holsten Efter 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein after 1830)*, 5:63–69.

The national movements in Northern Schleswig and Bohemia shares similarities in several ways. The ideological construct behind the Czech national movement was constructed around language, in similar fashion to other movements inspired by German nationalism. Czech was a regional language spoken among peasants residing in the countryside, in opposition to the prominence of German speakers in the urban areas. In Phase A the Czech national movement in Bohemia relied mainly on peasants. As it developed towards Phase B, it came to include intellectuals and clergy who would construct a national program for the movement<sup>97</sup>.

The second phase (B), also called *the period of patriotic agitation*, covers the development in which the national movement transforms itself from a scholarly idea into popular idea. Once the struggles of this movement reaches a public audience, it gains a patriotic dimension in which it becomes the “moral plight” of any citizen to help. Through the economic, social and political support received by members and outside parties it becomes possible to undertake patriotic agitation. This was done in order to gain influence or to challenge the established norms on language and culture, all done in the pursuit of a nation.

The national movement in Northern Schleswig changed character once it had received support and attention from the public and intellectuals situated within the kingdom. The political backing, but also donations of books and creation of reading societies meant that the Danish language was secured in the region. It became the duty of the citizen to donate books to the Language Cause, as exemplified by the high amount of books sent from Copenhagen. Inspired by the same philosophical ideals, as its German counterparts, the movement fit into the trend of other European cases. Yet, the amount of members in movement with a peasant background sets it apart from others. This meant that there was an economic dimension to the movement.

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<sup>97</sup> Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, 52–55.

With the increase of economic means, came also an increasing demand for inclusion in society. In the Schleswig case, the urban centers were German speaking and showed closer ties to the Duchy of Holstein than to Copenhagen. This clash eventually led the peasants on the pursuit to strengthen the link with Copenhagen, in order to weaken the influence that officials and statesmen in the Estate Assembly in Schleswig held over the region.

In the Bohemian case there was a religious dimension in the struggle between its Protestant members and the Catholic Germans. The clergy made up the largest group at the beginning of Phase B, yet towards the transition to Phase C the group shrank to the size of those members with a background as students or officials<sup>98</sup>. The Czech national movement occurred later than the Language Cause in Schleswig, thus the former was already into the industrial revolution as the movement underwent Phase B<sup>99</sup>. Despite the differences in when they occurred, both national movements centered on the language spoken; its survival, influence and spreading it to other areas.

The third and last phase (C) also known as *the rise of a mass national movement*, is exemplified by a successful patriotic agitation. Hroch states that the majority of national movements reaches this stage during the industrial revolution, following the emergence of capitalism. The national movements are likely to absorb the rhetoric of a class struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie, with drastic changes to society as the end goal<sup>100</sup>. It is in this phase that we see working-class movements being established, which would gain an increased influence vis-à-vis the traditional classes.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 25–27.

This was more the case with the Czech national movement in Bohemia, than the national movement in Northern Schleswig. King points out that the mainstream tendency has been to view the Czech national movement in Bohemia from its national intentions, rather than the class structure behind this<sup>101</sup>. His argument is that while class mattered less in the beginning, as supported by Hroch's findings earlier provided, it was still an important aspect of the movement. With the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy in 1918 came the aspirations for a nation-state. Before this period the resistance was against the restrictive language policies of the Habsburg monarchy, which saw to promote German at the cost of Czech. This discrimination took place within the education system, and official and judicial institutions, just as in the Schleswig case.

There are similarities between the Danish case of Union-state patriotism and the Habsburg monarchy's policies of governing. The Habsburg monarchy ruled its territories in similar fashion, as a type of federation of different units. It extensively promoted German over other languages, yet was tolerant of other languages within its borders.

It is the claim of the author, that the Language Cause in Northern Schleswig only reached an early stage of this phase. A change of the judicial and official language into Danish did occur when the language rescript was amended in 1840<sup>102</sup>. The patriotic agitation in favor of closer ties to Denmark succeeded and increased the Danish influence in the region. The movement seemed to have succeeded until the frustration of the German speaking inhabitants of Schleswig boiled over.

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<sup>101</sup> King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 5–7.

<sup>102</sup> Rerup, *Slesvig Og Holsten Efter 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein after 1830)*, 5:72–74.

In 1848-1850, the First Schleswig War erupted, as well as the transition from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy (the Danish constitution was finalized in 1849). This period has not been included in the main body of the thesis, yet will be mentioned briefly here in order to explain when the national movement in Schleswig reached Phase C. The First Schleswig War was a civil war between two factions; those in favor of a union with Holstein, and those in favor of an inclusion into the Danish state<sup>103</sup>. The armed conflict occurred before the industrial revolution had reached Schleswig, and thus the conflict makes no use of rhetoric otherwise associated with a modern class conscience. As the First Schleswig War ended in 1850, and the Danish side emerged victorious, the Language Cause and movement behind it had served its purpose.

A new language rescript was signed in 1851, which dictated that the Danish language was to be introduced alongside German in churches and schools situated in Central Schleswig. This was an area with a much more mixed population when compared to the Danish majority north, and German majority south in Schleswig<sup>104</sup>. This language rescript would further increase the tensions in the region between German and Danish speakers. It was not until the period following the Second Schleswig War in 1864 that the Danish movement reached Phase C and by use of political parties developed into a modern political movement<sup>105</sup>. One thing that continually sets the national movement in Northern Schleswig apart from other such movements was that the end goal was to become absorbed into an already established nation instead of declaring a new nation state of its own.

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<sup>103</sup> Claus Bjørn, *1848: Borgerkrig og Revolution (1848: Civilwar and Revolution)*, 1st ed., vol. 1998 (Denmark: Nordisk Forlag A/S, 1998), 120–28.

<sup>104</sup> Henningsen, *Sydslesvigs Danske Historie (Southern Schleswig's Danish History)*, 37–39.

<sup>105</sup> Glenthøj, *1864 - Sønnene Af de Slagne. (1864 - Sons of the Fallen)*, 70–76.



## CONCLUSION:

Throughout the thesis, it has been the goal to cover historical events and ideas related to how early nationalism developed in the Danish context. The research question presented was how the agrarian reforms of 1788 and school reforms of 1814 influenced the rise of nationalism in the Kingdom of Denmark. These reforms and the changes brought to the lives of the peasants are focal to this thesis. It is within this group that the aspirations towards greater economic, social and political influence emerged.

The Danish Kingdom slowly turned from having a polycentric view on identity towards an ethnocentric national perception. The German Feud and the Law of Birthright marked the beginning of this tendency. The German Feud was fueled by sentiments of suspicion between Danish and German speakers and revolved around which language was to be used in the public discourse. It was at this point a struggle between intellectuals and had not yet reached the common people. The Law of Birthright secured equal rights to all subjects of the Kingdom. It was also the first step towards asserting political dominance over its internal borders, as a way of protecting itself from outsiders.

During the age of enlightened absolutism, the Danish kingdom developed by inspiration of Frederick the Great's Prussia. By use of agrarian and school reforms came a breakaway from the feudal structure of adscription. The peasant was no longer the subject of the estate owner and was allowed to seek work elsewhere if mistreated or offered better terms. Following the reform, peasants were now allowed to purchase land resulting in a drastic change from tenant farming towards owning small plots of land to use. Schools were being constructed all over the kingdom, and along came also a standardized curriculum intended to awaken feelings towards king and country. During this period the peasants become an integral part of society. With

increased economic, social, and political influence, the previously isolated agrarian communities became linked with the rest of the kingdom.

Union-state patriotism was an important ideology within the Kingdom of Denmark. By use of national romanticism, the king and intellectual elite steered towards a political nationalism aimed at mobilizing the peasant class in favor of the monarchy. As an ideology, it held resemblances to a federalization of different units all held together by the monarch. The intention behind the union-state patriotism was to keep together a kingdom, in which differences among its subjects started to emerge. National-liberalism increasingly challenged this vision and proposed a nation to be built centered on the language spoken. This movement lent much inspiration from flows of German philosophy that equated the language spoken with the nation to which the individual belonged. The politicizing of language meant that schools, churches, and official and judicial institutions all became contested over which language was to be used.

This was the case with the Language Cause in Northern Schleswig. Situated in the borderlands between German and Danish nationalism, this peasant movement organized in favor of introducing Danish as an official and judicial language in the region. To the German speakers, this was seen as a challenge to the social structure and stability within the Duchy.

The theoretical analysis looks into four different aspects of the findings in the thesis. The ideological construct behind the national movement in Northern Schleswig covered in this chapter. The important finding here that sets this movement apart from other national movements, is the lack of a religious dimension as both sides were Protestants.

The dissolution of Denmark-Norway in 1814 led Danish intellectuals such as N.F.S. Grundtvig

to question what it meant to be Danish, and who would fit into this category. They looked to the works of Herder and Fichte for answers and adapted these works to fit the national narrative of the Danish people.

The concept of power-structures can be useful when investigating how the economic and political landscape changed in this period. The increasing economic wealth and political influence of the North Schleswigian farmers led to the pursuit of implementing Danish as an official and judicial language in the region. The struggle in Schleswig had a political dimension to it – not just within the Duchy but the entire Kingdom. Following the dissolution of the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, the position of Copenhagen as the economic and political center of the Kingdom was challenged by the growing wealth and influence of Holstein. Schleswig was situated on the periphery of the Danish and German speaking parts of the Kingdom, and thus it became a battleground for political influence.

Gellner's Modernization Theory accounts for the developments occurring towards the beginning of the industrial era. With the promotion of a standardized script came a likeliness of a cultural and cognitive storage and centralization within the population. The spread of periodicals and new means of communication broke the isolation that these communities had existed under for centuries. The construction of schools in the countryside made education available to the peasants and promoted the ideas of the nation among common people.

The Phases of Nationalism was used to analyze the national movement in Northern Schleswig, to put it into the context of the period, and to compare it to the Czech national movement in Bohemia. The first necessary step was to find five strata to be used when investigating the social characteristics of a national movement.

Once this had been achieved, the same information was put then into his Phases of Nationalism framework. The findings suggest that the national movements in Schleswig and Bohemia hold many similarities in their construction and emergence.

Both movements held all the social characteristics necessary to be classified as a national movement. External events affected the eventual development towards Phase C *the rise of a mass national movement*. In the case of the Czech national movement in Bohemia, the attempt of declaring the Czech nation was fought down. It was first in 1918 after the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, that their aspirations came true. In the case of Northern Schleswig things played out differently. In 1848 the Schleswig-Holsteiners revolted against the attempt to include Schleswig into a Danish nation-state<sup>106</sup>. The Northern Schleswigers fought on the side of the Danish army and gained increased influence until the Prussian invasion in 1864. It was during that time that the movement itself transformed into a modern political organization.

The case of Northern Schleswig was included for several reasons. It holds familiarity to an audience of readers interested in Scandinavian and German history and provides for a study of a national movement occurring before the industrial revolution. Limitations were present in this study as the writer's capabilities of reading German and Frisian literature was limited. It was necessary to rely on English and Danish literature in the research phase, and thus great effort has been put into finding politically neutral source material.

The logic behind the theoretical approaches used in the thesis has been to utilize familiar theories to analyze and place the developments occurring in the Kingdom of Denmark within the context of 19th-century nationalism. There are certain aspects of the Modernization Theory

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<sup>106</sup> Rerup, *Slesvig Og Holsten Efter 1830 (Schleswig and Holstein after 1830)*, 5:169–74.

and Marxist-historical analysis, which have received criticism within the field. Smith argues that all men crave security and desire to belong to a human group of some kind<sup>107</sup>. While this is no sociological paper, the group aspect is something that neither the Modernization theory and to a lesser extent Marxist-historical analysis pays enough attention to. The sense of belonging is an important component of an individual's membership in a nation. It is viewed more as a facilitating factor bringing together its members in the pursuit of forming worker unions and political parties, rather than a constant factor that defines the individual's identity.

The Marxist-historical analysis considers language as a step towards the aspirations of a modern political system. In Hroch's phases of nationalism, this is described under Phase C called the rise of a mass national *movement*. This viewpoint is also replicated in Gellner's Modernization Theory, which stresses the importance of language in relation to the industrial revolution. The means of production were dependent on a common tongue and thus came the standardization of national languages. Both viewpoints promote language only as part of a process, and thus rejects the central role that language held in the foundation of the national movements inspired by German nationalism.

Smith further elaborates that nationalism as an ideology creates new groups, which can substitute for the lost security afforded by the former group. The security aspect of belonging to a nation matters and provides an organization, which can work against discrimination. The success of the movement is determined not only by its capability of creating groups but also by its ability to challenge other groups in society as seen in the Schleswig case.

Despite the limitations of the mentioned theories, it is the perception of the writer that these theories have been successful in explaining aspects of the development of nationalism within

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<sup>107</sup> Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 28.

the Kingdom of Denmark. The Agrarian Reforms of 1788 and School Reforms of 1814 were successful in promoting economic, social and political change within the Kingdom of Denmark. It is the claim of the author that these reforms not only saw to the inclusion of peasants but also by time turned them into political actors. The studies at Central European University has taught the writer not to draw a conclusion based on just a single perspective. The key to gain an increased understanding and to investigate the developments further in later studies is to employ a theoretical approach that accounts for the social dimension of groups, the economic dimension of class, the political dimension of power structures, and finally the importance of language, which has remained a central component of nationalism since its conception.

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