5. Sleswick from 1789 until 1945

By the end of the 18th century the ideas of enlightenment, humanism, liberalism and democracy infiltrated the European continent and became particularly popular among a growing bourgeoisie which demanded to attain influence and power, something which until then was almost entirely reserved for the aristocracy and church. The subsequent French revolution of 1789 left its mark throughout Europe and also affected Denmark and Sleswick-Holsten resulting in demands for more liberty and participation of the general public in the decision making process. This lead eventually to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Denmark in 1849 while Sleswick and Holsten took a different course which resulted in the Prussian annexation of Sleswick-Holsten as a whole in 1864. Although the pre-conditions in both Denmark proper and Sleswick-Holsten were similar as both being ruled by the Danish king as a part of the Danish Commonwealth and customs union, the fact that the population of Holsten and Southern Sleswick did not speak Danish (or Southern Jutish in that context) became a key factor for the different development, in particular when nationalism in its ethnic form took hold.

Political Movements

When the complex linguistic situation between Southern Jutish, Danish, Frisian, Low Saxon and Standard German was beginning to provoke nationalistic disputes it lead to the formation of effectively five movements in Sleswick-Holsten:

1. A Sleswick-Holsten movement aiming at effective independence while remaining a part of the Danish Commonwealth

2. A German nationalistic movement aiming at incorporating Sleswick-Holsten as a whole into a German national state.

3. A Danish nationalistic movement aiming at separating Sleswick and Holsten and incorporating Sleswick entirely into a Danish national state (Eider Danes).


5. Low Saxon / Low German movements
5.1. The Sleswick-Holsten movement and the Danish Movement in Sleswick

„Schwarz-Weiss-Rot sind meine Farben, ich MUSS ein Preusse sein!“ (Black-White-Red are my colours, I am FORCED to be a Prussian!; parody of many Sleswick-Holsteners on a popular Prussian song after the Prussian annexation of the Duchies of Sleswick and Holsten in 1867, the original song line would read “I WANT to be a Prussian)

5.1.1. From 1789 until 1863

Democratic and liberal minded movements first appeared in Sleswick by the end of the 18th century and were initially mainly correlated to Danish liberal movements which itself were related to liberal and revolutionary movements appearing in the wake of the French revolution. But since Sleswick formed a separate entity apart from Denmark proper and connected to the Duchy of Holsten through the contract of Ribe it remained outside the changes which took place in Denmark in the subsequent years.

Ethnically, the majority of the population in Sleswick spoke Southern Jutish and used Danish as official language and also saw themselves as Danes, nevertheless, there were significant parts of the population which did not speak Danish and also would not ethnically consider themselves as Danes, namely the Frisians in the south west and the Low Saxon speakers in the South. Many of the larger towns had also a substantial non-Danish merchantry which used standard German in their daily business and that resulted in a subtle Germanization of city life in the towns of Sleswick. The consequence was that the democratic and liberal movements in Sleswick did not only raise questions concerning the status quo of the absolutist system, they also increasingly raised the question to which nation Sleswick should belong to in future and a growing gap began to appear between those who considered themselves as Danes and those who looked south towards Holsten and a possible future German national state (Lars N. Hennigsen: Under Danmark, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 29). This effectively lead to a split into a Danish-orientated movement and a German-orientated movement although the groupings were initially not always as clear cut as they appeared later since the German-orientated movement also began its life originally as a Sleswick-Holsten autonomy movement.

The Danish movement itself was far from being a unified movement, it included supporters who wanted to maintain the status quo, being loyal subjects to the Danish king and accepting the role
of Sleswick as a different entity, if necessary with Holsten (especially in the city of Flensburg) and the supporters of this movement hoped they would remain connected to the Danish Kingdom. But there were also those who wanted to create a Danish unitary national state which would include Sleswick down to the Eider and effectively transferring Holsten to the arising German national state. The supporters of these ideas were called “Eider Danes”.

The increasing awareness of the creeping Germanization of Sleswick was not the only catalyst for the Danish movement, the turning point came when Uwe Jens Lornsen published his pamphlet “Über das Verfassungswerk in Schleswigholstein” in 1830 which also marks the beginnings of the Sleswick-Holsten autonomy movement which evolved later into a German nationalistic movement.

Inspired by the French revolution and the ideas of liberalism and enlightenment, Lornsen demanded in 1830 a liberal constitution for Sleswick-Holsten in a common Danish State and published his demands in his pamphlet “Über das Verfassungswerk in Schleswigholstein” (Concerning a constitution for Sleswickholstein). Uwe Jens Lornsen was born in Keitum on the island of Sylt in 1793 and was a native (North-) Frisian, his father being a captain. He studied law in Kiel and later worked for the Slewic-Holsten-Lauenburgian administration in Copenhagen before returning to his native Sylt in 1830 to start a position as a governor. On his return from Copenhagen he had his pamphlet “Über das Verfassungswerk in Schleswigholstein” printed and published and distributed in the capitals of Holsten and Sleswick, respectively Kiel and Flensburg. In this pamphlet Lornsen suggests several administrative reforms to make state finances more transparent and an administrative separation of Denmark proper and Sleswick-Holsten as two equal parts united under the Danish crown. He emphasizes “Schleswigholstein” (in exact that spelling) as his fatherland and described himself as a German living under the Danish crown which later attained considerable significance as a statement for the German nationalistic movement. Lornsen supported the liberal movements in Denmark but was aware of the separate status of Sleswick and Holsten, in particular, since the latter was declared a part of the German Federation set up after the Vienna Congress in 1815. In order to promote liberal ideas he referred to both, the Danish liberal movement and the growing German liberal movement. Thus, in “Concerning a constitution for Sleswickholsten “ Lornsen demanded a separate administration for Sleswick-Holsten as a sovereign entity under the Danish Crown but simultaneously referred to the Federal Act (Bundesakte) of the Vienna Congress from 1815 where the rulers of the German states agreed to allow representative constitutions being enacted, the latter being neglected ever since in Holsten.

Despite the fact that he described himself as a “German” he did not demand a complete secession from the Danish crown, to the contrary, he demanded a representative constitution for Sleswick-Holsten as a whole, including a separate administration (de facto home rule), while “the king and the enemies remain common”. This would effectively have created a sovereign Sleswick-Holsten as a constitutional monarchy remaining under the Danish crown where foreign affairs and defence being maintained by the common Danish state. He also suggested that the Danish king should partly reside in Sleswick-Holsten but compared any attempts to merge “the Danes and Germans” living under the Danish crown to “an act like connecting twins forcibly together while everyone knows they will develop best independent from each other”. (Gesellschaft für
Despite some discussions raised as a result of his pamphlet and successful uprisings taking place in other parts of Europe (France and Belgium) in 1830, his demands remained paperwork for another 18 years and the status quo of the Vienna congress remained in place until 1848.

His supporters, many of whom were based in Southern Sleswick, soon had to realize that his suggestions were unrealistic and with growing national awareness saw themselves forced to either declare themselves loyal towards the Danish King or the newly formed German Federation, most eventually supporting the latter. The upcoming German nationalism in the wake of writings by Herder and the nationalistic-romantic demands voiced by Fichte, Jahn and Arndt began to overshadow the initial liberal-non ethnic-nationalistic demands of Lornsen and his movement became a catalyst for German nationalism. Those nationalists did not only demand Holsten becoming a part of a German national state but also called for Sleswick being included as well. Much of the argument for that was due to the fact that parts of Sleswick were (or had recently become) Low Saxon and Frisian speaking and both were regarded as mere “German dialects”. But not all Frisian and Low Saxon speakers chose the German side as a consequence, an example is the Eiderstedt born Frisian activist W.L. Andresen who in “Tachendi jor arbeid” (Eighty years of work) described that his teacher’s exclamations for Sleswick and Holsten being unlawfully occupied by Prussia lead him to hope for a return of Sleswick under Danish rule instead. (W.L. Andresen: Tachendi jor arbeid, Husum, 1985, ISBN3-921416-39-6, page 78).

In contrast to Southern Sleswick and Holsten, Lornsen’s demands were not that well received in many parts of Northern Sleswick since they also would manifest a closer relationship to Holsten than to Denmark proper, thus potentially increase the Germanization. In 1832 the lawyer Christian Paulsen from Flensborg published his pamphlet “Über Volksthümlichkeit und Staatsrecht des Herzogthums Schleswig; nebst Blicken auf den ganzen Dänischen Staat” as a response to Lornsen’s demands where he highlighted that Sleswick is a Danish fief which cannot be united with Holsten. He also suggested that Danish should be introduced as language of administration where the school and church language was Danish (as was the case in rural Northern Sleswick) and Danish lessons where to be introduced beside standard German where the population spoke Southern Jutish (>Danish) but the language of education and church was standard German (which was the case in many parts of Middle-Sleswick). This should gradually also lead to Danish becoming the church language in this area (Lars Hennigsen: Under Danmark, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 27).

Due to growing pressure, the Danish King in his role as Duke of Sleswick agreed to create the State General (already decreed in the Treaty of Ribe from 1460) in 1836 which created a stage for debate about the status and the future of Sleswick. However, he granted only advisory rights to the State General and not all deputies were elected by the people, some of them were directly appointed by the king. The election of the remaining members was not secret, but public, and only those were allowed to vote who possessed property and assets of a certain size. Teachers and journalists, for example, were not eligible to vote, neither were women or Jews (initially). “The people”, that was in the State General’s own mind the ”genteel, educated middle

In the first State General the deputies who supported the Sleswick-Holsten movement in the legacy of Lornsen’s demands formed a majority but also Danish minded representatives were elected from Northern Sleswick.

In 1838, the State General debated a petition by the Northern Sleswick deputy Peter Hjort Lorenzen where he demanded the introduction of Danish as official language where the educational and church language was Danish as well and the petition was finally passed despite the Sleswick-Holsten minded majority. However, no mention was made about Southern Sleswick but it was nevertheless added that the administration should investigate whether Danish should also be introduced as official languages where the educational and church language is standard German but the language of the people is undoubtedly Danish (>Southern Jutish) (Lars N. Hennigsen: Under Danmark, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 30).

This, in turn, created fears among many Sleswick-Holsteners that with the introduction of Danish as official language in middle Sleswick the bonds with Denmark proper will be tightened and, thus, jeopardizing their hopes for a common Sleswick-Holsten state in a common constitution. This lead to a moratorium of those plans and this debate set the tone for things to come.

The subsequent years brought further divisions between the Danish minded and Sleswick-Holsten minded supporters. An increasing number of liberal Sleswick-Holsten minded supporters believed that their case for liberal reforms could best be realized by associating themselves with the liberal movements in the German Federation while Danish minded liberals decided to look for support to the North in the Danish liberal movement once they realized that the Sleswick-Holsten liberals would not support more official rights and presence for the Danish language. Soon those Danish minded liberals found support among the Eider-Danish movement in Denmark which demanded a complete split of Sleswick from Holsten and the incorporation of the whole of Sleswick into the Danish national state. However, there was also support for retaining the status quo, in particular in the city of Flensborg, but their influence dwindled while the split into a Danish-minded North and a Sleswick-Holsten minded south became ever more apparent.

Since it looked likely that the Danish Prince Frederick as apparent successor of King Christian the 8th may remain childless another question around his succession arose once he would inherit his father’s crown. King Christian the 8th declared that succession of the female inheritance was possible for the duchies of Sleswick and Lauenborg but it was not clear whether this would apply to all parts of Holsten. Many in the Sleswick-Holsten movement concluded that a new duke for Holsten had to be selected and they favoured the duke of Augustenborg as successor. During a Song-festival in the city of Sleswick in 1844 the new Sleswick-Holsten anthem written in
standard German “Sleswick-Holsten maritime-surrounded, German manners watchtower” was introduced and a new tricolour in red-white-blue as official flag. Most of the urban population in Southern Sleswick, with the exception of Flensborg, supported this movement while the rural population appeared either indifferent or loyal to the status quo.

In the wake of numerous European revolutions in 1848, constitutional demands were also raised in Denmark and the King eventually agreed to constitutional changes. This also brought an increase of power for the Eiderdanes who received ministerial posts in the subsequent new civic government.

In Sleswick and Holsten, however, the opportunity was used for an uprising and on 18th March 1848 the State General deputies of Sleswick and Holsten held a common meeting in Rendsborg where they decided to send a delegation to the Danish king demanding:

- The creation of a common Sleswick-Holsten State General
- The creation of a common Sleswick-Holsten constitution
- The inclusion of the Duchy of Sleswick into the German Federation.
- The Creation of an independent Sleswick-Holsten army
- In case of a childless King Frederick VII of Denmark death, the title of Duke of Sleswick, Holsten and Lauenburg should be passed to the house of Augustenborg, thus a de-facto separation from Denmark proper.

These demands were rejected by the new Danish liberal government in Copenhagen, instead they offered a liberal constitution for Sleswick together with Denmark while Holsten would be allowed to separate from Denmark.

But this offer did not satisfy the common State General and a provisional government was established under the leadership of Friedrich Graf Reventlow, W. H. Beseler, Prinz Friedrich von Noer and Theodor Olshausen which claimed to have taken over in the name of the hereditary Duke and to maintain the state’s rights on 24th March 1848 (Gesellschaft für Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte (GSHG), Schleswig-Holstein von A bis Z, Erhebung, http://www.geschichte-s-h.de/vonabiszindex.htm ). The next days the provisional government managed to surprise the king’s garrison in Rendsborg, take it over with support of volunteers from the south and made them switch sides to support their case. In September 1848 a new constitution for the Duchy of Sleswick-Holsten was drawn up and included many advanced liberal and democratic principles and was adopted by the provisional government, as e.g.:

Freedom of religion (Article 14)

Protection of person and of property (Art. 15-19, 26-27)
Freedom of expression, assembly, the press and freedom of petition (Art. 21-23)

Freedom of speech (Article 24)

Freedom of movement (Article 25)


The new constitution nevertheless resembled in many parts the Danish constitution adopted in June 1849 and reflected the common origins of the Danish and Sleswick-Holsten liberal movements (Thomas Riis: 1848 – und seine Kehrseite, Beirat für Geschichte in der Gesellschaft für Politik und Bildung Schleswig-Holsteins e.V., Band: 14, Jahr: 2001, http://www.beirat-fuer-geschichte.de/fileadmin/pdf/band_14/Demokratische_Geschichte_Band_14_Essay_2.pdf, page 10). The proclamation was subsequently supported by the 1848 German uprising and the Frankfurt National assembly and they formulated a federal act to intervene on behalf of the Sleswick-Holsteners. This resulted into a war but after initial success of the Sleswick-Holsten army even military support by Prussia did not prevent that the rebellion of the Sleswick-Holsteners was crushed by the Danish king at the battle of Idsted in January 1851.

Interestingly in this context, by entering the war on behalf of Schleswig-Holstein, the Prussians were acting on behalf of a democratic uprising which was out of the norm for the Prussians. This was the only time that Prussia carried out assistance for a revolutionary movement. Indeed, concurrently with their participation in the first Sleswick-Holsten war, Prussia was occupying the Polish city of Posen and was fighting in Italy and Hungary to put down revolutionary uprisings there (Frederick Engels "Letter from Germany: The War in Schleswig-Holstein" contained in the Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Volume 10, p. 394.).

Uwe Jens Lornsen, the original imitator of the Sleswick-Holsten movement never got to know any of these developments because he committed suicide in Brazil in 1832 as a result of his poor mental state.

The defeat of the Sleswick-Holsteners resulted in restoration of the rights of the Danish king in Sleswick and Holsten, but under different conditions due to the liberal changes which have taken place in Denmark in the meanwhile. The Danish victory appeared to give the king and the Eider-Danish group in the Danish government a clear victory and a free hand over Sleswick to implement their dream of incorporating Sleswick under the Danish constitution effectively creating a Danish national state reaching down to the Eider. For the rebellious Sleswick-Holsteners the defeat was devastating and also brought suppression by the Danish authorities towards them, the freedom of press and association was curbed and supporters of the movement working for the authorities were made redundant. The defeat and the grim outlook for changes

But despite the defeat, the remaining Sleswick-Holsten supporters in Southern Sleswick were not prepared to subdue to this demands and the external powers, particularly Prussia and the United Kingdom were keen on pointing out the continuous contractual obligation regarding the relationship between Denmark, Sleswick and Holsten to be retained. This lead to an agreement between Denmark and the German Federation, represented by Prussia and Austria in 1852, whereby Denmark guaranteed to retain the commonwealth structure where all parts maintain their sovereignty, that Sleswick will not be annexed to Denmark, the Duchies of Sleswick and Holsten will retain the State General assemblies and that the “Danish and German nationality” will be equally respected (London Protocol). However, this disappointed those in the Danish minded movement who hoped for a liberal constitution being implemented on behalf of Sleswick. Since the city of Flensborg showed more loyalty towards the Danish king then the old capital, the city of Sleswick, important institutions where moved to Flensborg and new linguistic measures were taken: In 49 Southern Sleswick municipalities which appeared Danish (Southern Jutish) speaking the language of the church and education became Danish replacing standard German (Lars N. Hennigsen: Under Danmark, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 37/38). But by then the Low Saxon language had become the dominant language of the population in most of Angel and many parts of middle Sleswick and many preferred to retain the standard German church language and education which lead to protest from those municipalities. Throughout the 18th century and the 19th century the use of Low Saxon spread in becoming the daily language of the population from the districts around Rendsborg and Kiel in the far south in Sleswick. By the mid of the 19th century the southern half of Angel switched to Low Saxon (Jessen-Klingenber/March: Kleiner Atlas zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins, Braunschweig, 1986, ISBN 3-14-10099-6, page 10: Kirchen- und Schulsprache) which alarmed the supporters for including Sleswick into the Danish unitary state. It also created a division between those supporting the new language measure and those who rejected them in Southern Sleswick. Flensborg itself was given a separate status from those linguistic measures because both languages, Danish and Standard German were recognized and the population could choose to either have the Danish or Standard German as educational and church language.

In 1849 the Flensborg merchant Andreas Christiansen founded “Den slesvigske Forening” (The Sleswick Association) which was the first Danish minded organization in South Sleswick which had a closer association of Denmark and Sleswick under a single liberal constitution as its goal. This association collaborated with similar organizations in Northern Sleswick and in the coastal region of Northern Angel. But to the South the views differed considerably and the majority of voices were in support of Sleswick becoming a part of the German Federation and having a close

In the meanwhile the German Revolution of 1848 had lost its momentum and the aristocracy was able to regain the upper hand in the German Federation. Many of the initial liberal ideas were increasingly replaced by German nationalistic, authoritarian and Pan-German nationalistic views, calling for a colonial empire and also authoritarian rule (see also chapter 2. Nationalism). In due course, these views were also becoming prominent in some fractions of the Sleswick-Holsten movement.

This situation continued until 1855 when the new constitution for the whole Danish State was rejected by the Holsten General State and the constitution declared invalid for Holsten by the German Federation in 1858. Although the new constitution would create a common parliament to govern the joint affairs of Denmark, Sleswick and Holsten the constitution nevertheless provided for all entities to maintain their individual parliaments and administrations as well (1911 Encyclopædia Britannica: Schleswig-Holstein Question, Danish Unitary Constitution of 1855, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911_Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica/Schleswig-Holstein_Question). The rejection of the Holsten State General may thus also be regarded as a breach of the London agreement of 1852 but no subsequent action followed from the Danish side. With Holsten now effectively departing from the Danish Common State, the Danish General State Assembly adopted a new constitution in September 1863 which was designed to deal exclusively with common Danish and Sleswick issues and therefore was a concession towards the Eider-Danish demands and became known as the November- Constitution. But this also constituted another breach of the agreement from 1852 and consequently provoked a reaction from the German Federation, in particular Prussia.

5.1.2. From 1863 until 1918

When the Danish king Frederick VII died on 15th Nov.1863 the new king Christian IX signed the new constitution on 18th Nov. 1863 in order to avoid a possibly uprising of the liberal-democratic movement in Denmark while being aware that this may lead to war with the German Federation, namely Prussia. Simultaneously, the hereditary prince of Augustenborg renounced his father’s previous declaration towards the Augustenborg’s rights for Sleswick and Holsten and claimed the Duchies but also promised to honour the Sleswick-Holsten constitution from Sept. 1848. This declaration surprised many Sleswick-Holsteners and brought a resumption of the Sleswick-Holsten autonomy movement about, now with the hereditary prince as the central figure for the agitation. The hereditary prince himself established a shadow cabinet which was to plan his take over and also planned to erect an army to secure his rights. (Zimmermann, Harm-
On an initiative of the Prussian Prime Minister Otto von Bismarck, who was calling for the occupation of Holstein by Confederate forces, the German Federation responded with a “Bundesexekution” (Federal executive order) on the 7th December 1863. The Danish government abandoned Holsten in anticipation for not being able to hold it against the Confederate forces and pulled the Danish Army back to the border between Sleswick and Holsten and Holsten was subsequently occupied by Confederate Forces.

Spontaneous committees were set up in Holsten calling for the hereditary prince to take over and new army formations were erected to chase after the Danish Army towards Sleswick. But doubts about Prussia’s and also Austria’s ambitions, both being viewed as anti-liberal and antidemocratic and reactionary, were also coming to the fore. Fears for them using the situation to annex Sleswick and Holsten instead of granting autonomy lead to a declaration of the Itzehoe civic militia to call for resistance against the Prussian and Austrian occupying forces. The emphasis lay now in establishing an autonomous liberal-democratic Sleswick-Holsten as a constitutional monarchy in a united Germany with the hereditary prince of Augustenborg as Duke and head of state (Zimmermann, Harm-Peter... schmeiß’ die Preußen aus dem Land!“, Die demokratische und die augustenburgische Opposition in Schleswig-Holstein 1863-1881, Beirat für Geschichte in der Gesellschaft für Politik und Bildung Schleswig-Holsteins e.V., Band: 8, Jahr: 1993, http://www.beirat-fuer-geschichte.de/fileadmin/pdf/band_08/Demokratische_Geschichte_Band_08_Essay02.pdf, page 13/14).

On 14th January 1864, Austria and Prussia declared to take further action against Denmark without regard to decisions of the German Confederation. On 16th January 1864, Bismarck issued an ultimatum to Denmark demanding that the November Constitution for Denmark and Sleswick to be abolished within 48 hours. This was rejected by the Danish government and on 1st February 1864 Austrian and Prussian troops crossed the Eider. On 18th April the Danish fortifications in Dybbøl to the north of the Flensborg Fjord fell to the Prussians and despite the desperate position of the Danish army the Danish Council President D.G. Monrad rejected the suggestion of the British representative to divide Sleswick on a line reaching from South of Tonder to the south of Flensborg which was support by all participants, including Prussia and Austria, during a conference held in London between April and June 1864 (Grænseforeningen: Historie, Leksikon, Londonkonferencen april-juni 1864, http://www.graenseforeningen.dk/leksikon/l/all/4665). This resulted in continued warfare and by July 1864 the whole of Jutland was occupied by Prussian and Austrian troops. With the Danish islands now threatened the Danish government signed a preliminary peace treaty on 1st August 1864 were the King of Denmark renounced all his rights on the duchies of Sleswick, Holsten and Lauenborg in favour of the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia. Finally, in the Treaty of Vienna on 30st October 1864, Denmark ceded Sleswick, Holsten and Lauenborg to Prussia and
Austria. In the aftermath Prussia and Austria decided that Sleswick was going to be occupied by Prussian troops, Holsten by Austrian troops.

In accordance to the announcements by various committees in Holsten, the Austrian and Prussian troops were greeted with suspicion and with the Danish King abandoning Sleswick as well, committees were also set up there but were soon prohibited by the Prussian occupiers who, in contrast to Austria, wanted to establish an iron grip on it right from the start. In Austrian occupied Holsten these committees were allowed to agitate and the hereditary prince could roam freely because the Austrians saw in the hereditary prince a potential ally to curtail Prussian ambitions and therefore did not block or hinder his activities, nor those of the Sleswick-Holsten committees. The difference in attitude displayed the beginnings of the Austro-Prussian conflict which eventually lead to war between the two in 1866 (Zimmermann, Harm-Peter... schmeiß’ die Preußen aus dem Land!“, Die demokratische und die augustenburgische Opposition in Schleswig-Holstein 1863-1881, Beirat für Geschichte in der Gesellschaft für Politik und Bildung Schleswig-Holsteins e.V., Band: 8, Jahr: 1993, http://www.beirat-fuer-geschichte.de/fileadmin/pdf/band_08/Demokratische_Geschichte_Band_08_Essay02.pdf, page 20).

Despite this devastating defeat for Denmark, the Danish minded population of Sleswick, in particular Northern Sleswick, was not prepared to resign to their fate and accept Prussian-German rule and eventually being Germanized. The Danish loyal guilds in Flensborg “Borgerforeningen” and “Knudsgilde” had to re-orientate and became the nucleus for the Danish movement in the city. In those areas of rural northern and middle Sleswick which still spoke Southern Jutish, particularly those where Danish was the official language before 1864, the local farmers’ association took over the role in becoming a voice for the Danish case. A delegation of Danish minded Sleswick citizen was able to express the desire to have a ballot over the status of Sleswick to the French foreign minister in 1864. The announcement of the French Emperor Napoleon III from 1865 to support the right for self-determination resulted in an illegal collection of signatures in Flensborg in support of such a petition.

In the meanwhile the hegemony dispute between Prussia and Austria, not only on how to govern Sleswick and Holsten, culminated into the Prussian-Austrian war from 1866 and ended with a Prussian victory and the German Federation being declared dissolved. Austria had to give up its rights towards Sleswick, Holsten and Lauenborg and together with Luxembourg, Liechtenstein and the Duchy of (Dutch-) Limburg remained outside any new German federation which then lead to their independence. In the following peace settlement the French Emperor was able to insert the so called Paragraph 5 which assured the people of Northern Sleswick the right to be reunited with Denmark if this would be the result of a free referendum. The question then became what is to be considered “Danish Northern Sleswick”, does this include Flensborg or even districts further south? (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen 1864-1945, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 51).

Another consequence of the war was that Prussia now also had a free hand in Holsten and soon set about to disband the Sleswick-Holsten autonomous movements committees, censor the press and prohibit describing the hereditary prince of Augustenborg as “Duke of Sleswick and
The final act came when Prussia decided to completely annex Sleswick, Holsten and Lauenborg in 1867 as the Prussian province of Sleswick-Holsten. This annexation of Sleswick-Holsten into Prussia and its reduced status to a mere Prussian province was a great disappointment to many Sleswick-Holsteners. Sleswick-Holsten received a provincial assembly with very limited powers and this assembly constituted effectively representatives of the city and district assemblies, thus it was not directly elected. The legislative powers laid in Berlin with the Prussian government and to a minor degree the state assembly which was elected in proportion to the tax revenue of the individual voter. But it was lacking real powers since it had only advisory rights in most areas of government. The chief executive of the Prussian authorities in Sleswick-Holstein was the “Oberpräsident” (Upper President) and his job was to administer and execute the decrees of the Prussian government. This was not what many of the Sleswick-Holsteners, who rebelled against the Danish domination in the past, wanted and many of them remained embittered and felt betrayed (Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte (GSHG), Schleswig-Holstein von A bis Z, Provinziallandtag Schleswig-Holstein, http://www.geschichte-s-h.de/vonabiszindex.htm ). Prussian rule nevertheless brought hesitantly more democratisation to the ancient local electoral and administrative system. As already mentioned above, the elections introduced by the Prussian administration were far from being comparable to nowadays elections (three class electoral system etc.) they nevertheless brought a general election for the first time to Sleswick for the assembly of the newly founded Northern German Federation in 1867, the Prussian dominated successor of the German Federation. Through this the Danish community in Northern Sleswick was able to bring forward their own candidates and they were able to achieve a majority of the vote in Northern Sleswick roughly from a line just north of Tønder in the west to Ryllskov in Northern Angel in the East, including the city of Flensborg. Those who supported the Danish cause also saw this as the potential area for a ballot concerning reunion with Denmark after paragraph 5 of the peace settlement (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen 1864-1945, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, pages 53-58). But due to the fact that the language of the majority in Flensborg had become Low Saxon and not Southern Jutish (or Danish) they also became increasingly aware that this may hamper Flensborg of being included into the area, thus, attempts were made to introduce more Danish language into the daily life of the citizens by e.g. establishing the Danish language newspaper Flensborg Avis in 1869 (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen 1864-1945, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 64).

The election also gave the Sleswick-Holsteners the opportunity to form a political party, the “Landespartei” (State Party), and to put forward their own candidates. The election was a striking success for the Sleswick-Holsten autonomists and they were able to win 7 out of 9 constituencies in Sleswick-Holsten, the remaining two being won by the Danish candidates in Northern Sleswick. But soon differences and cracks did appear in the Sleswick-Holsten movement between those fostering a democratic and liberal autonomous state and those who wanted to accept Prussian rule and getting the best deal out of it. This resulted into a split of the

The successful Prussian campaign against France in 1870 lead to the establishment of the German Empire which created expectations of becoming part of a powerful Empire, and this, together with the improved economical outlook, began to compensate for the disappointments, at least temporarily, and support for the autonomists began to wane. With the prospect of any kind of autonomy becoming increasingly unrealistic and the industrialization bringing new political movements to Sleswick such as the Social-Democrats, the people began to re-organize themselves in accordance to the new circumstances. However, the educational curriculum of the general schooling emphasized German-nationalistic views in order to create a German-patriotic minded new generation of Sleswick-Holsten citizens and extreme nationalistic overtones also appeared in Sleswick-Holsten (see also 8.3). This process eventually lead to the Sleswick-Holsten movement diminishing into insignificance, however, once more the movement was able to mobilize its supporters when it was suggested to erect a monument to Uwe Jens Lornsen in regard to the 25th anniversary of the Sleswick-Holsten uprising from 1848 which was realized with the financial aid of the hereditary prince of Augustenborg in 1873. The inauguration in Rendsborg drew a crowd of 20000 spectators and the autonomous minded teacher Sönksen held the inauguration speech where he highlighted once again the rights of Sleswick and Holsten for autonomy and the right of the hereditary prince for the throne of the Duchies. As a consequence, Sönksen was suspended from his position as a teacher and received a professional ban by the German-Prussian authorities (Zimmermann, Harm-Peter... schmeiß’ die Preußen aus dem Land!“, Die demokratische und die augustenburgische Opposition in Schleswig-Holstein 1863-1881, Beirat für Geschichte in der Gesellschaft für Politik und Bildung Schleswig-Holsteins e.V., Band: 8, Jahr: 1993, http://www.beirat-fuer-geschichte.de/fileadmin/pdf/band_08/Demokratische_Geschichte_Band_08_Essay02.pdf, page 21). In 1881 the daughter of the hereditary prince Frederick VIII of Augustenborg married the Prussian prince Wilhelm who later became Emperor Wilhelm II which further enhanced the loyalty of many Sleswick-Holsteners towards Prussia and the new German Empire.

In Danish minded Northern Sleswick hopes for a referendum about Sleswick’s status took a serious blow after Prussia was victorious in the French-Prussian war of 1870. As was the case after the Danish victory in 1851, many of those who did not see any prospects in a Prussian ruled Sleswick took the opportunity and emigrated to North America as a consequence (Jens Nygaard: Danmark efter 1864, article in Flensborg Avis from 20th Oct. 2014).
The next general election for the Reichstag of the new German Empire resulted in a slight majority for the pro-German candidate in Flensborg, but the remainder of Northern Sleswick remained Danish minded. But the new German Empire soon became more ambitious in its expectations and increasingly intolerant for any kind of dissent (or would could be interpreted as such) and this, in turn resulted in diminishing minority rights, freedom of expression and forced introduction of standard German educational language and church language even in the Northern Sleswick districts where Southern Jutish was undoubtedly the language of the people. In Flensborg, increasing industrialization and the establishment of the Social Democratic party to represent the new working class resulted in a decrease of votes for the Danish minded candidates. Many began to regard international socialism or liberalism as a higher value then being re-united with Denmark and they subsequently turned away from the Danish movement. Increased wealth among the population slowly made the German Empire acceptable to many and the new generation rather made arrangements with the Prusso-German authorities then trying to struggle against them. But this, in turn, made the linguistic border shift even further north and diminished the chances of Flensborg and surroundings ever becoming Danish again (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen 1864-1945, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, pages 64/65).

While the areas which did not have Danish language of education and church before 1840 slowly became entirely germanized and the Southern Jutish dialects were replaced by Low Saxon and eventually Standard German, the rural areas in Northern Sleswick retained Danish as language of education and church for the first few years of Prussian rule. The Low Saxon speaking population in Northern Sleswick’s larger cities such as Åbenrå or Sønderborg shifted to standard German during that period. After the establishment of the German Empire in 1871, German lessons were introduced in all schools in Northern Sleswick but the language of instruction remained Danish, however, the use of Danish was more and more curtailed and culminated in the education laws from 1888 which effectively allowed only German as language of education in all situations. This law also prohibited Polish and Lithuanian being used as educational language in the Eastern parts of the German Empire and lead to deputies from Northern Sleswick working closely together with deputies of those areas (Upper Silesia, Poznan, West and East Prussia). Danish private schools were prohibited already in 1878 closing this loophole as well. Simultaneously the business language law of 1876 allowed only the use of Standard German, a similar law was introduced for court language in 1878. The use of Danish as a church language was not restricted but the use German was promoted by the authorities and finally also dictated by basic regulations for church services in 1901. Finally, the Imperial Association law (“Reichsvereinsgesetz”) included a decree which dictated the use of standard German in all assemblies. Exceptions were permitted in areas were more than 60% of the population was non-German speaking, however, since this was not the case in the city of Flensborg the use of Danish in clubs and official meetings became forbidden by law (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen, 1864-1945, I hagekorsets skygge 1933-1945, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 79).

As a consequence of the increasing language restrictions in Northern Sleswick and the cancellation of Paragraph 5 of the peace treaty of Prague the “Sprogforeiningen til de danske Sprogs Bevarelse i Nordslesvig” (Language Association to preserve the Danish language in Northern Sleswick) was founded in 1880 and in 1888 a political organization was established

Considering the election results of the Northern Sleswick Voter’s Committee during that period, it is remarkable that the Danish candidate in the Haderslev-Sønderborg constituency of Northern-Sleswick was always able to gather the absolute majority of votes behind him (more than 50%) (Valentin Schröder (2011): Wahlen in Deutschland bis 1918, Reichstagswahlen, Preußische Provinz Schleswig-Holstein, http://www.wahlen-in-deutschland.de/kuPrSchlehol.htm). Even in Flensborg and surroundings the Danish candidate could gather more than 50% of the votes until 1884, almost 20 years after the annexation (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen 1864-1945, Sydslesvigs Danske Historie, Flensborg, 2009, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 68) and it shows the continued Danish mindedness of the population in Northern Sleswick despite all German suppression attempts and agitation.

During that period a number of Flensborg citizens attempted to directly adopt standard German as their daily language but it retained a strong Southern Jutish and Low Saxon colouring which became known as “Petuh” (Elin Fredsted: Mål & Mæle 1, Petuhtantendänisch, page 27, Copenhagen, 1983). The use of Frisian and Low Saxon (including Dutch in the Lower Rhine area) was allowed verbally but they were simply categorized as German dialects and thus any officially written notes had to be in standard German. These laws remained in place until the surrender of the German forces effectively ending WWI in 1918. As a result of the peace negotiations from Versailles, Danish was re-introduced as language of instruction and church in Northern Sleswick by the beginning of 1919 (as was Polish and Lithuanian in the respective areas) (T.P. Petersen: Preussens Sprachpolitik in Nordschleswig, Münster, 1995, pages 373-382).

5.1.3. From 1918 until 1945

The era of Germanization of Sleswick came to an end with the surrender of the German forces in WW I in November 1918 and the subsequent peace negotiations of Versailles. The subsequent uprisings in Germany forced Emperor Willem II to abdicate and brought a democratic government to power which had to negotiate peace with the Western Allies in 1918. One of the results was a revival of Paragraph 5 of the peace of Prague and preparations for the subsequent referendum about Sleswick future.

The member of the Reichstag for Northern Sleswick, H.P. Hanssen declared in the German Reichstag on the 23 October 1918 that in accordance to American president Wilson’s 14 paragraphs for a post-war settlement, the Danish minority in the German Empire has also the right for self-determination and demanded to full fill the referendum about Sleswick’s future as
already decreed previously under paragraph 5 of the Prague peace declaration (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen, 1864-1945, Afstemming og grænsedragning, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page84). In November 1918 the Northern Sleswick Voter’s Committee confirmed a declaration to demand a referendum about re-unification of Northern Sleswick with Denmark. However, since the southern border of what would be regarded as Northern Sleswick was settled to be just south of a line from Kruså on the Flensborg Fjord to south of Højer on the North Sea coast it meant that large parts of Sleswick would not be re-united with Denmark including the city of Flensborg. This left many Danish minded South Sleswickers embittered but H.P Hanssen argued that inclusion of Southern Sleswick could lead to failure of getting the majority of votes for re-unification with Denmark and it would also mean that if successful nevertheless, a large non-Danish minority would then become citizens of Denmark and this could in turn lead to a revival of the old ethnic conflict in Southern Sleswick Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen, 1864-1945, Afstemming og grænsedragning, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page85). The new German foreign minister Solf agreed to this resolution in foresight to the forthcoming peace negotiations with the Western Allies and the Danish government passed the resolution on to the Western Allies, together with their own initiative for such a referendum on 12th December 1918. However, Danish minded citizens in Southern Sleswick also set up their own association and demanded that also middle Sleswick (at least) should have the right to decide its national future through a referendum. This, in turn, also provoked a response from the German minded part of the Sleswick population who set up an association which worked against re-unification with Denmark or at least in settling the new border as far North as possible.

The discussions about how the referendum was to be held and which parts of Sleswick should be included were heated and even initially a third ballot zone was suggested reaching all the way down to the Eider and Slie but eventually the Versailles peace agreement settled the following on 28th June 1919:

1. Northern Sleswick north of a line reaching from south of Højer on the North Sea in the West to south of Kruså on the Flensborg Fjord in the East should vote en-bloc on unification with Denmark on 10th February 1920.

2. Middle Sleswick north of a line Amrum-Föhr-Stedesand-Hjoldelund-Oversø-Munkbrarup should vote by individual municipality about remaining in Germany or becoming part of Denmark.

The ballot day for the 2nd zone was set for 14th March 1920 and until then allied peace corps would take control of the two zones to ensure a fair campaign and vote for the future of Sleswick (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen, 1864-1945, Afstemming og grænsedragning, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 90).

Subsequently heated campaigning started from both sides and the result of the referendum was the following:
Although there were German majorities in the cities of Åbenrå, Sønderborg and Tønder and the municipalities of Tinglev, Højer and Ubjerg, the en-bloc result for Northern Sleswick was 74,9% for Denmark, 25,1% for Germany, thus a clear victory for unification with Denmark.

In Middle Sleswick, in none of the municipalities a Danish majority was returned and in general 80.2% voted for Germany while 19.8% for Denmark. In the city of Flensborg 25% Danish votes were counted against 75% German votes which lead to great disappointment among the Danish campaigners but excitement among the German campaigners (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen, 1864-1945, Afstemming og grænsedragning, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page95).

Thus, the new border between Denmark and Germany was settled to the south of the first voting zone and meant that Sleswick became divided between German and Danish Sleswick. It also meant that significant minorities on both sides of the new border remained, to tolerate them and establish their rights in both Denmark and the newly formed democratic “Weimar” Republic in Germany became a new focus for both sides.

The greatest shift in national feelings and association occurred in Flensborg. While the first more-or-less democratic election held in Flensborg in 1867 brought a Danish majority, now 53 years later 75% of Flensborg citizens voted to remain in Germany, this is a clear shift in one generation but it shows also that national feelings and loyalties are not inbred, they can shift, often due to very pragmatic reasons and in general, people prefer the status quo rather than attempting something new. In 1867 being part of a German state was “new” and people had doubts about that, in 1920 becoming part of Denmark proper was something new for the next generation and thus was viewed with doubts. The shift in Flensborg itself makes clear that national feelings and loyalties should not be over interpreted, they can be influenced by agitation and propaganda but are also results of pragmatic rendering. It would be wrong to believe that 75% of the population in Northern Denmark are 100% full hearted Danes and 80% of the population in Middle Sleswick are full hearted German, the real feelings are much more complex and recent election results show that they still shift.

However, the newly established border came into force on 15th June 1920 and the Danish campaigners eventually organized themselves after their disappointing referendum result in middle Sleswick in a new organisation called “Den slesvigske Forening” (The Sleswick association), established in Flensborg in June 1920. Some still hoped for unification with Denmark at a later date but others accepted the result and rather focused on ensuring that a “Danish lifestyle” can also be fostered south of the new border (Sydslesvigsk Forening: 1920 - 1933 Det organiserede mindretal, http://syfo.de/om-ssf/historie/1920-1933/ ). This organization became the political arm of the Danish movement and it also slowly established branches in all parts of Southern Sleswick, and it also organized cultural events and had social functions. A Danish orientated national Frisian organization became associated to the Slesvig Foreningen in 1923. The basis for those activities were laid in §113 and §148 of the Weimar Constitution which allowed the establishment of minority organizations and also of minority schools and the protection of separate national feelings. This also lead to the establishment of Danish schools, first in Flensborg in 1920 and subsequently in other parts of Southern Sleswick. In Northern Sleswick the German minority also established their own organization called “Schleswigsche...
Partei”, however, in contrast to the Slesvigsk Foreningen, they agitated still for re-unification with Germany.

Politically the defeat of the referendum in 1920 lead to resignation among many Danish activists and this also showed in the election results: At the general election for the Reichstag in 1921 only 4697 votes for Slesvigsk Foreningen were received, of this 3671 in the city of Flensborg alone (13.6%) which showed that apart from general resignation the remaining Danish activism was very much a Flensborg phenomon. Nevertheless, this amount of votes was still enough to send two deputies into the Prussian state parliament (Landtag) in 1921 (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen, 1864-1945, Weimarrepublikken 1920-1933 – en ny begyndelse, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, pages 109/110). There was a slight upswing during the economic turmoil of the inflation period in Germany in 1923 but once the economy consolidated again the votes diminished to 2215 in 1928 and further to 1544 in Nov. 1932, the last really free election campaign in Germany before the takeover of the Nazi-dictatorship. It appeared that the population further accepted the German-Prussian rule and saw little in maintaining Danish traditions and culture.

Sleswick-Holsten experienced the realization of liberal democracy during the Weimar Republic as a Prussian province with a provincial assembly elected through free democratic elections after 1919 although still only as a province of Prussia. But the realization of full democracy did not lead to a revival of calls for more autonomy or regionalist ambitions (as e.g. in the Rhineland), instead the Social-Democrats became the largest party and focus was given to improve the devastating economic situation after WWI and the obligations demanded on Germany after the Versailles Treaty. With Northern Sleswick ceded to Denmark, the remaining Sleswick-Holsten appeared to be fully integrated into Prussia and with it the liberal-democratic autonomous movement which was formed in 1830 after Lornsen’s pamphlet.

However, democracy found an abrupt end with the take-over of the extreme right wing, intolerant-anti-democratic and anti-Semitic NSdAP in Germany in January 1933 under the leadership of the notorious Adolf Hitler. The economic crisis by the end of the 1920 lead to a revival of extreme German nationalism which blamed the results of the Treaty of Versaille for the slump and established a particular strong following in rural Sleswick-Holsten were many farmers were suffering under huge debts as a result of the crisis. Within months the Nazis had completely taken control of all institutions in Germany and established a harsh dictatorship which did not allow for any dissent. Although initially not officially prohibited, the room for manoeuvre for the Danish minority in Southern Sleswick was becoming increasingly limited and let to a complete prohibition of political activity. But since the Nazis viewed the Danes as “Nordic-Aryan”-brothers the fate of the Danish minority was by far less severe than e.g. the fate of the Polish or Sorbian minorities, not to mention the Jews, Roma and Sinti. The Danish schools were allowed to remain open but had to obey the Nazi-rule, the representatives of Sydslesvigsk Foreningen in the local council retained their seats for a while until they quietly had to give them up in favour of Nazi-minded deputies or in other cases the council was simply disbanded. Recognized members of the Danish minority were exempt from performing the “German Greeting” (Heil Hitler) and due to the “fellow Nordic-Germanic-Arian’-origins of the Danes full “Reichsbuergerschaft” (complete German Empire citizenship) was granted to them, in contrast to other minorities (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen, 1864-1945, I hagekorsets skygge 1933-1945,
Nevertheless, any dissent or criticism towards the Nazi rule was not tolerated and life inside the minority organizations carried on in a muted tone.

In Northern Sleswick, which had been renamed officially “Sønderjylland” when it became a part of Denmark on the 15th June 1920, the German minority fostered hope of a re-unification with Germany after the Nazi take-over. The Nazi-German occupations and annexations of Austria, Czechoslovakia, the Memel-area and the eventual invasion of Poland in 1939 (which marked the beginning of WWII) motivated them ever more. Support for the Nazi-government in Northern Sleswick was on the increase ever since which lead to strong and often justified accusations of collaboration after the German invasion of Denmark in April 1940. This is not withstanding that a few were critical towards the Nazi rule and even supported the Danish resistance in the underground. But since the Danes were viewed as “Nordic-Germanic-Arian” brothers, German rule in Denmark was less severe in compare to e.g. Poland or Czechoslovakia. The German occupation allowed the Danish government to retain limited sovereignty, the parties were allowed to maintain the democratic system and due to the cooperative attitude of the Danish protectorate government under Thorvald Stauning, a social-democrat, a democratic election was even held in 1943 where only the communists were banned from participation. This also ensured that the Danish Jews were save from German prosecution for the time being and even the death penalty remained abolished. However, when news of the German defeat in Stalingrad reached Denmark, hopes were raised of an imminent German defeat in WWII which also caused a rise in resistance activity. Subsequently the cooperation policy was abandoned in August 1943 and the German occupiers erected military rule which exposed the Danish Jews to possible prosecution. In a daring arrangement the Danish resistance managed to transfer almost all Danish Jews in a few nights in October 1943 across the Kattegat to neutral Sweden where they remained save from being caught up into the Holocaust (Århus Universitet: Danmarkshistorien.dk. - Forhandlings- og samarbejdsforhandlingenen under besættelsen, 1940-1945, http://danmarkshistorien.dk/leksikon-og-kilder/vis/materiale/forhandlings-og-samarbejdsforhandlingen-under-besættelsen-1940-1945/ )

Although most members of the Danish minority and the national Frisians in Southern Sleswick remained muted some supported the Danish resistance in the underground as e.g. the later Sleswick-Holsten member of parliament K. O. Meyer who deserted after being called up for German military service by the end of 1944 and joined subsequently the resistance movement in the underground (Rene Rasmussen: Under Preussen, 1864-1945, I hagekorsets skygge 1933-1945, ISBN 978-87-89178-2, page 170/171).

5.2. German nationalism and its domination of the Sleswick-Holsten movement in the 19th century.
Most historians would not make a distinction between a Sleswick-Holsten movement and the German nationalistic movement in Sleswick-Holsten since they often went hand in hand, but taking Lornsen’s demands from 1830 as the basis for the changes to come, the ambitions of the German nationalist were certainly far removed from Lornsen’s liberal minded proposals which related a lot more to the proposals of the Danish liberals as was shown in the previous chapter. An autonomous Sleswick-Holsten was still on many minds when Prussia annexed Sleswick-Holsten in 1867 and made it a mere province and the reception of this was very negative among the Sleswick-Holsteners. But after many years of struggle and wars the situation became hopeless and it lead to resignation among those still fostering autonomy and they accepted the status quo while others went further and looked for new opportunities with the German nationalists (see also chapter 5.1.). But the ideas of the German nationalists were contrary to many of Lornsen’s liberal proposals, first of all, he did not even demanded association to a German national state, he mainly wanted autonomy inside the Danish realm. Therefore it appears to be historically correct to make a distinction between the Sleswick-Holsten autonomy movement started by Lornsen and the German nationalistic movement in Sleswick-Holsten.

As already mentioned in chapter 5.1., the idea of a “German” Sleswick and Holsten did not establish itself before the beginning of the 19th century. Uwe Jens Lornsen described himself as a “German” but nevertheless aimed at establishing a separate Sleswick-Holsten state under the Danish crown. In order to achieve this he tried to refer to both the constitutional status of Holsten within the German Federation from 1815 and the separate status of Sleswick inside the Danish Kingdom. But it soon became clear that such a state was not viable and due to Danish ambitions to incorporate Sleswick constitutionally into the Danish national state many of his supporters selected to support the German nationalistic case.

Although the initial motivations of German Nationalism were inspired by the French revolution and its ideas of “nation” and by philosophers and writers such as Herder and Goethe which, in turn, were inspired by the age of enlightenment, German nationalism quickly developed its own values and character. The radicalism, racism, anti-Semitism, authoritarianism, pan-Germanism and expansive chauvinism may already have its origins in Martin Luther’s later works were he appears intolerant, authoritarian, anti-Semitic and anti-feminist. Golo Mann describes Luther as “despotic, superstitious, and soon as he escaped the danger of being prosecuted himself he became the prosecutor” (Golo Mann: Deutsche Geschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, Frankfurt, 1958, ISBN: 3 10 347901 8, page 34). Extreme nationalism, which also became known as “völkisch”, became clearly evident in the demands and writings of Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1860) and Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852). Fichte claims in “Addresses to the German Nation” from 1808 on page 68 among others, that “the German speaks a language which has been alive ever since it first issued from the force of nature whereas the other Teutonic races speak a language which has movement on the surface only but is dead at the root” (Johann Gottlieb Fichte: Addresses to the German Nation, page 68, http://archive.org/stream/addressestothege00fichuoft#page/68/mode/2up). Such statements clearly show the beginning of German nationalistic chauvinism. In the chapter “German characteristic at the exhibit of history” on page 95 he celebrates Luther as a “German earnestness
of soul”. Xenophobic elements appear in the works of Fichte in the idea that the “German nationality” is threatened by “fusion with foreign peoples” (Johann Gottlieb Fichte: Addresses to the German Nation, Introduction and Survey, page 4, http://archive.org/stream/addressestothege00fichuoft#page/4/mode/2up ). Another important figure of the German nationalistic movement was Friedrich Ludwig Jahn who claimed in “Deutsches Volksthum” from 1808 that Germany has been “unconsciously conquered by a foreign language” and “foreign admiration” which made a “foreign victory” easy in Germany and in the introduction he condemns a “multi-racial” society (Friedrich Ludwig Jahn: Deutsches Volksthum, page 199, http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/resolve/display/bsb10016165.html ). Consequently, Germany should liberate itself from the foreign rule and this emotion played an important part after the French Napoleonic troops were evicted from the territory of the previous Holy Roman Empire in 1814, which, in turn, also ensured support by significant parts of the aristocracy. Even the poet Hoffmann von Fallersleben who was viewed as a liberal German nationalist, and who wrote the text for the “Deutschlandlied” (of which the third paragraph stills serves as the national anthem of the Federal Republic of Germany) also exposes anti-Jewish feelings in his poem “Emancipation” (Hoffmann von Fallersleben: Emancipation, http://nndg.de/gedicht/23806-Emancipation-Hoffmann+von+Fallersleben.html ), but certainly more moderately and constructive then e.g. Fichte or Richard Wagner when he calls upon them to denounce their “Jewish believes” to liberate themselves. The same Hoffmann von Fallersleben also visited Sleswick in 1845 where he described the inhabitants as people who “in principle only share the same language with us while deep down they inhabit a Danish character which is exposed at every opportunity” (Wikipedia: August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, in reference to Slesvigland No. 4 from 1980, http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/August_Heinrich_Hoffmann_von_Fallersleben ).

The 1848 “German” uprising and the creation of the Frankfurt National assembly and constitutional draft promoted nevertheless many liberal positions, including the abandonment of the death penalty, but it was crushed by the aristocracy who still lead the member states of the German Federation. The eventual formation of the German national state in 1871 differed substantially from the French national state since it was not the result of a popular uprising and was neither formed as a uniform state but as a federation where regionalism and local difference remained influential. Golo Mann in “Deutsche Geschichte des 19. Und 20. Jahrhunderts” described the unification process as follows: “Otto von Bismarck (The Prussian chancellor and first Reichs-chancellor) had unified the state, but not the people because the understanding of a German people still had to be created during Bismarck’s chancellorship” (Golo Mann, Deutsche Geschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, Frankfurt, 1958, ISBN: 978-3-10-047920-4). The historian Hans Ulrich Wehler attributes “greater Prussian expansion policy” much rather than a popular national movement for the formation of the German national state (Hans-Ulrich Wehler: Der deutsche Nationalismus, page 70, http://gepeskonyv.btk.elte.hu/adatok/Germanisztika/111Balk%E1nyi/Horv%E1thPabis/17-Der%20deutsche....pdf ) while E.J. Hobsbawm described in “Nationalism in the late twentieth century” a term he called “The invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm, Eric J.: Nations and Nationalism Since 1780. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, ISBN 0521439612) and German nationalism used numerous of those as e.g. “real German music pieces (as e.g. claimed by R. Wagner), museums, public holidays and feasts etc. (see also chapter 2).
In Sleswick-Holsten, identification with the new German nation was drawn from the many links the aristocratic and bourgeois elite had with what became the German Empire through family background, education and trade and, last but not least, the fact that High German had replaced Lower Saxon as the language of prestige, education, trade and administration preventing the creation of a separate Northern German (Low Saxon) identity, possibly in conjunction with the Netherlands. Luther’s bible translation was a major factor for the bourgeoisie and educated classes to look south for cultural inspiration. In this way the Northern German elite was also directly exposed to Luther’s later works which were conservative, anti-Semitic (Rudolf Sponsel: Martin Luthers Antisemitismus: Von den Juden und ihren Lügen, Internet Publikation für Allgemeine und Integrative Psychotherapie, 
http://www.sgipt.org/sonstig/metaph/luther/judens.htm ) and anti-feminist (Volker Leppin: Luther, Martin Hexereiverständnis, Historicum.net, Geschichtswissenschaften im Internet, 2009, http://www.historicum.net/themen/hexenforschung/lexikon/personen/art/Martin_Luther/html/artikel/6975/ca/23947ab0f6/ ). Luther’s opinions may have been mainstream in his time but for him formulating this positions had certainly a major cultural and lasting impact in those areas which also adopted his written standard German as administrative language. In contrast to the Netherlands, where the Low Saxon related Netherlandic Dutch became the official language and a Dutch version of the bible became popular, the Northern German upper classes looked upon Low Saxon as a vernacular and taking over High German was seen as a manifestation of their elitist status (see also chapter 11.1.). The landowning aristocracy of Prussia and North-Eastern Germany (Junker) became the bearers of this attitude which, in turn, influenced the aristocracy and bourgeoisie throughout Northern Germany. It is therefore difficult not to see a correlation between Luther’s anti-Semitic, conservative and anti-feminist publications and the German extremist nationalism which arose in the 19th century and ultimately resulted in the Nazi-dictatorship. When the ethnic foundations of a German nation were formulated by Fichte, Arndt and Jahn by the end of the 18th century it appears that they were quickly adopted by those classes since it confirmed their general attitude of superiority. On the other hand, the majority of the Sleswick-Holsten population was, of course, farmers, labourers, craftsmen and seafarers who had no association to any nationalistic ideas until then. But since this groups had no means of influence they simply were unable to voice their interests and it is very difficult to anticipate how they felt and thought because hardly any records exist. In this context it has to be pointed out that any of the movements, whether Danish, Frisian, Sleswick-Holsten or German were predominantly a matter of the bourgeoisie who could afford higher education, not of the common people.

When Prussia and Austria drove the Danes out of Sleswick-Holsten in 1864 both had already vociferous German nationalists in their ranks and the subsequent Prussian annexation of Sleswick-Holsten in 1867 was an eye opener for many liberal minded Sleswick-Holstener with whom they had associated themselves (e.g. T. Storm, see also chapter 5.5.) but by then it was too late to reverse the developments. Initial economic and foreign policy successes (Prusso-Franconian war 1870) made many Sleswick-Holstener accepting the new status quo and they greeted the formation of the German Empire in 1871 as a chance to look for new opportunities in a powerful state (see also chapter 5.1.).
But the tone of the German Empire was not a liberal democratic one, to the contrary, it became an increasingly chauvinist, elitist, arrogant and often racist one, and those who profited from these processes often went readily along with them. The first chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Konrad Adenauer, concluded in his memoirs in 1965 that “the creation of the German Empire brought the German nationalist into a very powerful position” and that the German state was viewed as “omnipotent where the state and its supporting collective powers are set above everything else, including the general values of humanity after the creation of the German Empire” which eventually lead to the extremist excesses during the Nazi dictatorship (Konrad Adenauer: Erinnerungen 1945-1953, Gedanken und Überlegungen zur Lage Deutschlands, Stuttgart 1965, ISBN 3 421 01140 0., http://www.konrad-adenauer.de/downloads/pdf/Dokumente/Konrad%20Adenauer_Erinnerungen_1945-1953.pdf).

Through the introduction of general schooling these ideas and views were then promoted throughout the new German Empire. Critical voices surely existed but they were all too often denounced as unpatriotic or simply ignored and overtaken by the apparent success of the new Empire. Some kind of parliamentary representation was introduced in form of the Prussian Landtag and the German Reichstag to play lip-service to the liberals. But in Prussia the three-class franchise system whereby the individual vote is valued in compare to the tax revenue made sure that the wealthy, aristocratic and bourgeois elite remained in power. In addition, casting the vote was to done in public. (Landschaftsverband Rheinland: Portal Rheinische Geschichte, Zwischen Revolution und Reichsgründung – Durchbruch zur Industrialisierung (1848 – 1871), http://www.rheinische-geschichte.lvr.de/epochen/epochen/Seiten/1848bis1871.aspx). For the Reichstag this rule was not adopted but other restriction such as denying women, military personal, persons under 25 and persons receiving any form of state benefit were introduced, subsequently only 20% of the population where entitled to vote. Even if the Reichstag had been democratically elected after contemporary standards, it was lacking power to legally curtail the policies undertaken by the Reichs-administration, the Reichs-chancellor (Otto von Bismarck) and the Emperor whose entitlement and power was beyond any democratic control. Furthermore, when industrial towns such as Altona or the Ruhr valley cities grew rapidly in population this was then not reflected by changing the constituencies which disadvantaged those parties representing the working classes (Deutscher Bundestag: Historische Ausstellung des Deutschen Bundestages :Wahlen im Kaiserreich 1871-1918, http://www.bundestag.de/kulturundgeschichte/geschichte/infoblatt/wahlen_kaiserreich.pdf).

Firmly integrated into Prussia and the new German Empire, German nationalism flourished in the formerly Danish ruled Duchies of Sleswick and Holsten and they became a stronghold for the nationalists. The general upswing of the economy through the industrialisation and little concessions towards the new working classes ensured loyalty and a new generation who grew up under this circumstances appeared to have no doubts any more about their national belonging (see also chapter 5.1.). The first big break appeared during and after WWI which was lost by the German Empire and caused enormous casualties through the mechanization of warfare and lead to starvation and economic hardship for the masses. But the nationalist soon were able to create myths such as the back-stabbing legend when the navy revolted against the military leadership against maintaining the lost war and were able to gather strength again after the hard decrees of the Versailles negotiations were published (Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung: Kampf um die Republik 1919 – 1923, Politische polarisierung,
But initially the outcome of WWI brought about the establishment of real democracy in the German Empire, including a fully democratically elected Reichstag and Prussian state assembly. Under this new conditions the Social democrats developed into the largest political movement and together with other smaller liberal and centrist parties they became the dominant political force in what was to be called the Weimar Republic until the economic crisis by the end of the 1920 lead to dramatic changes which strengthened the left and right wing extremist parties and ultimately ended in the Nazi dictatorship.

The general political views and the shifts the population of Sleswick-Holsten undertook from 1919 onwards are reflected by the results of the Reichstag elections: While initially the Social democrats and left-liberal parties dominated, the mood quickly changed after the Versailles decrees and the German nationalistic and right wing German National Peoples Party became the second biggest party, at one point even surpassing the Social Democrats. The left-liberal party diminished significantly while the right-wing liberal German People Party (DVP) remained the third strongest party until the beginning of the 1930. A huge change occurred in 1930 when the Nazi-Party NSDAP became the second largest party in Sleswick-Holsten and shortly afterwards the largest with almost 50% of the votes while the communists became the third largest party. The democratic and centrist parties were effectively eliminated and the Social democrats the only democratic party left of significance until they were prohibited after the Nazi-take-over in 1933 (Die Provinz Schleswig-Holstein Reichstagswahlen 1919–1933, http://www.gonschior.de/weimar/Preussen/Schleswig-Holstein/Uebersicht_RTW.html ). This documents clearly that, although initially the democracy was welcomed by the population it soon lost its support among large parts of the population after the Versailles Treaty was ratified by the democratic German government. This resulted in a switch towards German nationalistic views and when the global economic crisis arrived by the end of the 1920 this views shifted to the extreme antidemocratic right wing NSdAP who blamed external forces and minorities on the situation such as the Jews. The high percentage the NSdAP received in Sleswick-Holsten are on the one hand an expression how deep the crisis affected Sleswick-Holsten, in particular in rural areas where many farmers were deeply indebted but it also shows how thoroughly German nationalism was implanted into this border region (Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte (GSHG), Nationalsozialismus, http://www.geschichte-s-h.de/zeitreiseindex.htm ).

When the Nazi-Party took control and erected one of the most radical, intolerant, aggressive and racist dictatorship in history, Sleswick-Holsten was to become a model for the Nordic-Aryan people and many of those Sleswick-Holsteners who fulfilled the racist demands of the Nazis enthusiastically took over this role and, thus, Sleswick-Holsten became a hotbed for Nazi-support. Ironically, Sleswick-Holsten also became the last refuge for the encircled Nazi-leadership when the end of the by then called “Third Reich” came near in 1945. Once the German capital Berlin fell to the allies, the Nazi-government (or what was left of it) moved first to Eutin and then finally to Flensborg by the beginning of May 1945 from were General von Dönnitz announced the total surrender on the 8th of May 1945. This brought an abrupt end to extreme German nationalism in Sleswick-Holsten but not immediately a change in the mind of many Sleswick-Holstener. Since Sleswick-Holsten was the last refuge of the Nazi-government, many high-ranking Nazis tried to go underground here after the surrender (Himmler, Koch).
while others tried to cover up their involvement in Nazi policies (Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte (GSHG), Renazifizierung, http://www.geschichte-s-h.de/zeitreiseindex.htm ). At least, the total collapse made a second back-stabbing legend impossible and being occupied by the British forces made to everyone clear that any ambitions or dreams of a great powerful colonial and aggressive German national state which was “to rule the world” had come to a drastic and definite end.

In that sense the establishment of the state of Sleswick-Holsten by British decree in 1946 after the state of Prussia had been dissolved was a real new start while the old nationalistic shadows were still looming but became weaker in the course of time. However, the strong Danish movement in Sleswick immediately after the war gave some of the old nationalists the opportunity to agitate again but with the British still controlling the affairs their room to manoeuvre was limited. Even when the centre-right coalition of CDU, DP, FDP and BHE came to power under prime minister Bartram (later Luebcke) in 1950 of which 8 out of the 9 secretaries of state were previously members or associated to the Nazi party and its organizations, the time for extreme German nationalistic politics was over which gradually (and grudgingly by many) was then accepted. The continuous CDU-FDP lead state governments until the 1980s were in tone rather conservative-German nationalistic but nowhere near an extremist position and the economic success and the accompanying integration into Western Europe eventually lead to proper establishment of democratic, humanistic, liberal and tolerant values. Currently, German nationalistic parties and movements as e.g. The NPD, DVU or Republicans do not receive more than 1 or 2% of the vote and in an increasingly globalizing world and continuous European integration it is difficult to imagine that a German nationalistic movement could ever become a force again (Statistische Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Landtagswahl in Schleswig-Holstein am 6. Mai 2012, election result NPD: 0.7% (http://www.landtagswahl-sh.de/wahlen.php?site=left/gebiete&wahl=53#index.php?site=right/ergebnis&wahl=53&anzeige=0&gebiet=1&idx=0&typ=1&stimme=2&flip=1&mode=liste&hoch=0&untertyp=0 ).

5.3. The Frisian Movement

The term “Friesland” is currently describing three areas along the North Sea which are not (or no longer) forming a continuum. These areas are nowadays called North Friesland as a part of the German state of Sleswick-Holsten, East Friesland as a part of the German state Lower Saxony and Frieslan, which is the Frisian name of the Dutch province Friesland. There is also a West Friesland in the Dutch province of North Holland but this area has no longer any native Frisian speakers. The origins of the Frisians are somewhat uncertain, however, their language and customs clearly show their Germanic origins and it is assumed that they once spread from further north into the areas nowadays described as Friesland. Linguistically they form an under group of the so called North-Sea-Germanic languages which also include English, Dutch and Low Saxon.
In the 7th century the Frisians had established a powerful kingdom reaching from the river Zwijn in today Flanders to the river Weser in nowadays Lower Saxony. This was destroyed by the Franks in the 8th century (Halbertsma, H. (1982), Frieslands Oudheid, Pages 791-796, www.dissertations.ub.rug.nl/FILES/faculties/arts/1982/h.halbertsma/Halbertsma.PDF). Since North Friesland was located outside this area it is assumed that it was colonized from the Frisian areas further south, however, at one point the Jutland peninsula was as a whole occupied by North Sea Germanic speaking groups who then largely emigrated during the Anglo-Saxon conquest of Britain and it is not clear whether there is also a North Sea Germanic continuum in North Friesland which then merged with Frisian settlers from further south. After the loss of their independent kingdom, the Frisian language declined and disappeared as a whole from the areas to the west of the Vlie and almost entirely between the Lauwers and the Weser (with the exception of the Saterland). Frisian nevertheless survived in North Friesland and is still maintained by about 5000 speakers. Frisians are also mentioned as participants in the Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain and there are traces of Frisian settlers in Sweden (as founders of the ancient trading place Birka (B. Siewertsen, Friserne – vore glemt forældre, page 22, Slot Forlag, 2004, ISBN: 877-90476-08-5) and the Faroes (TripAdvisor: Suduroy: From Sandvik to Akraberg, Akrarberg, http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Travel-g190337-c123798/Suduroy:Faroe-Islands:From.Sandvik.To.Akraberg.html). There are also various place names in the British isles which refer to the Frisians such as Frizington in Cumbria (Armstrong, A. M.; Mawer, A.; Stenton, F. M.; Dickens, B. (1950). The place-names of Cumberland. English Place-Name Society, vol.xxi. Part 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 336) or Dumfries in Scotland (W.F. Skene: On the early Frisian settlements in Scotland, page 179, http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/adsdata/arch-352-1/dissemination/pdf/vol_004/4_169_181.pdf).

Awareness of being a distinctive group was always apparent and forms the basis of demands for recognition and rights not only to maintain their linguistic heritage but also to use the language more widespread. However, since the Frisians as an ethnic group are spread over two countries (The Netherlands and the F.R. of Germany), recognition of their status has been coming forward in different ways. Since the Frisian group in the Netherlands are by far the most numerous, certain stages of recognition were quickly established, in particular after the 2nd World War. Despite some shortcomings, the Frisians in the Netherlands are recognized by the Dutch government as a distinctive ethnic and linguistic group and certain rights have been granted. For the East and North Frisians the road towards recognition in Germany was more difficult because they form a relatively small group in contrast to the majority of the population. As a matter of fact, the Frisian language in East Friesland has more or less disappeared with the exception of the Saterland and the East Frisians have adopted a distinctive Low Saxon dialect which is now also eroded by standard German. To a certain degree this process has also taken place in North Friesland and Frisian has disappeared from Eiderstedt, Nordstrand and Pellworm but it manages to survive in the remaining areas of the original Frisian speaking area (Steensen, Thomas: The Frisians in Schleswig-Holstein, History of the Frisian Movement, Nordfriisk Instituut, Bräist/Bredstedt, 1994, page 14, ISBN 3-38007-216-7). An exception forms the small area to the north of the Danish-German border just south of the town of Tønder were Frisian has been replaced by Southern Jutish dialects (see also 11.2.).
Of particular interest for this review is North Friesland since it forms a part of Sleswick and therefore was affected to the national disputes from the 19th century onwards. Modern North Friesland is effectively entirely engulfed in the district of North Friesland with its administrative capital Husum. However, in some of the Eastern municipalities of the district, Frisian was never spoken and either dialects of Southern Jutish or Low Saxon were spoken (Bo Sjölin: Einführung in das Friesische, Stuttgart, 1969, page 42). Currently the Frisian language is still surviving in the areas of Wiedingharde, Bökingharde, North Goesharde, Middle Goesharde, South Garde, the Hallingen, and the islands of Föhr, Amrum and Sylt (Nils Århammar (Bredstedt/Flensburg): Das Nordfriesische, eine bedrohte Minderheitsprache in zehn Dialekten: eine Bestandsaufnahme, 2007, http://www.opus.ub.uni-erlangen.de/opus/volltexte/2008/952/pdf/IZD_Arhammar_Das_Nordfriesische.pdf, page 11).

Politically the North-Frisians can be roughly divided into three groups:

1. Frisians who consider themselves as Germans

2. Danish minded Frisians

3. Frisians aiming at complete independence

The first group is more or less represented by “Nordfriesischer Verein für Heimatkunde und Heimatliebe”, or contemporary simply called “Nordfriesischer Herein”. It was founded in 1902 and reflected also a general mood for the so called “Heimatbewegungen”. The second group is represented by the “Friesisch-Schleswigscher Verein”, nowadays called “Friisk Foriining” and is closely associated to the Danish Minority party SSW. The third group was effectively too small to sustain itself and disappeared or was absorbed into one of the other two organizations. However, in recent years some of the partly bitter German-Danish disputes have eased and communication between the German and Danish minded Frisians has improved and common initiatives such as recognition for Frisian as part III of the European minority laws have helped to overcome animosities (Steensen, Thomas: The Frisians in Schleswig-Holstein, School, page 21/22, Nordfriisk Instituut, Bräist/Bredstedt, 1994, ISBN 3-38007-216-7).

The realization that the North Frisians form a distinctive ethnic group began around 1840 when Christian Feddersen issued a program for the Frisian language and a Frisian movement called “Five words to the North Frisians”. However, the movement became quickly embroiled into the Sleswick-Holsten conflict and was forced to choose between the autonomous minded Sleswick-Holsten rebels and protagonists for a Denmark down to the Eider (which would then include North Friesland) by most choosing to support the Sleswick-Holsten side. Once it became clear that an autonomous Sleswick-Holsten was not feasible any longer the former accepted German-Prussian dominance and searched for a way to maintain their Frisian identity within a German national state. As a consequence of the disastrous results of World War I for the German Empire, a greater number of North Frisians began to promote a closer association to Denmark and to Northern Europe as a whole and established the “ Friesisch-Schleswigscher Verein” which also
agitated for incorporating North Friesland into Denmark. But the subsequent referendum in those districts which were included into the plebiscite area resulted in a clear majority for remaining in Germany. Nevertheless, this movement re-established and strengthened the view that the North Frisians are a separate group closely associated to Northern Europe and the Frisians in the Netherlands and in Eastern Friesland (Steensen, Thomas: The Frisians in Schleswig-Holstein, History of the Frisian Movement, Nordfriisk Instituut, Bräist/Bredstedt, 1994, page 18, ISBN 3-38007-216-7).

The Frisian language and its dialects have never had any status within North Friesland until recently despite first attempts to introduce some Frisian classes in schools by the beginning of the 20th century. But those were mere concessions which virtually disappeared again after the Nazi take over in 1933. Not until the end of the World War II and the collapse of the German Empire did any recognition take place and even the newly founded state of Sleswick-Holsten as part of the Federal Republic of Germany only reluctantly recognized the North Frisians as an ethnic group in its own rights. From embryonic beginnings the North Frisian institute was established, and more prominence of Frisian was given at school, in particular in the newly established Danish schools in North Friesland. Sharing the same fate as those Danish minded Sleswickers south of the 1921 border, they began working more closely together. When the German minded Nordfriesischer Verein finally supported the separatist status of the Frisians together with the Danish minded Frisians they eventually succeeded in having Frisian also recognized by the new Sleswick-Holsten constitution of 1990. In 1992 they were also recognized as a minority group in accordance to part III of the European Charters of Regional and Minority Languages and the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995). With the support of the Danish School Association the “Frasch Schölj” in Risum was set up were Frisian is the predominant language of the classroom since the 1950s (Steensen, Thomas: The Frisians in Schleswig-Holstein, School, page 21/22, Nordfriisk Instituut, Bräist/Bredstedt, 1994, ISBN 3-38007-216-7). Bilingual place names boards at railway stations and at road signpost were permitted in 1997 and have been introduced in many North Frisian municipalities making Frisian more visible in the public domain (Nils Århammar (Bredstedt/Flensburg): Das Nordfriesische, eine bedrohte Minderheitsprache in zehn Dialekten: eine Bestandsaufnahme, 2007, page 20, http://www.opus.ub.uni-erlangen.de/opus/volltexte/2008/952/pdf/IZD_Arhammar_Das_Nordfriesische.pdf).

However, all this could not stop the decline of the language, from about 20000 speakers out of a population of 60000 in 1900 to an anticipated 10000 in 1976 and estimates from 2007 see the numbers as being as low as 5000 remaining speakers in North Friesland proper. While initially Frisian speakers adopted Low Saxon, there is a clear movement now towards standard German instead which is the all dominant language today in almost all matters of daily live in North Friesland and thus, even Low Saxon is sharing the same fate as Frisian in its decline (see also chapter 11.2.1.).

5.4. Low Saxon / Low German movements
The Low Saxon language in Sleswick and Holsten suffered long under neglect and low prestige, effectively degraded to a mere dialect although it was written standard in what is nowadays Northern Germany until the 17th century. It also served as the official language of the powerful Hanseatic league in its heyday and left its mark on all languages around the Baltic Sea. But the loss of prestige set in with the shift of power inside the Holy Roman Empire towards High-German using Southern Germany, the decline of the Hanseatic League and finally the popularity of Martin Luther’s High (Standard)-German bible translation. But it was never really disputed that Low Saxon is a language in its own right and its close relationship to Dutch manifests that it cannot be described as a mere German dialect (see also 11.1.).

Despite the neglect and effective discrimination, the idea of an independent Low Saxon language was never fully forgotten and calls for a revival in prestige and status were also voiced during the period of romanticism in the 19th century. The Dithmarsian poet Klaas Groth can be regarded as the best example for the attempts to revive status and prestige to the language as he declared the following in his poetic Low Saxon collection “Quickborn”:

“It may be due to the fact that it is difficult to write the way we really speak (Low Saxon) but the main reason is that we find written Low Saxon odd because we denounce our dialects (Dithmarsian Low Saxon) as “platt” (vulgar) and do not show respect towards the language of the old Saxons. This is what we should confront the Danes with! But we do not realize what treasures we have, this is how we are, we Germans, we only value what is foreign.” (Klaus Groth: Quickborn, Kiel und Leipzig, 1852, ISBN 3-79630098-7, preamble of the first edition from 1852)

But this statement already documents the dilemma the activists faced because he described the Low Saxon speakers nevertheless as “Germans” which shows that, although Low Saxon being recognized as a language in its own rights with its own culture and traditions, the speakers did not see themselves as being part of a separate Low-Saxon group or nation. Nevertheless, he viewed standard German as a foreign tongue, hence he obviously saw himself as a German with a non-German mother tongue. This apparent contradiction can only be explained by looking at the historical context when the Sleswick-Holsten autonomous movement tried to achieve its aims with the support of the German federation of which Holsten was a part and Sleswick was not. Standard German had been adopted as the written official language in Holsten and the southern parts of Sleswick since the 17th century and this was used as prove for their case to request assistance from the German Federation against the Danish King. But one also has to take in account the initially not clearly defined “nationality” of the people in Sleswick and Holsten. Nationality was by then still a relatively recent phenomenon and it is therefore not surprising that people were not certain and consistent of there own position and how to define their “nationality”. In the case of Groth it is quite obvious that his foremost ambition was to promote the case of the common people and that included promotion and restoration of the Low Saxon language but in the rapidly changing political circumstances he had difficulties to identify the various groups, their positions and their aims which lead him to shift his support and opinion often and even to contradict himself occasionally. But through his writings it appears that his “Germaness” is a multicultural one and not a uniform one, a unified German state should be able
to recognize and promote its regional differences and not force the “foreign” standard German language upon the citizens of Holsten and Sleswick (see also chapter 5.5). This dilemma becomes also apparent in the contemporary comments in the North-Frisian novelist Theodor Storm although he never actively promoted the case of the Low Saxon or Frisian language.

The preamble of Groth’s Quickborn by the Dithmarsian reverent Dr. Harms has the following passage: “The book (The Quickborn) which has been edited here does not attempt to be a heroic epos but it approaches the Low Saxon language in such a way that it is saving the honour of the Low Saxon language which has not been achieved by any other text, assignment or poem so far.” (Klaus Groth: Quickborn, Kiel und Leipzig, 1852, ISBN 3-79630098-7, “Vor- und Fürwort” by Pastor Dr. Harms)

This alone shows that there was a Low Saxon awareness and a movement for its restoration but it was not a separatist-nationalistic one, it was a purely linguistic and cultural one demanding linguistic rights within the respective national state. Thus, there are also similarities to the Frisian movement. Nevertheless, many separatist movements began life in similar circumstances and eventually became full blown nationalist-separatist movements but this did not happen in Sleswick-Holsten, nor anywhere else in the Low Saxon language area.

Looking at the historical context, one may wonder what might have happened if the Sleswick-Holsten movement had achieved Lornsen’s demands (for details see chapter 5.1.) and Sleswick-Holsten had become an autonomous territory inside the Danish Kingdom. In Luxembourg and respectively Switzerland, “Letzebuergsch” (Luxembourgish) and “Schwitzerduetsch” (Swiss German) became important factors of their national identity. In Spain, maintenance and promotion of the Catalan and Basque languages were part of the liberal republican movement in the 1930s and thus the use of them was prohibited by the fascist Franco regime. Only after the end of the dictatorship and the introduction of a liberal democracy in Spain, Catalan and Basque were recognized as languages in their own rights again. Catalan even became the official language of the principality of Andorra, thus a fully recognized official state language. It is therefore possible that something like this may have happened to Low Saxon if any of the territories where Low Saxon was spoken had remained outside the German Empire after 1871 and the duchies of Sleswick and Holsten could have been such cases under different circumstances. But the development inside the German Empire never allowed for such conditions as it grew into an increasingly uniform, aggressive and chauvinistic state. Thus, the attempts of Groth and his contemporaries found only little repercussions and their influence remained marginal. Little concession were allowed such as issuing Low Saxon school books but the main focus of culture and education remained standard German in Holsten and Sleswick.

The conclusion is that sandwiched in between superior forces (Danish and German nationalism) the Low Saxon activists were unable to establish their own movement (at least in strength) and eventually were forced to choose either between Danish or German. Although most of them chose the German side, some support the Danish side (that must be so because otherwise there would not be any votes for the Danish Minority party in the southern Sleswick districts of Erfde and Hohn where Low Saxon has always been the native tongue). Danish awareness is even present south of the Eider in Holsten which is clearly documented in the election results and the

The recognition of Low Saxon as a regional language together with the minority languages Frisian and Danish by the new Sleswick-Holsten constitution of 1990 and recognition in accordance to part III of the European Charta of regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) in 1999 (see also chapter 11.1.) finally restored an official status to Low Saxon which was lost some 400 years ago and was particularly due to activists from Sleswick-Holsten (as e.g. the Sleswick-born MP Wolfgang Börnsen). This finally also re-confirmed Low Saxon’s status of a separate language in its own right instead of that of a mere Dutch or German dialect and, as a result, some bilingual road-signs have appeared in some parts of Northern Germany. But by 1990 the Low Saxon language has seen an enormous decline in the number of active speakers and standard German has become the norm and the language of daily business throughout Northern Germany, including Sleswick-Holsten. The result is that Low Saxon is effectively restricted to domestic use by the older generation. Whether the recognition of Low Saxon can restore the language is disputable, it may be too little too late.

5.5. Klaus Groth and Theodor Storm – Two Sleswick-Holsten contemporaries of the period between the Lornsen’s pamphlet and the Prussian annexation

What was the general mood among the people in Sleswick-Holsten during that period? As mentioned before, no ballots or polls are available but there are comments by writers, poets and even ordinary observers.

A clue might come from the opinions of the two most well known writers in Sleswick-Holsten during that period, Theodor Storm and Klaus Groth.

Klaus Groth, born 24 April 1819 in Heide, Dithmarschen, and a native Low Saxon speaker (see also chapter 5.4.), was the son of a miller and had a modest background and education which enforced him to acquire his knowledge and skills autodidactic. In his view the artist should mainly focus on aesthetic items and thus try to remain above political issues (Frithjof Lüding, Theodor Storm und Klaus Groth in ihrem Verhältnis zur Schleswig-Holsteinischen Frage, Wachholtz-Velrag, Neumünster, 1985, ISBN 3-529021849). But eventually he found it impossible to avoid commenting on the upheavals in his surroundings and in his insecurity he often appeared contradicting himself between pacifism and reconciliation (between the warring parties) on one hand, and support for the German case, admiration for the troops who “liberated Sleswick-Holsten” from the Danish yoke and acceptance of the Prussian
annexation on the other. The former is well reflected in poems such as “De Welt” and “Sandburs Dochder” and the latter in his later poems such as “Erhebung” or “An Se. Majestät König Wilhelm von Preussen”. But above all, Groth appeared as a local patriot for his native Dithmarschen region with its long tradition of self determination, rebellion and successful avoidance of being drawn into a feudal system. Nevertheless, according to Frithjof Lüding, another of Groth’s characteristics was being rather overcome by the events than actively participating or anticipating them (Frithjof Lüding, Theodor Storm und Klaus Groth in ihrem Verhältnis zur Schleswig-Holsteinischen Frage, Wachholtz-Velrag, Neumünster, 1985, ISBN 3-529021849).

Once confronted with the reality he genuinely appeared to support the Sleswick-Holsten autonomous movement but the democratic-constitutionally demands which came along with the movement remained rather alien to him. Instead, he took a clear position for the hereditary prince Frederick VIII of Augustenborg’s right to the Sleswick-Holsten crown, a concept that he perhaps felt more familiar with than liberal democracy. Although appearing sometimes “out of touch from the reality” (Frithjof Lüding, Theodor Storm und Klaus Groth in ihrem Verhältnis zur Schleswig-Holsteinischen Frage, Wachholtz-Velrag, Neumünster, 1985, ISBN 3-529021849), he nevertheless was not heading into a nationalistic-romantic direction others had taken by then and which became all too often chauvinistic, racist and anti-Semitic. He remained drawn towards humanism and his continued pacifism is all too obvious when he described the sufferance of a war-widow in “Wenn aavends rood de wulken trekt”. He took position on behalf of the Jews in “Kaneeljood” and any kind of racism, xenophobia or chauvinism is absent in his writings.

Through his work he also tried to revive awareness of a linguistic Lower Franconian-Lower Saxon continuum stretching from Flanders to, at that time still, the Baltics which is evident in his poem “Min Moderspraak” (Reinhard F. Hahn: Klaas Groth – De Minsch, http://lowlands-l.net/groth/groth.php) without drawing any territorial-chauvinistic conclusions from that. His ambitions were humanistic-cultural and not political-power based ones. The Sleswick-Holsten question appeared to have come to him unexpectedly and he struggled to take up positions. His famous Low Saxon written “Quickborn” from 1852 makes no direct comments about the conflict, in the introduction he nevertheless comments that Low Saxon should be used against the Danes. While this comment is clearly aimed against Danish rule, it also exhibits his local patriotism and his scepticism towards a German nationalism calling for a uniform state with no room for regionalism or minorities. But when renewed war between Denmark on the one side and Prussia and Austria on the other was looming again in 1863, Groth published the following poem:

Fru, sök mi ut den Koffer
Min Krüz und dreeklärt Band!
Raff, vunne Wand, min Puffer!
Nochmal voert Vaderland!"

(My wife, please search for my suitcase
My cross and the tricolour ribbon!
Take quickly my gun from the wall!
Once again, for the fatherland!)
Although writing pacifist poems before, here he clearly calls on renewed warfare for the case of the fatherland (Sleswick-Holsten). This poem shows once again his insecurity how to respond on unexpected external pressure and his desire to appear in touch with contemporary events. But when it became clear that the Prussian intervention might lead to complete incorporation into the authoritarian Prussian state, he issued the following poem in the Kieler Wochenblatt in January 1864:

Und Gott vom Himmel sieht darein,
Und schützet Dich und unsre Rechte.
Wir wollen keine Dänen sein
Und keines fremden Volkes Knechte."

(And god from heaven is looking at it
And protects you [Friedrich VIII, the hereditary prince of Augustenborg] and our rights
We do not want to be Danes
And no servants of foreign people)

Historian Harm-Peter Zimmermann interprets this as clear indication that he saw the Prussians as a foreign power of which the Sleswick-Holsteners do not want to become servants to and thus, clearly takes position for the hereditary price and against Prussia (Zimmermann, Harm-Peter... schmeiß’ die Preußen aus dem Land!“). Groth’s later writings show however acceptance towards Prussia’s rule and exhibit again his tendency for reconciliation (as in “An Se. Majestät König Wilhelm von Preussen”) but political comments were rare, possibly due to some resignation because although he personally achieved fame through his writings, neither an autonomous Sleswick-Holsten could be realized nor a revival of the Low Saxon language.

Storm, by contrast, is clearer in his position and his concept, he supported the Sleswick-Holsten movement from start, aiming at a “free Sleswick-Holsten as a part of a liberal German national state”, but, as Groth, he clearly disapproved the Prussian annexation. In contrast to Groth, his native Husum was part of Sleswick and therefore closer to the source of the dispute in the Sleswick-Holsten question. His family was part of the Husum bourgeoisie and therefore he enjoyed better education and was exposed to liberal-democratic ideas much earlier than Groth, this, in turn, might explain his more determined position (Frithjof Lüding, Theodor Storm und Klaus Groth in ihrem Verhältnis zur Schleswig-Holsteinischen Frage, Wachholtz-Velrag, Neumünster, 1985, ISBN 3-529021849). Initially he was not anti-Danish as he also paid honour...
to the Danish king Christian VIII during his visit to Husum 1848 in his poem “Heil dir, heil dir, Hoher König”. But when it became clear that a side had to be chosen he quickly made up his mind and supported the Sleswick-Holsten autonomous movement. This resulted in describing the rule of the Danes as a foreign one and he began to utter his hope that Sleswick could join a German federation and enjoy liberty and democracy through this. After the defeat of the Sleswick-Holstener in 1850 he appeared resigned and moved away from Husum to Potsdam in Brandenburg fearing a total incorporation of his native Husum as being part of Sleswick into Denmark proper. When war became apparent again in 1864, he repeated his support of the German Sleswick-Holsten case but when tough restrictions aiming at suppressing liberal-democratic ideas were introduced by the Prussian authorities after the Prussian-Austrian victory, he was deeply disappoint and wrote:

„Nun ist geworden, was du wolltest;
—Warum denn schweigst du jetztund?
Berichten mag es die Geschichte,
Doch keines Dichters froher Mund."

English: Now has been realized what you wanted
- Why are you silent now?
History may report it
But no poet’s happy mouth”

(Zimmermann, Harm-Peter... schmeiß’ die Preußen aus dem Land!“, Die demokratische und die augustenburgische Opposition in Schleswig-Holstein 1863-1881, Beirat für Geschichte in der Gesellschaft für Politik und Bildung Schleswig-Holsteins e.V., Band: 8, Jahr: 1993,

When it became apparent that the Prussians were planning complete annexation of Sleswick-Holsten into Prussia after Prussia's victory against Austria in 1866, he became disillusioned and began to withdraw from politics. That his position had not changed despite his disillusionment became obvious when he wrote in 1870:

„Hat erst der Sieg über fremde Gewalt
Die Gewalt im Innern besiegt,
Dann will ich rufen: Das Land ist frei!

English: Only if the victory over foreign violence
Has defeated the internal violence,
Then I will call out: The country is free!

Here he obviously refers to the Prussian aristocratic rule by calling them the “internal violence” (Zimmermann, Harm-Peter... schmeiß’ die Preußen aus dem Land!“, Die demokratische und die augustenburgische Opposition in Schleswig-Holstein 1863-1881, Beirat für Geschichte in der Gesellschaft für Politik und Bildung Schleswig-Holsteins e.V., Band: 8, Jahr: 1993,
http://www.beirat-fuer-
Thus it can be concluded that both Storm and Groth supported the Sleswick-Holsten autonomous movement although deriving from different positions and having different ambitions. Both became disillusioned by the authoritarian Prussian rule after 1864 and the subsequent Prussian annexation of the whole of Sleswick-Holsten in 1867. Storm, as an advocate for liberal-democratic ideas, was bitter about the persistent power of the aristocracy in Prussia which brought no internal liberation of Sleswick-Holsten in the end. Groth, advocating a more romantic position with his vociferous support for the hereditary prince of Augustenborg and his revival attempts of the Low Saxon language (see also chapters 11.1, 5.4. and 8.1.) was bitter over the “foreign rule” only this time by Prussia instead of Denmark but accepted Prussian rule later on and tried to reconcile. It can be assumed that they probably reflected many of the ideas and ambitions the population of Sleswick-Holsten had in that period and also the subsequent disappointment and anger. It was not until 1946 when Storms ambition of a liberal-democratic autonomous Sleswick-Holsten was realized, but this time decreed by the British occupiers while Groth's demands for the hereditary prince Frederick VIII of Augustenborg’s right to the Sleswick-Holsten crown never materialized and his call for restoration of status for the Low Saxon language was not realized before the adoption of the new Sleswick-Holsten constitution in 1990.

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