The whole of Germany it should be?

Changing conceptions of ‘Germany’ 1780-1871

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Master’s Thesis in History

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Spring 2023

Sammendrag

Denne oppgaven tar for seg ulike forestillinger om hva 'Tyskland' var, eller burde være, i perioden ca. 1780-1871 (og senere). De tyske politiske forholdene endret seg enormt i denne perioden, fra det desentraliserte og fragmenterte tysk-romerske riket til det forente og industrialiserte Tyskland under prøyssisk ledelse. Jeg skal derfor undersøke hva 'Tyskland' betød for enkelte fremtredende tyske intellektuelle i denne perioden. For å avgrense oppgaven, vil jeg fokusere på tre hovedbegreper i tekstene jeg undersøker: *territorium*, *nasjon*, og *politisk forfatning*. Min hypotese er at disse konseptuelle endringene fulgte et slags «dialektisk» mønster: for 1700-tallets tenkere var 'Tyskland' et geografisk eller lingvistisk begrep, ikke et politisk et. Dette endret seg i kjølvannet av koalisjonskrigene med Frankrike: yngre, intellektuelle deler av den tyske middelklassen tok til seg nye idéer og ideologier som liberalisme, konstitusjonalisme og nasjonalisme. Dette førte til konflikt med den tyske, konservative eliten, som ønsket å opprettholde politisk absolutisme og motvirke moderne, «revolusjonære» krefter. I denne perioden (1815-48) ser vi derfor en «politisering» av konseptet 'Tyskland'. Dette nådde et høydepunkt i 1848, da det revolusjonære Frankfurtparlamentet forgjeves forsøkte å forene Tyskland til et liberalt, konstitusjonelt monarki. 'Tyskland' som stat var ferdigdefinert, og vi finner fra nå av tanken om at denne (potensielle) staten skulle ekspandere og annektere ikke-tysk territorium i Sentral-Europa. Denne forestillingen om et ekspansivt 'Tyskland' ble beholdt etter den mislykkede 1848-revolusjonen. Forestillingen om et liberalt Tyskland ble derimot avvist etter 1848: innflytelsesrike prøyssiske historikere forestilte seg et prøyssisk-ledet Tyskland, og deres konservative politiske overbevisninger er derfor tydelig markerte i tekstene deres.

Preface

In finishing a project of this magnitude, I am reminded most of all of Socrates' saying: "all I know is that I know nothing." Having worked on this thesis for more than two years, and having learnt so much in the process, I am deeply conscious of the fact that I have barely scratched the surface of what there is to know and learn of the subject. When I was younger, this saddened me; for how could one find the time to read everything? But now I cannot but find it liberating: we humans are infinitely small beings in an infinitely wonderful universe, and there is so much to discover, past, present, and future. As I now finish this thesis and move on to other projects, I hope that you may discover something yourself in it.

I want to thank my supervisor, Stephan Sander-Faes for his invaluable guidance, exhaustive knowledge, constructive criticism, kind words of encouragement, and unwavering support all the way. Whenever I felt at a loss, a discussion with Stephan would without fail give me the courage to continue onward. I could not ask for a better supervisor, and he has my most sincere thanks and gratitude.

I also want to thank my dear Anja for her love and incredible patience. Whenever the thesis seemed insurmountable, she would always give me advice for how to proceed further. When I would lecture her on modern German and European history, she would kindly pretend to care about these topics, to a certain degree, at least. I am also grateful for the fact that her spending time with her two horses meant more peace and quiet for me to work.

I also want to thank my parents and my sister for their unconditional support during these years. During the last weeks of finishing this thesis, even a short phone call would be a great joy in a busy time.

Lastly, I want to thank my cat, Anton, whose silent wisdom has been a great blessing during the long hours of writing.

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15.05.2023

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Introduction

The Germany that limped into the 19th century was one far different from the one that crushed the French and captured Napoleon III at Sedan a century later. Now strong, industrialized, and unified, Germany had become a force to be reckoned with on the international stage. Considering the situation in Central-Europe a century earlier, the massive changes are almost overwhelming. In the late 18th century, what we now call 'Germany' was a hodgepodge of kingdoms, duchies, free cities and ecclesiastical states, only ostensibly united in the Holy Roman Empire. During the early modern period and up to the early decades of the 19th century (and even beyond), local patriotism and loyalty to the local regime more often than not had precedence over that to an illusory 'Germany'.[1] The Holy Roman Emperor, while technically the head of what was at best a framework for alliances,[2] had little real power within the Empire or on the international stage: great states and nations both within the Empire and in Europe were eager to prove their own worth. The Reformations in the 16th century had further rendered its role as the foremost defender of Christendom an anachronism: even within the Empire confessional divisions were a reality, with Lutheranism dominant in the north and Catholicism still holding on in the south and along the Rhine.

A common retort to German disunity is the concept of *Kulturnation*, the concept of a nation being united culturally or linguistically, if not politically. In the case of Germany at the end of the 18th century, this could be exemplarily framed in terms of literature: with writers like Goethe, Schiller or Schlegel, a unified German state was superfluous. Of course, equating high art with a national culture creates new lines of division: these writers appealed more to educated, urban middle-class people or the wealthy nobles than impoverished peasants. A better way of defining *Kultur* as a unifying factor is language: Germany is where one speaks German. A focus on language was common with Enlightenment philosophers such as Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803). Such a definition of 'Germany' would have ambiguous implications for concrete political borders and territory: when Ernst Moritz Arndt in 1813 asked in his patriotic song *What is the German Fatherland*, the answer was "[a]s far as the German tongue rings".[3]

36 years after Arndt, at Frankfurt, 'Germany' was defined completely different. In §1 of the revolutionary Frankfurt Constitution proposed in 1848, Germany had established

[1] Berger 2015, 269
[2] Although wars even within the Empire could be devastating, demonstrated by the Thirty Years' War and the Seven Years' War.
[3] Cited in Schulze 1991, 54

borders;[4] it was to be a political entity, a unified nation-state. This state would not be confined to German-speaking territories, however: the deputies at the Frankfurt Parliament used different arguments to justify the incorporation of areas populated by, e.g., Poles or Czechs. It was also possible or even necessary to exclude: if Austria refused to let go of their massive non-German areas, was it possible—or desirable—to include them into the new Germany? The attempt at unifying under Austrian leadership failed due to this problem of nationalities. To unify under Prussian leadership failed due to constitutional issues—the Frankfurt deputies demanded a constitutional monarchy, but the Prussian king refused anything less than absolutism. While the 1848 revolution therefore didn't lead to a unified German state, it was clear at this point that the concept of Germany had changed from that of the *Kulturnation*.

My thesis investigates how leading Germans throughout this transitional period between the end of the Old and the establishment of the Second Empire conceived of 'Germany'; in other words: what 'Germany' was and, perhaps, what it ought to have been. Considering Germany's long and layered history, this becomes particularly challenging. Further, terms like "identity" and "self-identification" are fraught with meaning, particularly when these terms cease to be merely descriptive or take on prescriptive content. Besides, I do not aim at exploring etymological or semantic changes throughout this century; what I will do is look at a few prominent German writers and examine their writings in order to see what Germany meant for *them*. *These* meanings can then be compared with each other, in order to examine how the concept 'Germany' evolved through this century. It therefore becomes essential to focus on certain terms and ideas and examine how these were thought and written about by writers and thinkers as diverse as liberal poet Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) and Prussian historian Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-96). However, diachronic comparison of terms and even themes are not as straight forward; while Herder and Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) wrote in the tradition of the *Kulturnation*, focusing on the German language as signifying identity, with Treitschke language is seemingly not addressed. As the "problem" of *Kleinstaaterei*[5] had been solved by 1871, Germany was now a political reality with a unified culture. Thus, hard political themes such as statehood and political ideology take precedence in the latter part of the century. This inclusion or exclusion of certain themes is in itself one way of measuring what the writers emphasized in their writings on Germany and 'Germanness'. Discussing shifts in identity over the 19th century without taking the powerful new force of nationalism into account would be impossible, and German historians during the

[4] Verfassung des Deutschen Reiches, March 28, 1849, § 1.
[5] The political fragmentation of Germany from the Middle Ages until 1871.

period 1871-1945 particularly demonstrated just how interwoven nationalism and historiography was.[6] However, looking through the "national lens" is not as obvious as it used to be: prominent historians such as Benedict Anderson[7] and Eric Hobsbawm[8] argued that the concept of "nations", far from being ancient and unalterable entities, had rather been "invented" sometime during the late 18th century. Rather using "nationalism" as a static analytical category, I will be examining these "inventors" to see what nation and nationalism entailed for these philosophers and historians, and how these meanings changed.

In terms of the historiography of Germany and German nationalism, we find a few differing conceptions of 'Germany'. This particularly concerns the relationship between the (late) Holy Roman Empire and 'Germany'. After the Empire was dissolved in 1806, German historians throughout the 19th and 20th century until the end of the Second World War portrayed it as a failed German nation-state, or as a hindrance for a "proper" nation-state in the mould of its European neighbours to the west, most notably Britain and France. As Prussian and Northern German historians advocated the thesis of the Empire as a weak state, this became the orthodox historiographical position. This, in turn, also took on antagonistic colours: the leading German historians would (partly) place the blame on the Austrian emperors for failing to modernize the Empire, instead prioritizing their own international Habsburg domains.[9] We find ideas of this kind in e.g. Leopold von Ranke's *History of the Reformation in Germany* (1854-7). Ranke criticized his colleagues who blamed the Reformation for German disunity; he maintained that German division was not necessarily rooted in the confessional divide, but rather because of foreign intervention in German affairs. It is telling that these foreign powers are Catholic, represented by the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor (and king of Spain) Charles V.[10] Such pro-protestant (and pro-Prussian) and anti-Austrian historiography was also dominant after the founding of the German Empire in 1871. Dominating mainstream German historiography in the period 1871-1945 was the conception of the *Sonderweg* ("special path"). This idea maintained that Germany had taken its own particular path to modernity, by not adopting liberal democracy unlike Britain or France.[11] After the Second World War, this idea was re-evaluated and re-used (particularly in

[6] Iggers 1983, 11-2
[7] Anderson 2006, 4-7
[8] Hobsbawm 1983, 13-4
[9] Evans and Wilson 2012, 8
[10] Ranke 1905, 316-7
[11] Kocka 1999, 41

Western Germany[12]: the new approach to *Sonderweg* rather attempted to explain why fascism had been adopted in Germany during the interwar years.[13] Its proponents usually placed the cultural, ideological, and institutional origins for the Nazi Reich in the German Empire of 1871.[14] While the Holy Roman Empire thus became relegated to the background in this historiographical context, a noteworthy exception is found with Geoffrey Barraclough. For Barraclough, Germany's "special path" was due to its late unification compared to that of other West-European countries. The late unification was in turn due to the concept of "German liberty", that is, the fact that the German world had "always" been decentralized and never had a strong, centralized imperial government.[15] While it has been common to blame this decentralization either on the societal organization of the ancient Germanic tribes or on events of the early modern period (the imperial reforms of the late 15th and early 16th century;[16] the religious divisions of the Reformations and consequently the Religious Peace of Augsburg (1555); the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia, 1618-48), Barraclough places the blame ultimately on Medieval emperors focusing on their non-German territories, leaving Germany in the hands of the German princes.[17]

The historiographical conceptions of Germany as the Holy Roman Empire have undergone major changes since the war, however. The 19th and early 20th centuries' obsession with the power of the nation-state were abandoned: instead of denigrating the Old Empire for what it was, as opposed to what it allegedly failed to be, it was now to be understood on its own terms.[18] One major aspect of this direction was a kind of "institutional rehabilitation". Rather than portraying the Empire as a failed German nation-state, later writers focused on the strengths of its central institutions, particularly the legal ones. For instance, Leopold Auer highlights the role of the Imperial Aulic Council in meditating between the German princes, as well as between the princes and their subjects.[19] There is a historicist quality to this approach. Rather than comparing the Empire with other European states on the trajectory to modernity, it could be appreciated for what it was: a vehicle for relative peace and stability in Central-Europe.[20] While later social and cultural historians would criticize the institutional

[12] See footnote 10 in Steinmetz 1997 for the particular problems East German historians faced regarding the *Sonderweg* thesis.
[13] Kocka 1988, 3-4
[14] Hagen 2012, 9-15
[15] Whaley 2012, 2:171
[16] Hardy 2018, 234
[17] Barraclough 1947, 245-6
[18] German historians such as Otto Hintze had distanced themselves from state-centred historiography already in the wake of the First World War; however, these historians remained a minority until 1945. Iggers 1983, 26-7
[19] Auer 2011, 64
[20] Scales and Whaley 2018, 341-2

and legal historians for perceived overemphasis on institutional details at the cost of historical syntheses,[21] they retained the historicist idea of examining the Empire on its own terms, rather than attempting to place it along the axis of imagined state modernization. Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger's *The Emperor's Old Clothes* (2011) is a good example of this. By treating symbolic gestures (e.g. coronations or table placements at feasts) as meaningful political statements rather than "merely symbolic", Stollberg-Rilinger stresses the pre-modern nature of the Empire.[22] However, the ambiguous and dynamic nature of symbolic representation makes it difficult to succinctly summarize the nature of the Empire: "[e]ven if the tradition-bound rituals suggested as much, the constitution of the empire was not a static, fixed, and objective entity, but something that was calibrated by the players through their actions (…)"[23]

While concepts of the Empire as a nation-state thus for the most part were abandoned, they were not completely given up. Georg Schmidt is a prominent proponent for continuing to think about the Empire in these terms; however, the terms themselves have to be re-evaluated. Rather than state centralization Schmidt highlights the federative nature of the Empire, arguing that cooperation between states and the imperial central authority thus met state obligations.[24] "Nationality" is also redefined: while 19th century historians decried political fragmentation and religious divisions, Schmidt argues rather in terms of cultural and religious *plurality*, as well as through membership in the "federal empire".[25]

Recent years have also shown a particular interest in the historiography of the German borderlands, as well as a new range of sources (like maps and photographs).[26] However, there is not much work regarding German territory within the subdiscipline of intellectual history; it is within this cross-over my contribution will lie. To address these issues in a manageable way, there are a few recurring themes and ideas I will be focusing on, yet it is equally important to note that what follows is an exploration of interconnected aspects that cannot easily be separated from one another. These are territory, nation and political constitution.

The first main theme of this thesis concerns *territory*. What geographical regions did Germany encompass, and what should Germany encompass? How did 'Germany' change from a vague *Kulturnation* into something clearly (albeit controversially) delineated by political borders by the mid-19th century, and how is this expressed through the writings of a

[21] See Vann 1986; Wilson and Schaich 2011, 15 for such critical comments.
[22] Stollberg-Rilinger 2015, 5-9
[23] Stollberg-Rilinger 2015, 12
[24] Schmidt 2011, 48-9
[25] Schmidt 2011, 53-9
[26] Tompkins 2019, 78-9

few important writers? Answers thereto vary by author, genre of the text, and the time in which it was written; ranging from the last decades of the Holy Roman Empire, through the *Vormärz* (1815-48) and the March Revolution, until and beyond the German unification of 1871. Again, as 1848 showed, territories in which multiples distinct nations lived easily led to conflict. As we will see in the case of the Rhineland and Heinrich Heine, territory and territorial struggles could even become the setting for distinct political-constitutional battles.

It would be impossible to write about early 19th century German history without taking the new force of nationalism into consideration. Thus, the second main theme is that of the *nation* as a collective of people sharing a common culture and history, which is connected to the territory it lives on via the "Herderian triad",[27] that is, the conceptual framework that a particular *nation* living in a particular *territory* expresses itself through a particular *language*. The term 'nation' had already undergone a fundamental semantic shift by the time of the Romantic nationalism of the late 18th/early 19th century. While originally referring to the German nobility of the late Holy Roman Empire, during the early 19th century this came instead to mean the German *people*, united by language and culture.[28] While this would serve to unify the multitude of German states in one sense, it could also become another tool for division. This would be clearly demonstrated in 1848, when German attempts to create a nation-state for itself clashed with other nationalities also seeking statehood or autonomy.

This leads us to the last of the important themes, that of *political constitution*. The question of what political form Germany should take is one which will be expressed through the struggles between progressive and liberal middle-class intellectuals on the one hand, and the conservative noble elites and the German princes on the other. While this issue will first rear its head just before and immediately after the Congress of Vienna, with young middle-class having become politicized and emboldened by the French Revolution, it will become a mass phenomenon particularly after the Revolutions of 1830.

This thesis is thus structured around three main themes, which confer on it a certain dialectical structure, or that of succeeding developments. My guiding hypothesis for this thesis is such a "dialectical" development may be traced throughout this period: while the Late Enlightenment thinkers conceived of 'Germany' as a vague *Kulturnation*, the French Revolution, the Coalition Wars and their accompanying upheavals politicized (parts of) the educated German middle-classes. This led to a need to re-define Germany and make it more concrete, first and foremost through the institution of the state. The third stage would then

[27] Blommaert 2010, 44
[28] Whaley 2006, 448-53

envision territorial expansion and a "Prussianizing" for this newly politicized 'Germany'.

After a short introductory chapter providing a brief history of Germany c. 1780-1870 for contextualization, the second chapter treats 'Germany' as a linguistic *Kulturnation*. This chapter covers Germany at the turn of the century, as the Holy Roman Empire is unable to stave off both wilful German princes and an expansionist revolutionary France. At this point in time, 'Germany' as a political entity appears 'hollow'. Rather, as a *Kulturnation* or a linguistic community, it is something non-political. Instead of a sharply delineated place, 'Germany' may instead refer to its inhabitants – the Germans. It is therefore only fitting that the first writer I will examine in this chapter is the aforementioned Herder. Specifically, I will examine excerpts from his historical-philosophical work, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man* (1784-91). While Herder is often regarded as an early theorist and systematist of cultural nationalism, he is never regarded as being a *German nationalist*, i.e. as claiming German ascendancy or superiority. I will therefore examine this work for that which is *specifically German*. The second part of the chapter will be dedicated to Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*, based on lectures he held in Berlin during the winter of 1807-8.[29] By this time, war had raged between France and the German states for more than a decade, the Holy Roman Empire had been dissolved and most of the smaller German states now served France, and the great military power of Prussia had been crushed and was being occupied by France. Given these political and territorial upheavals, territory seems almost totally insignificant to Fichte, as he rather stresses the German language as defining 'Germany'. I will use some of the lectures in the *Addresses* to examine what 'Germany' was for Fichte, linguistically and historically. While it is important to note that Herder wrote mostly pre-Revolution and Fichte post-Revolution, my working hypothesis is that 'Germany' for these was essentially a *Kulturnation*. That is, 'Germany' referred to a territory inhabited by a linguistic collective, not a clearly delineated polity.

The third chapter will encompass the period when the concept of the *Kulturnation* seems no longer to be sufficient. In the wake of the Coalition Wars and the massive territorial changes taking place during the wars and the Congress of Vienna (1814/5) 'Germany' needed to be redefined, made more concrete and delineated. As the French Revolution had aptly demonstrated the strength of a unified state in which citizens participated rather than served as subjects, and due to close contact with and occupation by the French in the western parts of

[29] Moore 2008, xi

Germany, the ideologies of liberalism, constitutionalism and nationalism began to make themselves known among educated middle-class elements. A politization of 'Germany' was thus becoming more widespread during *Vormärz*. This chapter thus represents the hypothetical "antithetical stage" in our examinations: a political re-definition of 'Germany', notably through the modern *state*. I will first examine excerpts from two texts written by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). The first is his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History,* a compilation of lectures he held at the University of Berlin in the period 1822-30. The work as a whole is a teleological history of the world, where the main agent in the "World Spirit" gains ever more self-consciousness and self-knowledge.[30] Here, too, I will be focusing on what Hegel had to say specifically about German history. This will be structured chronologically, in three parts: the ancient Germanic tribes, the medieval Germans and the modern Germans. While this structure will be reminiscent as that of Herder in the previous chapter, the concept of 'statehood' will play a much larger role with Hegel than with Herder. This will also become apparent with the second text, *The German Constitution* (written c. 1799-1802). 'Germany' is here defined in the context of the Holy Roman Empire. It is therefore noteworthy that he discusses Austria and Prussia and their rivalry, just as the old Empire is struggling during its wars with France.

With the next part of the chapter we move to a different milieu. Heine positively embodies the political struggles afflicting Germany during *Vormärz*. He was from the Rhineland, which was under French control until the Congress of Vienna, when most of it was transferred to Prussia. He was therefore well acquainted with the liberal ideals of the French Revolution, and the dichotomy of a (perceived) liberal France as opposed to a backwards Germany would be an important part of Heine's outlook for the rest of his life.[31] As a member of 'Young Germany'[32], he was notoriously a thorn in the side of the German authorities. His writings were therefore banned in Germany,[33] and he lived in exile in Paris from 1831 until his death. Heine therefore signals the politization of the educated middle-class who is prepared to struggle with the reactionary authorities in order to gain political rights. Unlike the venerated professor at the University of Berlin, Hegel, who claims that the modern state is the fullest and most complete expression of freedom and reason,[34] for Heine, the state is almost something to resist. This was particularly so because the state in question was the arch-

[30] Breisach 2007, 231
[31] Sammons 1979, 30-35
[32] A loose group of young, liberal and unapologetically political writers.
[33] Sammons 1979, 205-210
[34] Little 2020

conservative Prussia. This struggle is a recurring theme in his poem, *Germany. A Winter's Tale* (1844). In the poem, the narrator travels from Paris through the Rhineland to Hamburg. The spatial aspect of this poem is intertwined with the political one; throughout the journey, liberalism and Francophilia is repeatedly contrasted with the Prussian soldiers stationed here and there. The Rhine also serves as an important geographical marker, as the poem was written only a few years after the Rhine crisis (in which France threatened to annex the Left Bank of the river), which allows me to also examine how Heine writes about that quintessential German river. Lastly, while large parts of the poem are concerned with German history (as Heine satirizes it) he also looks towards the future; we will therefore examine the two possible futures for Germany he implicitly sketches out.

The writings I will examine in my final chapter of this thesis take a diametrically different point of view than that of Heine. Both authors are staunchly pro-Prussian, which is explained by 'Germany' having achieved 'unity through Prussia', thereby rendered more concrete than during the earlier decades. My guiding hypothesis is that for the period after the mid-century revolutions (c. 1848-1871), we can identify a desire for expansion, which constitutes a new idea of what 'Germany' means. Put differently, by this time 'Germany' had been defined as something concrete and political (in the image of Prussia); now it was time to expand. Such ideas will first be made explicit during the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848, which tried to constitute a unified German nation-state. 'Expansion' would in this case have a twofold meaning: firstly, it means the determination of German political borders so that the German state would include non-German minorities. Particularly in multi-ethnic areas on the periphery of the German world, such as Poland, Bohemia or the borderlands of Denmark would this prove a controversial topic during and after 1848. Secondly, this also entailed the issue of Lesser Germany vs. Greater Germany. As the Austrian Empire consisted of territories both within and outside of the German Confederation, the question was whether a German nation-state could include Austria (which refused to give up all its non-German lands), or whether it had to be excluded from this project.

Both writers I am focusing on in this chapter are representatives for the so-called Prussian school of history. These historians espoused a German national history focused on Prussia and perceived Prussian efforts to unify the German states (excluding Austria). As the Lesser-German solution became a reality in 1871 this historiographical school had "won", and thus became the dominant historiographical tradition during the German Empire.[35] As both of

[35] Southard 1995, 1

the texts I will examine were written post-1871, in addition to these ideas of territorial extent and expansion, two other important and interconnected themes therefore will recur throughout them. First, the equation of 'Prussia' with 'Germany', or perhaps more correctly, the view that Prussia seems to be one of the few actors able to see the larger, national picture. Its opponents are thus on the opposite side of history: on the one hand the wilful German princes, more concerned with their own sovereignty than with national concerns, who refuse to work with Prussia (most notably Austria). On the other side we find the liberals (and a smaller republican minority). This is where the second theme is represented: the repudiation of liberalism and constitutionalism. Thus, we will revisit the struggle expressed by Heine in the previous chapter, though now historically and from the point of view of his political opponents. In short, the three main themes or foci of this part are: 1) territory (German dominance over non-German lands, Lesser- or Greater-Germany), 2) Prussia as the main vessel for the German nation and 3) the inversion of established liberal activism.

The first text I will examine is the *History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century* (1879-94) by Heinrich von Treitschke. Treitschke is likely the most well-known of the historians writing in the Prussian tradition, although this is probably so due to his militant and extreme nationalistic sentiments rather than his rigorous scholarship.[36] In terms of territory, I've chosen excerpts of the work which relates of Prussian acquisition of territory in the wake of the Coalition Wars. More precisely, I will focus on those parts of the Rhineland gained by Prussia with the Congress of Vienna. This means it is a fitting contrast to Heine's poem, particularly as Heine and Treitschke take up very different positions on the battleground between the liberal Rhinelanders and the reactionary Prussians. As to Treitschke's views on *Vormärz* liberalism, I will focus on his writings of two festivals dedicated to German nationalism pre-1848. Both the Wartburg Festival (1817) and the Hambach Festival (1832) were in their own ways inspired by French-styled constitutional liberalism. By seeing how Treitschke writes about these festivals, I shall show how this particular kind of liberalism was viewed from the other side of the political spectrum, at a time when the German nation-state had already been founded on illiberal grounds.

The second text I want to examine is Heinrich von Sybel's (1817-95) *The Founding of the German Empire by William I* (1889-94). While the overall work treats German history[37] from the 1848 revolution right up to the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, I will focus on

[36] Breisach 2007, 236-8

[37] Though mostly from a Prussian perspective: Sybel only employs Prussian archive materials for his research. Further, "[i]n no part of the book [has he] tried to conceal [his] Prussian (…) convictions." Sybel 1890, 1:vi-vii

the first volume, most of which is dedicated to the 1848 Revolution in Germany. Relatively large portions of this volume are dedicated to the Frankfurt Parliament and the discussions therein. Whereas with Treitschke we are able to examine Prussia in the Rhineland and the ridicule of the liberalism expressed during the festivals, Sybel's writing allows the historian to focus on the territorial aspects and multi-dimensional expansion of the idea and conception of 'Germany'. This is exemplified by the discussions of the Frankfurt Parliament, especially the question of Schleswig-Holstein. How does Sybel treat this issue, both the discussion in the Parliament, and in terms of the war between Denmark and Prussia? In answering these questions I hope to see where Sybel's sympathies lay, though as a Prussian and German patriot I of course suspect him of justifying incorporating the duchies into the new German nation-state. I will examine similar questions in treating the second theme, the question of Posen (another area gained by Prussia with the Congress of Vienna). Here questions of territorial incorporation into Germany is still relevant, but so would be the question of German support (or lack thereof) of restoring a Polish state. This latter issue also cuts into the Frankfurt Parliament itself with its liberal majority, and thus we may also see how Sybel treats questions of constitutionalism, with his knowledge of how it failed to unify Germany. While the section on the last theme is a bit shorter that the two preceding it, this theme is recurring throughout the texts, particularly those of the Prussian historians. This is the question of Greater- or Lesser-Germany, posed as whether Austria ought to be a part of the German nation-state or not. I will examine how Sybel writes about this issue, in particular how he reports on Austrian attitudes and response to the plans of establishing a German nation-state as proposed by the Frankfurt Parliament.

Chapter 1 – Germany between the empires, 1780-1871

In the late 18th century, most of the German-speaking world was united in in the thousand-year-old Holy Roman Empire. The word "unity" is misleading, however: at this point, the Empire had devolved into something that amounted to nothing more than a loose, symbolic association (in practise, not even a military alliance, as proven by France's German allies during the Coalition Wars). Hundreds of essentially sovereign states, ranging from small city-states to great powers like Austria and Prussia made up the political patchwork that was Central-Europe. Religious divisions and cultural differences were also prominent, leaving uncertain grounds for building a common identity.

The French Revolution and the resulting decades of warfare fundamentally changed Germany. Territorially and constitutionally, it particularly sharpened the divisions between the western and eastern parts of the Empire. The Rhineland and areas in North-Western parts of Germany were outright annexed by France.[38] To recompensate the German princes who had lost territory in this region, in 1803 the Imperial Diet passed a resolution (drafted by the French) that annexed the smaller German states to these princes. Most of the ecclesiastical states were among those annexed, and this dealt a severe blow to Catholic secular presence in the German world.[39] This, combined with Napoleon declaring himself Emperor of the French a year later, and organizing almost all the German states into the Confederation of the Rhine (a French puppet-state) in 1806, meant that the Holy Roman Empire was virtually without significance or members. Shortly after, Holy Roman Emperor Francis II abdicated and simultaneously dissolved the Empire.[40]

Even though Napoleon later was defeated, the Revolutionary period held an irrevocable influence in Germany. Occupation and close contact with the French meant that new ideas of liberalism and constitutionalism had gotten a foothold particularly in the Rhineland and in Southwestern Germany. War with the French had awoken (an ill-defined) nationalism among middle-class intellectuals. These, who had hoped for the creation of a liberal, German nation-state were sorely disappointed. At the Congress of Vienna (1814/5), it was instead decided to establish a new German Confederation. Led by Austria and its Chancellor Klemens von Metternich, one of its goals became to suppress liberal and radical

[38] Hobsbawm 1962, 80-1
[39] Whaley 2012, 2:620-3
[40] Wilson 2006, 731

thoughts which had been unleashed by the Revolution.[41] In the historiography of Germany, this period (1815-30) is usually described in this context; with national-liberal activity[42] up until 1819, when the Confederation issued the Carlsbad Decrees which instituted censorship, supervision of universities and banned student associations.[43]

The nationalist elements were thus successfully suppressed until 1830, when both the July Revolution in France and an uprising in Russian Poland took place. Inspired by these liberal-nationalist revolutions, the Hambach festival was arranged in South-West Germany in May 1832, with national-liberal (and even radical republican) overtones. While the authorities again increased censorship and banned political associations and festivals, they were unable to completely stamp out these subversive political forces. In part, this was due to new tendencies within literature. A new generation of writers, politically conscious, replaced the older Romanticists. Most (in)famous of these were the group termed 'Young Germany': writers such as Heinrich Heine and Georg Büchner were emblematic of the new progressive (even radical) intellectuals who wrote satirically and polemically of the backwards and reactionary German elites. They frequently did so in exile: in 1835 their collective writings were banned in Germany.[44]

During the 1840s it became apparent that nationalism was starting to become a mass phenomenon. This was clearly visible during the Rhine crisis of 1840, when war threatened to break out between France and the German states as the French ministry wanted to annex the Left Bank of the Rhine. While peace ultimately triumphed, the crisis had revealed a particularly Francophobe type of nationalism, far removed from the cosmopolitanism of Hambach. It had also seemingly created a (temporary) unity between the elites and the masses. Prohibitions on pan-German associations were lifted, and the latter were even subsidized by state authorities. In addition to these middle-class concerns, the 1840s were also harshly felt by the lower classes: population growth, unregulated urbanization and early industrialization (with all its accompanying social ills) combined with economic crises during the middle of the decade to help politicize and radicalise the early German proletariat.[45]

This all came to a head in March 1848. Following news from Paris, riots broke out all over Germany and new liberal governments were installed in the German states. In addition, elections were arranged for an all-German national parliament, with the goal of preparing a

[41] Burg 1992, 31
[42] Though still very limited in scope; mostly limited to students and liberal professors.
[43] Schulze 1991, 57
[44] Nipperdey 1996, 323-31
[45] Schulze 1991, 64-8

constitution for what was to become a unified German nation-state.[46] This promising start soon gave way to internal and external problems: the borders the national parliament envisioned for Germany clashed with other nations also in the process of nation- and state-building; political divisions within the parliament and throughout the German states (as the middle-classes were just as afraid of social revolution as the old conservative elites, in time the former would ally with the latter); and the uneasy "alliance" between the national parliament and particularly the two German great powers, Austria and Prussia. There was also the question of if and how the multi-national Austrian Empire could be integrated into the projected German nation-state.

In the end, the March project failed. Austria could not realistically be integrated, and Prussia likewise refused to join. As the national parliament broke up, it was clear that Germany would not be united through parliamentary and peaceful means. While the 1850s on the one hand was a decade of political reaction and suppression of subversive and dissenting voices, it was also a decade in which state governments focused on economic policies.[47] The failure to unite politically coincided with successful economic unification: the Prussian-led *Zollverein* had integrated most of the German states into a customs union by the 1850s, with the notable exception of Austria.[48] As things stood, this worked to subvert the traditional power-dynamic within Germany: whereas Austria traditionally had been considered primus inter pares, it was now being dethroned by a modernizing and industrializing Prussia.

Prussia's ascendence was definitely demonstrated in 1866. Austria and Prussia had won from Denmark the right to administer the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein; however, they had differing intentions with these. Austria, in order to gain influence in Germany, advocated their independence from Denmark and membership in the German Confederation, a view popular in the Confederation. Prussia, on the other hand, wanted outright annexation of both duchies, and announced that it no longer recognized the Confederation. War followed between Prussia and most of the other German states. Due to modern weaponry and tactics, as well as Austrian diplomatic isolation, Prussia won handily. It and other North German states joined together in the North German Confederation, which replaced the German Confederation. Austria and the larger South German states were left independent.[49] Four years later, a diplomatic crisis with France led Prussia again to war. National sentiment led to the

[46] Schulze 1991, 70-2
[47] Alexander 2012, 134-5
[48] Schulze 1991, 77-80
[49] Alexander 2012, 142-3

South German states (excluding Austria) to join together with Prussia both in the war and in the new Prussian-led German Empire, proclaimed in early 1871.[50]

[50] Blackbourn 1997, 244

Chapter 2 – Germany as *Kulturnation*

Herder's German history

The ancient Germanics: national character

> We now come to the people, who, by their size and strength of body; their enterprising, bold and persevering spirit in war; their heroic propensity to military service, to follow in a body their leaders, wherever they chose to conduct them, and to divide the lands they subdued as their booty; with their extensive conquests, and the general diffusion of the [G]erman political around; contributed more than any other race to the weal and woe of this quarter of the globe.[51]

Already in the very introduction of Herder's Germanic tribes, we see the common conception of them as tough and warlike. This view derives to a large degree from the rediscovery and translation of Tacitus' *Germania* in the 15th and 16th centuries, giving detailed information on the ancient Germanic tribes of whom until then little was known. This work could also serve to distinguish Germanics (and modern Germans) from ancient Romans and their linguistic and geographical descendants, the French and Italians. The perceived nature of this distinction often took the form of a dichotomy, with the Latins portrayed as complacent, decadent, and "too" civilized, and the Germans as large and strong of body, vigorous, and closer to nature.[52]

Their strength of body combined with centuries of living next door to the Roman empire: clashes with the Roman armies and experience gained from serving in them themselves contributed further to Germanic military prowess and expertise.[53] However, this came at the expense of proper state-building, and crucially, at settled territorial residency. While Herder's ancient Germanics for the most part were nomads, the lands they settled were often already inhabited by peoples whom the Germanics conquered. The Gauls were one such people. After they first had been conquered by the Romans,

> they were conquered (…) afterwards by several [T]eutonic nations; by whom we see them frequently oppressed with great violence, enfeebled, or extirpated and expelled (…) Goths, [F]ranks, Burgundians, [A]lemans, [S]axons, [N]ormans, and other

[51] Herder 2012, 477. Note that Herder's use of the term "German" and its derivations is oftentimes ambiguous. It could refer either to modern Germans proper (i.e. those belonging to the German nation), or to the Germanic tribes of antiquity and the early Middle Ages. As this section refers to "different [G]erman nations" (477) (probably meaning tribes), and as the early medieval kingdoms of the variegated Germanics are described in a later chapter, "German" in the quote clearly means "Germanic-speaking". Herder also notes (480) that different Germanic tribes varies enormously regarding warlikeness, level of civilization, mythology and national literature.

[52] Ruehl 2014, 131; Birley 1999, xxxvi-xxxviii

[53] Herder 2012, 478

> [G]erman [sic] nations, variously intermixed, have taken possession of their lands, eradicated their language, and extirpated their name.[54]

We may also note that for Herder, while the Germanic tribes were militarily superior to the Gauls, the Gauls surpassed them regarding art and culture (though these too were inferior to Roman civilization).[55] Similar events took place in Iberia [56], Britain[57], Scandinavia and the Baltics[58], with the warlike Germanic tribes conquering the native peoples.

Such tendencies for conquest and nomadism apparently stemmed from their national character. In what appears as a "zero-sum game", Germanic disposition towards militarism left little room for intellectual culture and, crucially, agriculture (which also explains the thick forests of Central-Europe which were so important later in German folklore). The search for more prosperous and cultivated lands was therefore an important reason for why the Germanic tribes spread throughout large parts of Europe and intruded on other peoples. Because of this nomadic lifestyle, "it is necessary to guard ourselves against any partial attachment to a favourite spot for our modern constitution; with this the ancient [G]ermans had no concern, they followed the course of a different stream of nations."[59]

Regarding territory, the role the Germanic tribes plays in book XVI of *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man* seems noteworthy. The book describes the different peoples of Europe (apart from the Romans) during antiquity and the Migration Period, including their territory of habitation, territory of conquest (if applicable) and migration patterns. For example, the Hungarians "[probably] first seated themselves in the land of the [B]ashkirians, between the Wolga and the Yaik, (…) From Pannonia they now invaded Moravia, Bavaria, and Upper Italy (…) Thuringia, Saxony, Franconia, Hesse, Swabia, Alsatia, and even France, and afterwards Italy".[60] However, while the Germanic tribes were much more important in Herder's view, there is no such neat list of their geographical distribution. As we've seen, the reason for this is Germanic warlikeness, and it is twofold: 1) a lack of Germanic agricultural tradition forced them to intrude on already settled lands and 2) their military tradition often led them to subjugate peoples already living in these lands. For instance, because the

[54] Herder 2012, 472
[55] Herder 2012, 471-2
[56] Herder 2012, 470
[57] Herder 2012, 471-2
[58] Herder 2012, 475-7
[59] Herder 2012, 480
[60] Herder 2012, 476

"submissive and obedient"[61] Slavs had no military character, "many nations, chiefly of [G]erman origin, injuriously oppressed them."[62]

Medieval Germany: territory

Book XVIII of *Outlines* treats medieval Europe, particularly the early medieval kingdoms established by the Germanic tribes. Compared with book XVI, the ambiguity of Germanic/German is not as acute; "Germany" is simply the native territory of the numerous Germanic tribes, from which many of them migrated.

Early medieval Germany is in an unenviable position. While, as we have seen, the ancient Germanics spread over large parts of Europe, Germany itself seems to under foreign domination: "not only was half of [Germany] occupied by a foreign race, the [S]lavians, but the remaining [G]erman moiety, after various ravages, had become a province, subjected by conquest to the great empire of the [F]ranks."[63] Regarding the Frankish domination of the German tribes, we may here find a clue as to what constitutes a dividing border between the Franks (later French) and the Germanic tribes east of the Franks (later Germans). (This also implies that the Franks, though originally a Germanic tribe, later became "latinized".) In this part, Herder explicitly refers to Germanic tribes being conquered and Christianized by the Franks: The Frisons[64], Allemans,[65] Thuringians,[66] and the Saxons[67]. The area these groups inhabited may give us a vague idea about Germany's imagined western border for Herder. In Herder's chapter on the Franks we find further information about Frankish incursions into and conquest of Germany: "the South of Germany, to Pannonia,[68] and the north, to the Elbe and the Eyder".[69]

On the eastern frontier there were similar problems: "Arnulph, the savage [H]ungarian, broke into the country, to destroy the [M]oravian kingdom of the [S]lavians (…)"[70] While in Herder's time Moravia was part both of the Habsburg Crownlands and the Holy Roman Empire, during the Migration Period, as the Germanic tribes spread west and northwest, the

[61] Herder 2012, 483
[62] Herder 2012, 483
[63] Herder 2012, 554
[64] A Western Germanic people located mostly in the Netherlands and North-Western Germany (Haarman 2013).
[65] An alliance of Germanic people living on both sides of the Upper Rhine, in Alsace, Switzerland, and modern-day South-West Germany (*Encyclopedia Britannica* 1998a).
[66] A Germanic people centred around what is modern-day Thuringia in Central-Germany (Buchberger 2018).
[67] «A Germanic people located primarily in modern north-west Germany, probably first attested in Ptolemy's *Geography* as a tribe north of the lower Elbe River in the area of modern Schleswig-Holstein" (Buchberger and Loseby 2018).
[68] Modern-day western Hungary, eastern Austria, and parts of the northern Balkans (*Encyclopedia Britannica* 1998c).
[69] Herder 2012, 540
[70] Herder 2012, 555

lands they left behind were subsequently occupied by Slavic peoples.[71] Thus, despite these areas being inhabited from that time onwards into Herder's own time by predominately Slavs, he thought of it as a constituting a part of Germany. On the surface, this may seem to contradict Herder's well-known focus on language as an indicator of nationality[72] (and with it, territory). However, we also find what we may call a "soft climatic determinism" within Herder's theory of nationalism. In general, notions of territory, climate, nations and national characters work together in the following manner: as mankind spread over the earth, they found themselves in very different climates, from forests and steppes to arid deserts and tundras. Different peoples therefore had to adapt to different climates, and this therefore shaped their cultures, institutions, economies, "national characters", personalities, and possibly even their physiologies. (For example, the Arab "is lean and muscular, his complexion brown, his bones strong […] From the dangers of his mode of life, he has imbibed wariness and shy mistrust"[73]). Even though people may emigrate from this "original habitat" later on (like during the Migration Period, or during later European colonization), they have already been sufficiently shaped by their original habitat (their "homeland"), and it continues to form part of their identity. Thus, even though the habitat of modern Germans does not correspond 1:1 with that of the ancient Germanics pre-Migration Period, because the original habitat shaped the ancient Germanics, and because the Germanic way of life gradually has been transmitted from generation to generation (becoming German, Norse, Dutch etc. in the process), modern Germans still have a connection to their original habitat, even though they to a certain degree may have been supplanted by other peoples.[74]

However, we must still be careful so as not to overstate the importance of fixed geographical boundaries as constituting national boundaries. In one of his *Letters to the Advancement of Humanity* (dated to 1794) Herder states that

> [g]eographical boundaries alone do not make up the whole of a nation; an imperial diet of princes, a common language of the peoples do not bring about this alone; yes, the latter varies so much in Germany according to the provinces (large numbers speak a completely foreign language, entire classes of people take no part in the ideas) (…)[75]

This extract also touches upon the multinational aspect of Germany and central-Europe in general, and which is a point of interest among Herder scholars. Multinational communities

[71] Kobylinski 2005, 531
[72] «Whoever was brought up in the same language, whoever learned to pour his heart into it, to express his soul in it, belongs to the people of this language» Herder 1971, 1:294-5 (my translation)
[73] Herder 2012, 167-8
[74] Patten 2010, 667-8
[75] Herder 1971, 1:266-7 (my translation)

inside and across political boundaries seem to be inextricably connected with Herder's political views, and with his view of the state and state-building. For instance, a multinational empire is based on violence and forcing different nationalities to live together in a single state and under one single government, thus being inherently despotic.[76] Further, according to Herder, the political boundaries (i.e. the borders of *states*) of 18th century Europe did not reflect boundaries between national communities; these states were rather the domains of the monarchy and aristocracy which had developed out of medieval feudalism, which the majority of the population would not be integrated into (showing also such states to be despotic).[77] As e.g. great German states such as Prussia and particularly Austria both were hereditary monarchies and multinational, their political boundaries did not separate distinct nationalities, but were rather arbitrary lines drawn up by centuries of politics and dynastic warfare. (It could perhaps be argued that the Holy Roman Empire could be described as a similar multinational polity if one does not restrict oneself only to treating states. This is ambiguous however, as Herder apparently does not dedicate much space to describing the Empire, at least not in *Outlines*.) As such boundaries were apt to change rapidly, they could not simply be used for distinguishing between different nationalities, the more so in the culturally variegated Central- and Eastern-Europe.

For the development of Germany, the most important of the early medieval kingdoms is undoubtably the Frankish Empire. It was connected with Germany partially through territory (the eastern part of the Empire became the basis for Germany as a monarchy and later as the Holy Roman Empire), political domination (we've touched upon Frankish conquest of Germanic tribes) and a kind of imperial succession (with Charlemagne as the first [Holy] Roman Emperor in the 9th century, to an almost equation of "Germany" with the Holy Roman Empire from the 15th/16th century onwards[78]).

Herder's assessment of the Frankish Empire is mixed. As we've seen, the Franks conquered and Christianized the Germanic tribes living to their north and east (amongst others). The conquest of Thuringia is "barbaric", Clovis I is described as a tyrant who depopulated the surrounding territories, the kings and nobles are immoral (both pre- and post-Charlemagne), and the kingdom is overall governed poorly.[79] As we shall see, in Herder's view the transferral of the status of "Holy Roman Empire" from the Frankish Empire to Germany is also to Germany's detriment. There seems to be two redeeming factors about the

[76] Eggel and Mancini-Griffoli 2007, 64-5
[77] van Benthem van den Bergh 2018
[78] Wilson 2016, 255-60
[79] Herder 2012, 540

Frankish Empire (these two factors also seem to connect the Empire with Germany): 1) they were instrumental in Christianizing the rest of the Germanic tribes and 2) Charlemagne, whom Herder apparently views as their only capable and just monarch.

Herder portrays the Germans as being "the Christian successors" of the Franks, at least in the sense of the former taking over religious-military role of the latter.[80] When the Frankish Empire disintegrates, Germany inherits both the physical infrastructure of its religion (churches, abbeys etc.)[81], as well as its important role within the growing Christendom of Europe. Both Franks and later the Germans served as protectors of Christian Europe from pagan peoples to the north and the east and were important agents when converting these neighbours.[82] Lastly, the Frankish Empire's particular role within Christendom is connected to the second point, Charlemagne, who also serves a role in connecting the Frankish Empire to Germany. When Charlemagne is crowned Roman emperor in 800, this establishes a new (in Western Europe at least) title that serves as the zenith of the European royal hierarchy. However, for Herder, this title (and maintenance of the empire) seems to be a burden for any other than Charlemagne:

> Charlemagne deserved the crown: O that it had been buried with him, at least for Germany! For, when he was no more, of what advantage was it on the head of the good and weak Lewis? [A]nd when Lewis was compelled prematurely to divide his empire, how oppressive was it on the heads of each of his successors! The empire was torn to pieces (…) No one, but a man, like him, could rule an empire of such vast extent (…)[83]

However, Herder also uses Charlemagne to connect the past to his own time, and a potential future:

> Rest in peace, great king! [T]oo great for a long train of thy successors. A thousand years are elapsed, and the Rhine and the Danube are not yet united, though thy hand had already begun the work for a trifling object (…) By thee the German language was cherished (…) Perhaps thou wilt again appear at the end of the eighteenth century, and alter that machine which began at the end of the eight. Till then we will honour thy

[80] "[I]n Germany the church is greatly indebted to the kings of the [F]ranks at the expense of the nation. The archbishops and bishops of Salzburg, Wurtzburg, Eichstadt, Augsburg, Freisingen, Ratisbon, Passau, Osnabruck, Bremen, Hamburg, Halberstadt, Minden, Verden, Paderborn, Hildersheim, and Munster, the abbots of Fulda, Hirschfeld, Kempten, Korvey, Elwangen, St. Emeran, and others, established themselves through their means (…) The king of France is the firstborn son of the church: the emperor of Germany, his younger step-brother, only inherited the guardianship of the church from him." (Herder 2012, 541)

[81] «Gaul and [R]oman Germany were full of bishops. They sat in seemly order along the course of the Rhine, and on the banks of the Danube. Mentz, Triers, Cologne, Besancon, Worms, Spires, Basil […]" (Herder 2012, 540)

[82] Herder 2012, 555

[83] Herder 2012, 544-5

> relics (…) Great Charles, thy empire, which fell immediately after thee, is thy monument: France, Germany and Lombardy are it's [sic] ruins.[84]

Herder is unclear about what this refers to, and it becomes even more difficult because of the ambiguity "thy empire" involves (whether it means the Frankish Empire (*Regnum Francorum*), of which Charlemagne was monarch from 768, or the "Roman Empire" of which he was emperor from 800). If it is supposed to mean the (Holy) Roman Empire, then this already existed, as Herder seemingly considered the contemporary empire to be the continuation of that of 800.[85] Suggestions of some kind of German polity could perhaps be argued for, by the hypothetical connection of the Rhine and Danube, or by the highlighting of the German language, as Germany, along with France, are explicitly distinct entities from the Frankish Empire, and mere vestiges of it. It is also possible that Herder is musing on a kind of pan-European, "Neo-Carolingian"[86] empire which would capture his cosmopolitan sympathies to a larger degree than the contemporary Holy Roman Empire (which by Herder's time long since had lost its international status, and was simply identified with Germany[87]), though more concrete evidence as to what Herder really means is lacking. Considering Herder's view on cosmopolitanism as described below, this becomes even more unclear.

Instead of treating national and regional topics separately as he has done for most of the latter half of *Outlines*, in the final book Herder discusses general European trends and developments subject by subject throughout the Middle Ages and early modern period. Though these topics concerns pan-European developments, Herder exemplifies these through certain nations who excelled or were prominent in these areas. These topics covers maritime trade; aristocratic warrior culture and the literature it inspired; the crusades and their consequences for Europe; rationalism and Scholasticism; cities as centres of manufacturing, trade and art; and universities, inventions and practical sciences. In this last book of *Outlines* Germany or the Holy Roman Empire are hardly mentioned, as the above-mentioned developments for the most part are being led by Italy and particularly France. We may note one last jab at both the Catholic church and the Holy Roman Empire and their by then anachronistic attempts at spiritual or political universalism. Regarding the Hanseatic League, "to which Europe is indebted for its best activity"[88],

[84] Herder 2012, 545
[85] Emperors post-814 «inherits» Charlemagne's crown, seemingly without any break in continuity (Herder 2012, 555-6).
[86] Instead of «Neo-Frankish», in order to emphasize the idea of Charlemagne as a European rather than "merely" a Frank.
[87] Wilson 2015
[88] Herder 2012, 631

> [it] contributed more to give Europe the form of a commonwealth, than all the croisades and [R]omish rites, for it rose superior to religious or national distinctions, and founded the connexion of states on mutual advantage (…) Cities accomplished what was beyond the power of princes, priests, and nobles: they formed of Europe *one common* cooperative body.[89]

While Herder usually is regarded as a nationalist and usually *not* regarded as a political philosopher[90] (perhaps particularly regarding international politics), he argues against jingoistic nationalism as a political doctrine and strategy. For Herder, international affairs should take the form as cosmopolitan cooperation. However, cosmopolitanism to the degree that it is possible and desirable, is not to be found through spiritual or political domination or despotism (through the Catholic church or dynastic states), or through thoughts of cultural superiority (in Herder's own context, this took form as the prevalence of French rather than German culture and language among the German upper classes[91]). In order to be sustainable and peaceful, cosmopolitanism in international affairs must take shape as productive cooperation (as with the Hanseatic League) and mutual respect for one another's differences.[92]

Fichte's German nation

The national crisis

Even though Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* were written only a few decades after Herder's *Outlines*, Germany had been completely overturned by almost constant warfare with France. As mentioned in chapter 1, this had led to enormous changes regarding both territory and political institutions the German world. The Holy Roman Empire had been dissolved, Prussia had been reduced to a second-rate power, and the western parts of the old Empire was either allied with France or had been outright annexed. As the ancient political order had been demolished, Fichte, unlike Herder, was therefore writing in a time of perceived national crisis.

Already in Fichte's first of a total of fourteen addresses we get the sense that the French invasion of the German states signals much more than politico-military matters; in the opening pages he portrays this as an historical-philosophical event with great ramifications yet to come. Interestingly enough, Fichte does not simply portray the French invasion in terms of good/evil, oppressor/oppressed or the like. We rather get the sense of a Germany that is on the threshold of a kind of philosophical-eschatological renewal: the old, corrupt, and decadent

[89] Herder 2012, 628 (Herder's italics)
[90] Forster 2018, 262-6
[91] Spencer 2007, 99
[92] Forster 2018, 266-71

Germany has to be destroyed in order for a new and better Germany to take its place. (However, we may also note that the designation "Germany" is also used only once throughout the first address; rather, Fichte prefers terms as "the German nation", or "Germans".) Indeed, Fichte explicitly describes the invasion as the consequence of said moral corruption: "At some point selfishness has annihilated itself by its complete development (…) and, since it would not willingly posit any other end but itself, another, alien purpose has been imposed upon it by an external power."[93] This "total selfishness" which characterizes this age is clarified a bit later, and presented as a moral-political issue. Within a political community selfishness works from the ground up, starting with the rulers' subjects, then becoming total when the rulers themselves become selfish. This state is distinguished by both an external and internal aspect, both of which characterize of Germany during Napoleonic hegemony, according to Fichte.

Externally, such selfishness expresses itself in that a political community (such as a state) would only care about the security of its own borders, neglecting that of its supposed allies. This probably refers to Prussian neutrality after the peace of Basel of 1795,[94] and might also reference the German states allying themselves with France as the Confederation of the Rhine. The focus on princely politics regarding the corruption of Germany also relates contemporary concerns. "A people can be thoroughly corrupt (…) and yet not only endure but even perform outwardly glorious deeds, if only its government be not corrupt also."[95] The final stages of this age of corruption is expressed not necessarily through *Kleinstaaterei* (i.e. the internal political *borders* of the Holy Roman Empire) itself, but rather through the great local powers of the lesser princes to the disadvantage of that of the emperor (i.e. the political *constitution* of the Holy Roman Empire).[96] This constitution of the Empire therefore has the effect that the German princes "divide and conquer" themselves to the benefit of France, since the German states without any allies is forced to subject itself to the French Empire.

However, princely selfishness was not enough to subject Germany to this state; this was only possible because selfishness characterized the internal attitudes of the German states, not merely interstate politics of war and alliances. According to Fichte, the internal expression of selfishness inside a political community is probably best described as liberal individualism. Fichte is relatively vague on what this entails, but he repeatedly uses terms

[93] Fichte 2008, 9
[94] See Fichte 2008, 14, note 8
[95] Fichte 2008, 14
[96] Wilson 2006, 570-1

such as "slackening of the reins of state".[97] This may be tied to what Fichte believes is necessary for supporting a stable society; bonds between the individual and the collective as a whole. In Germany, these bonds had been rendered asunder on the one hand by Enlightenment philosophy (which with its materialist doctrines has destroyed the German spiritual community), and on the other by more liberal and humanist government (which removed the individual's fear of punishment). New and stronger bonds therefore had to be created. Where the contemporary bonds binding the individual to the community simply consisted of individual and egotistic fear and hope, it is Fichte's hope that stronger bonds also will include religious-moral aspects, but above all that of *national empathy*. An individual with the capability of such empathy further ceases to be simply an individual but becomes aware of itself as merely a part of an "extended self".[98]

One of Fichte's assumptions for this project is that it is possible already at this stage to speak of a German nation: it is a community of individuals who share the same fate. Fichte's perceived unity consists of each member being aware of and acknowledging this community of fate. Indeed, to be a member of the German nation seems to be the most important (or rather, the *only* important) identity at this point in the history of Germany. Awareness and acknowledgement of this community of fate is what we above dubbed "national empathy". The only way to save Germany after its domination by France, is to make such awareness widespread among the Germans, and making all its inhabitants take part in the "extended self", which will be a complete reforging of the German identity: "(…) the means of salvation (…) consists in cultivating a completely new self, a self that has hitherto existed perhaps as an exception among individuals, but never as a universal and national self (…) what I am proposing is the complete reform of the current educational system as the only means of preserving the existence of the German nation."[99] While Fichte's plans for German educational reforms are not my focus in this chapter, his remarks already in the first address may by noted for how they tie into his radical thoughts on creating a new, German identity. Firstly, complete reforms are necessary, as the current fails more often than not in instilling national empathy within individuals (merely keeping them at the level of self-interest); secondly, whereas the contemporary and earlier systems of education had been the prerogative of the privileged classes, Fichte's proposed system would include "all Germans" (whatever else this term encompasses, in this context it means members of higher *and* lower

[97] Fichte 2008, 14
[98] Fichte 2008, 16-7
[99] Fichte 2008, 17

social groups) in order to create not an elite nor popular educational system, but a national one.[100] While the well-to-do, educated classes would thus fuse together with the great masses of Germans, this would be a project for the future. Before that could happen, the "cultivated classes" (precisely the ones who were listening to Fichte's lectures) would have to guide the rest of the German nation into the "new world".[101] In a sense, Fichte's exhortations to these educated gentlemen proved prophetic; early German nationalism (from the Wars of Liberation of 1813 to the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819) was mostly confined to university students and liberal professors,[102] excluding both the reactionary nobility and the masses of the apolitical peasantry.

Without going into detail, Fichte explicitly rejects historical forces that in different ways have divided the German nation (with the two most important among them, presumably, being the Reformation and *Kleinstaaterei*, respectively dividing the Germans confessionally and politically). Other identities (for instance, region/locality or estate/class) are also to be rejected or downplayed to the benefit of national identity. At this early point, assigning different values of importance to differing identities is done for pragmatic reasons ("[…] it is solely by means of the common trait of Germanness that we can avert the downfall of our nation […]"[103]), though Fichte believes that any possible conflict between national identity and other identities will disappear in time.

Since the French invasion and the ending of 'the State of Completed Sinfulness' as Fichte dubs that age,[104] the status of Germany seems to be that of subjugation, or more precisely, "bracketing". "Whatever[105] has lost its self-sufficiency has simultaneously lost its capacity to intervene in the stream of time and freely to determine the content thereof."[106] The Germans are therefore without any autonomy, and "trapped between" the historical stages that Fichte posits, "[reckoning] its years according to the events and epochs of foreign peoples and empires."[107] However, obedience to external force is not the only option. The Germans would be able to break free from their present situation, if a new "world" or age could be imagined, and possibly brought into being (though Fichte is a bit vague as to what precisely this new "world" would entail). This constitutes part of Fichte's project for the rest of the *Addresses*: to demonstrate to his readers the possibility of such a world, and how to bring it forth.

[100] Fichte 2008, 17-19
[101] Fichte 2008, 20
[102] Schulze 1991, 50-4
[103] Fichte 2008, 11
[104] Moore 2008, xx
[105] In this case, Germany.
[106] Fichte 2008, 10
[107] Fichte 2008, 10

The German language as identity-marker

It is only from the fourth address onwards where we can properly compare Fichte with what we have read on Herder. That is, it is in this address that we find Fichte's emphasis of German territory (or rather, his lack of interest in it), distinctiveness and above all, *language*. Whereas the second and third addresses presents his educational program, in the fourth Fichte tries to justify *why* the German people is capable both of taking part in this educational program *and* bring forth "the new world" he alludes to in the first address. This justification is built on his belief that the Germans are in possession of an *essential* national character, meaning certain characteristics which remain constant throughout all the vicissitudes of history (in this case, the low point of the French invasion).[108]

Fichte defines the Germans as one of the "Teutonic [Germanic] tribes." The Germanic peoples are described only briefly, and surprisingly enough not in terms of language. As we will later see with Hegel, the Germanic peoples to a certain extent "embodies" a world historical stage. They are "those whose task it was to unite the social order established in ancient Europe with the true religion preserved in ancient Asia, and thus to develop out of themselves a new age in opposition to the antiquity that had perished."[109] The Germanics represents a fusion of east and west (or perhaps rather a redirection *from* east *to* west). When the Germanic tribes in Central and Northern Europe adopts Christianity, this represents a transition: 1) politically, the end of the Roman Empire and the formation of the earliest post-Roman European monarchies, 2) historiographically, the end of the Mediterranean antiquity and the beginning of the European Middle Ages.

However, Fichte is not at all as interested in the Germanics as he is in the Germans. Fichte's method of stressing German distinctiveness is by contrast to other Germanic peoples. Fichte's first marker of German distinctiveness fittingly enough concerns territory. While we saw that Herder was ambiguous about the question of territory, Fichte is even more explicitly dismissive of a geographically delineated German homeland. One of his distinctions between the Germans and the rest of the Germanics we also found with Herder; during the Migration Period, the Germans stayed in their original homeland (whatever this consisted in), whereas other Germanic peoples migrated north and west. Strictly in terms of territory and geographical space, this hardly matters to Fichte. "[T]he change of native soil (…) is quite insignificant. Man makes his home without difficulty in every region of the earth, and national character, far from being greatly altered by habitat, instead prevails over and alters

[108] Fichte 2008, 47
[109] Fichte 2008, 47

the latter after its own image."[110] This explicitly contradicts Herder (soft) climatic determinism and his emphasis on the physical, natural world which he dedicates much of the first half of *Outlines* to. Ethnic distribution and intermixing in both foreign and domestic lands (again Fichte briefly alludes to a German homeland) during the Migration Period also matters little:

> Nor do we wish to attach much weight to the circumstance that in the lands they conquered those of Teutonic stock mingled with the earlier residents: for the victors, rulers and educators of the new people that emerged from this union were after all Teutons. Furthermore, the same intermixing which, in foreign lands, occurred with Gauls, Cantabrians and so on took place in *the motherland* with Slavs to perhaps just as great an extent; so that it would be no simple task for any of the peoples who trace their origin back to the Teutons to prove a greater purity of descent than the others.[111]

While geography and ethnicities within a geographical space thus seem to be of subordinate importance to Fichte, they may prove noteworthy for indirect reasons. Geographical migration patterns and the political-geographic status of the antiquity (centralized Roman state in Southern Europe, decentralized Germanic tribes in Central Europe) serve to explain the contemporary political state of Europe (a decentralized Germanic alliance evolved into a decentralized Holy Roman Empire, while the autocratic Roman Empire split up into several smaller European autocracies).

A much more important result of migration, and therefore another mark of German distinguishment, is the divergence of languages. For Fichte, this is what truly sets Germans apart from other Germanic peoples. However, this has nothing to do with the qualities of any particular language or its perceived superiority in and of itself, but is rather a question of continuity and adoption (or lack thereof). In contrast to all or most of the other Germanic languages, the German language has been kept "pure" throughout the centuries, without (undue and excessive) foreign influence. Fichte contends further that national characteristics to a large degree stems from this exact question of linguistic purity and foreign influence.[112]

The reason for this is Fichte's assumption that three interrelated criteria enter into the relationship between a nation and the language it speaks, and their fulfilment in the case of the Germans and their language is what makes the German language superior to most other. The first criterion is historical. Any people[113] and the language they speak are bound together, because said people (living together in the same climate) and their speech organs are subject

[110] Fichte 2008, 49
[111] Fichte 2008, 49. My italics, though Fichte unfortunately is not specific in terms of geography.
[112] Fichte 2008, 49
[113] This also seems to serve as a second definition of "nation" after the previously mentioned community-of-fate. Fichte apparently uses the terms "people" and "nation" interchangeably, see Abizadeh 2005, 340

to the same climatic pressures and influence. They therefore establish and continuously develop a common language, with its grammar and vocabulary. "Continuous development" is key here. Even if a German-speaker living in 1800 could not understand a Germanic-speaker living during the time of Charlemagne, if the linguistic changes were so gradual that at any point during this development two generations could understand each other, Fichte argues that it is fundamentally the same language during this whole period.[114] The second criterion has to do with how language is used to describe a dichotomy: the empirical, material world vs. abstract thought. For Fichte, the latter is founded on the former: the way that a person e.g. looks at an object with his eyes, designates it and talks and thinks about it becomes symbolic for how he can talk and think about abstract, non-sensory matters. The third criterion is that a language is to be "authentic", that is, it is to express as accurate as possible the lived experience and the condition of the people that speaks it. This pertains to the whole nation (and only that nation), as how it works is particular to any one language.[115]

The fulfilment of these three interrelated criteria marks the vital difference between the Germans and most other peoples (first and foremost the French). As we saw with Herder, the ancestors of the French were the Germanic-speaking Franks, who migrated into Gaul and in time adopted the Latin language which later developed into French. Fichte claims that a certain struggle takes place when a people starts speaking a foreign language; instead of simply adopting said language (which includes talking, thinking abstractly and understanding using the concepts, idiosyncrasies etc. of said language), in the case of the Franks they tried to *make the foreign language adopt the people* (i.e. they brought their own concepts, ideas and mental images with them into Latin). This in turn cuts off the link between the empirical and the abstract aspects of the language, which again cuts the people off from truly comprehending abstract matters of said language. Thus, they only grasp the language superficially, are unable to express themselves authentically through it, and the language (and its linguistic offshoots) is "dead".[116] This also has moral ramifications, as "a language at bottom dead and unintelligible also lends itself very easily to perversion and misuse in white-washing human corruption, something that is impossible in a language that has never become extinct."[117] This serves as call to pride in the German language and culture, if not an outright warning against adopting French Enlightenment culture and ideas: "[for] the Later Roman (…) his own language in large part began to die in his own mouth (…) How could this

[114] Fichte 2008, 50-1
[115] Fichte 2008, 53-4
[116] Fichte 2008, 53-5
[117] Fichte 2008, 55

language, already half-dead in its own native land, have been transmitted in a living form to a foreign people? How could it be transmitted to us Germans now?"[118] Latin and French were particularly dangerous in this regard, as these languages were held in high esteem due to their historical influence and cultural "loftiness".[119]

The German national character

While the main difference between the German people and other Germanics is shown to be a question of linguistic continuity, this results in other differences of a more practical nature. Languages have national and moral significance: they shape national characters, and a living language (in which both the empirical and abstract aspects are interwoven) produces an honest, fair, hardworking, and pious people, apparently with a greater predisposition for egalitarianism and democracy. Among the Germanic-speakers, this applies only to the Germans. On the other hand, speakers of dead languages (i.e. the rest of the Germanic peoples, including those speaking Romantic languages) are the exact opposite; they are frivolous and superficial. [120] While the last paragraphs of the fourth address only foreshadows this theme, it is a main concern of the fifth address. This address is therefore an important source to Fichte's assumptions of what constitutes German identity and its distinction from other peoples. While we saw that the main distinction is the dichotomy of speaking a living vs. speaking a dead language, we may identify three further distinctions arising from said dichotomy.

According to Fichte, the Germans excel intellectually, that is, only they as a people speaking a living language may truly further develop art and science to the benefit of all of mankind.[121] This is the first distinction between German and non-Germans. "[A]mong the people of the living language spiritual culture intervenes in life; among the opposites spiritual culture and life both go their separate ways".[122] From this dichotomy result a dichotomy of thought: thought as "science" or philosophy vs. thought as mere speculation. He goes a long way towards equating this dichotomy with that of "German vs. non-German", where the former in both cases are preferable. Living language is dynamic and direct; the German merely has to think in order to think. He also feels inspired by such thinking. On the other hand, those speaking a dead language on the other hand has to cramp their thoughts by conforming to a foreign cultural and historical way of thinking, from which nothing new or

[118] Fichte 2008, 56
[119] Fichte 2008, 56-7
[120] Fichte 2008, 57-9
[121] Moore 2008, xxii
[122] Fichte 2008, 61

creative can result (Fichte describes thinking in a dead language as stagnating to become a sterile dictionary). Thinking becomes merely superficial, as something to occupy one's time.[123] Within the realm of poetry, we find many similar points. Only by thinking and writing in a living language are one able to expand poetic creativity and symbolism. Such possibilities are limited in a dead language; in time this will result in degradation and stagnation.[124]

A second difference between Germans and non-Germans (and one resulting from the above-mentioned difference concerning intellectual creativity) is of a societal nature. "When in a people spiritual culture and life both go their separate ways (…) the inevitable consequence is that the classes without access to the former (…) are placed at a disadvantage compared to the cultivated classes, are considered, so to speak, a race apart (…).[125] Fichte explains this class-based division historically and linguistically; to those Germanics who migrated into Roman territory during the migration period, Latin (and its later offshoots) became a language of sophistication and culture, while the German language signified barbarism. This idea reached even to Fichte's own time; due to the influence of French Enlightenment culture, French was prevalent among the German upper classes, while German was considered "lower-class", uneducated and rural.[126] However, this dichotomy of "German vs. foreign" also signifies another one: "[n]aturalness on the German side, arbitrariness and artifice on the foreign side – these constitute the fundamental difference."[127] Because of the perceived loftiness of Latin/French culture and language, and conversely, the perceived baseness of German language and culture, Germanics assumed foreign culture in order to distinguish themselves. The Germans seem to be alone in (in part) following the natural order; it at least takes effort and dedication for Germans to adopt foreign cultures; while "[f]or the foreigner, this unnaturalness enters his life spontaneously, because he has departed originally and in an important respect from nature (…)"[128]

The third important difference between Germans and non-Germans concerns what we may call "national character" – traits which in general terms would describe the nation in question. The specific traits this signifies we have already touched upon, and seems a vital (literally) characteristic of the German nation; whereas other Germanics speak dead languages

[123] Fichte 2008, 62-4
[124] Fichte 2008, 64-5
[125] Fichte 2008, 65-6
[126] For a notable example, the "Enlightened despot" Frederick II of Prussia (r. 1740-86) greatly disdained German language and literature, preferring French Enlightenment culture instead. Fraser 2000, 240
[127] Fichte 2008, 67
[128] Fichte 2008, 67

(cramping cultural development, resulting in stagnation), Germans, speaking a living language, seem marked by vitality and dynamism. While other peoples also have their native "genius", their languages are dead and neither the language itself, nor their culture or art may be further developed. Germans on the other hand combine their genius with effort in order further to develop their culture and language, which, as a living thing, is not finished and has further potential.[129] Foreign peoples are stuck in the past, the Germans are the only ones who can create their own future: "[T]he foreign genius will scatter flowers upon the beaten paths of antiquity and weave a fine robe to wrap around worldly wisdom (…) Conversely, the German spirit will open up new shafts, bring daylight to their abyssal depths and mine rocks of thought from which future ages will build their dwelling places."[130]

Cryptic references to what seems as some kind of universal human development are also to be found in this address, though they are not very well explained (Fichte describes this as "[integrating] into life [the images borrowed from the ancient world]",[131] while he is unclear as to what this would entail). It is nonetheless clear that the German nation is to take a leading role in this process for the development of all of mankind. Given this all-important spiritual role, this means that the contemporary occupation by the French is all the more perilous:

> [I]f foreign countries (…) should ever aim to rob their motherland[132] of independence, and thus to destroy and absorb her, then, should they succeed in their intention, they would thereby sever the last remaining thread still connection them with nature and with life, and they would succumb entirely to spiritual death (…)[133]

German traits in modern history

While the fourth and fifth address described the German national characteristics in ahistorical and abstract terms, in the sixth Fichte points to particular events and periods in German and European modern history in order to justify his comments so far. A recurring theme is that of the Germans heralding a new future through their national characteristics (while simultaneously promising universal human progress), while particularly the Neo-Latin peoples are stuck in the past.

The most important of these events is the Reformation, which according to Fichte

[129] Fichte 2008, 67-9
[130] Fichte 2008, 69
[131] Fichte 2008, 69-70
[132] As we saw with Herder, Fichte's geographical 'Germany' was not only as the homeland of (most) German-speakers, but also as the territory from which Germanic peoples had migrated north and west into Europe during the Migration Period.
[133] Fichte 2008, 70-1

almost "belongs" to the German nation. This appears as a watershed in history: through the Reformation (and the Germans) Christianity appears to have gained an intellectual aspect, as before that event "Christianity, which originated in Asia and by its corruption became more Asiatic than ever, preaching dumb submission and blind faith (…)".[134] Fichte further explains this process by his earlier-mentioned claim that only the German nation is able to "take knowledge into life" – in this case, they were the only people capable of seriously pondering how to attain spiritual salvation. While Martin Luther was the spiritual leader and pioneer in this regard, Fichte claims that this was possible only because the people among which he worked was receptive to his message – again proving "German seriousness and German soul".[135]

Fichte claims that the Reformation also exemplifies another one of his characterizations of the German nation, its union. Its princes and rulers "were (…) easily moved to solidarity with [the nation] and took pity on their people."[136] This in sharp contrast to the earlier Italian Renaissance, where the educated elite[137] discovered and acknowledged false and corrupt churchly affairs and teachings, but instead of leading the great masses to spiritual reform, they secretly mocked them and kept them from discovering this themselves.[138]

Large parts of this address concerns itself with "ordinary Germans", not only the political or intellectual elite. This is apparent with Fichte's emphasis on the medieval German burghers. As mentioned earlier, Fichte considered the ancient Germanics to be barbarians adopting Roman language and culture in order to appear more civilized. However, during the Middle Ages cities rose up throughout Germany as cultural, political and economic centres. By this time, Fichte argues that the Germans had surpassed most of the rest of Europe through these urban processes (and their burgher-actors), marking the zenith of German history, before it began its long decline, reaching its lowest point with the French occupation: "The history of Germany, of German power, of German enterprises and discoveries, of German monuments and German spirit, is in this period exclusively the history of these cities (…) This epoch is also the only one in German history in which this nation stands in all its splendour and glory".[139]

While the same politically fragmented, urban culture also rose on the Italian peninsula,

[134] Fichte 2008, 73
[135] Fichte 2008, 76
[136] Fichte 2008, 77
[137] Like the French, the Italians were also Neo-Latins.
[138] Fichte 2008, 74-5
[139] Fichte 2008, 82-3

due to the German burghers' "piety, respectability, modesty [and spirit of] community"[140] Germany did not experience the same amounts of intracity political warfare as Italy did during the late Middle Ages and early modern age. The above-mentioned virtues characterizing the Medieval burghers seem to be ideals for Fichte, and something to be emulated for later generations (particularly important during Fichte's own time and even more so in his projected future). This example of the burghers, then, is to have an exemplary and educational effect on Fichte's audience and readers, with the goal of "raising the German spirit once more"[141]. Though Fichte presents this as the high point of German history, it is potentially also merely a prelude for something greater: "That time was the youthful dream of a nation moving in limited circles, a dream of future deeds, struggles and victories: and it was the prophecy foretelling what it would one day be when in full possession of its power."[142]

We may end on a short, but telling paragraph in this address, concerning practical politics. While Fichte's political priorities are notoriously unclear and possibly changed over time,[143] this paragraph argues in favour of a cultural nationalism:

> [F]oreigners have lightly and with fiery boldness seized on [the] task of [establishing] the perfect state (…) only shortly thereafter to abandon the same (…) the reason for this outcome is plain as day: the state based on reason cannot be built by artificial measures out of any old material that lies to hand; rather the nation must first be cultivated and educated for it. Only that nation which has first of all solved the task of educating the perfect human being, through actual practice, will also solve that of the perfect state.[144]

While this excerpt cannot be said to definitely prove Fichte as an apolitical nationalist, it shows that a potential state supervenes on the nation in question, not the other way around. This idea is related to two well-known dichotomies, both comparing and contrasting France with Germany: 1) the idea of a French civic nationalism vs. a German cultural nationalism[145] and 2) the idea of a strong, expansionist French state under Napoleon vs. Germany as weak politically, but with a vibrant intellectual culture. Fichte's emphasis on national *culture* (including language) over national *politics* thus clearly demonstrates which side he is on.

[140] Fichte 2008, 83
[141] Fichte 2008, 83
[142] Fichte 2008, 84
[143] In 1800, Fichte published *The Closed Commercial State*, which proposes a system based on an almost totalitarian state and its control over economic life (Breazeale 2022). In 1808-9 however, the nation seemed vastly more important than the state.
[144] Fichte 2008, 80-1
[145] Zubrzycki 2002, 278-9

Chapter 3 – *Vormärz* and politics

Hegel's German history

The Germanics and the Frankish Empire

Hegel history of "the German World"[146] is not merely the history of the German world. As the fourth part of *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, which is an account of and an explanation of world history and the forces that guide it (thus comparable with Herder's *Outlines*, described in chapter 2), the history of this region is first and foremost the ultimate stage in the world historical progress. While this historical progressive model is the main thesis of this work, I want to focus on what Hegel has to say about Germany in particular.

Hegel's history of the German world is tripartite – ancient history, medieval history, and modern history (the latter two periods I will discuss in the next two sections). His ancient German history mostly comprises the Migration Period and the early medieval post-Roman kingdoms until the end of the Frankish Empire. Like Herder, Hegel's German history begins with the forest-dwelling, pre-political Germanic tribes and their interactions with the Roman Empire, through both warfare, co-operation, and cultural influence. We also find the dichotomy of the Germanic tribes who migrated into both Roman and non-Roman territories (like the Franks, Saxons, Scandinavians etc.), and those who remained in their "ancient habitations"[147], though Hegel does not make it clear exactly why this distinction is important. Probably more important are the different kingdoms established by Germanic peoples in previously Roman lands, e.g. the kingdom of the Burgundians, which "forms a kind of partition wall between France and Germany."[148] Here we may adduce another distinction, comparable to Fichte's main argument: 1) those establishing their new kingdoms on Roman territory, mixing with the local population, and adopting Latin (with the Germanic tribes in Britain being the exception), and 2) those establishing kingdoms on non-Roman territories, and keeping their Germanic languages. Unlike Fichte however, Hegel does not seem to ascribe any moral or normative value to this dichotomy of keeping vs. adopting languages.

It is important to note the ambiguity of terms such as "nation", as well as the permanence or fluidity of nations. For example, during the Migration Period those Germanics who settled in other territories are suggested to have formed new nations when they mixed

[146] As "the German world" seems more or less synonymous with modern Europe in *Lectures*, "German" in this context rather means "Germanic".
[147] Hegel 2001, 364
[148] Hegel 2001, 365

with indigenous peoples.[149] Hegel also talks of Romanic and Germanic-speaking nations (plural), divided along the adoption/non-adoption of Latin as described above. Hegel then goes on to describe "[t]he German Nation [singular]"[150], but in the very next paragraph he writes that "[t]his is the abstract principle innate in the German peoples"[151], suggesting both intrinsic national qualities as well as several German nations. (It is therefore also questionable whether "people" and "nation" are meant to be synonymous.) While this looks to be the question of German/Germanic that we have seen both with Herder and Fichte, it is not addressed explicitly and therefore runs the risk of being ambiguous, however pedantic this may seem.

Concerning the geographical entity of Germany, Hegel, like Herder, writes about it in the context of the Frankish Empire. His discussion of this polity makes up a large part of this chapter, and the dissolution of Charlemagne's empire marks the end point for the German "thesis-stage". It may be here that the above-mentioned dichotomy of the migrating vs. sedentary Germanics is relevant. "Germans proper" did not migrate into foreign territory, mix with other peoples and develop new languages, but neither were the Romans able to conquer and migrate *into* Germany, except along the Rhine and the Danube. "The portion between the Rhine and the Elbe remained thoroughly national. This part of Germany was inhabited by several tribes."[152]

Though these tribes were never conquered by the Romans, they did not manage to resist the Franks: "[Frankish king] Clovis (…) reduced the Franks on the Lower Rhine, and the Alemanni on the Upper Rhine; his sons subjugated the Thuringians and Burgundians."[153] Thus, during the reign of Charlemagne, the German parts of the Frankish Empire consisted of "Alemannia (southern Germany between the Lech, the Maine and the Rhine), Thuringia, which extended to the Saale, and Bavaria. Charlemagne likewise conquered the Saxons, who dwelt between the Rhine and the Weser (…)"[154] Like Herder, Hegel maintains that the only thing keeping this great empire together was Charlemagne's person. As we will we in the next part, concerning the Middle Ages in Germany (the anti-thesis of Hegel's German history), the dissolution of the Frankish Empire marks the first time Germany as an independent polity is established, and not merely as a cultural or geographical denomination.

[149] Hegel 2001, 366
[150] Hegel 2001, 367
[151] Hegel 2001, 367 (my italics)
[152] Hegel 2001, 366
[153] Hegel 2001, 365
[154] Hegel 2001, 379

The Middle Ages: Political fragmentation

For Hegel, the German Middle Ages take the form of a breakdown of several aspects of the previous age. This breakdown is tripartite: 1) the dissolution of the political empire of Charlemagne, 2) the breakdown of centralized authority and justice, and 3) the end of secular monopoly of secular power (i.e., the beginning of the church as a political actor). I will discuss the first and second aspects of this breakdown (as they are closely related): the political collapse is important because it separates Germany proper from the "universal" Frankish Empire,[155] and the collapse of central authority is important because it breaks up Germany into a feudal patchwork, planting the seed for the *Kleinstaaterei*.

Regarding the Treaty of Verdun and the end of the Frankish Empire, Hegel suggests that this was not merely the affairs of kings and nobles. Superficially, the empire was divided through acts and warfare on the part of king Louis the Pious and his heirs, but Hegel maintains that an underlying national element also was present. Unfortunately, he is rather short when describing this: "[t]he Western Franks had already identified themselves with the Gauls, and with them originated a reaction against the German Franks, as also at a later epoch one on the part of Italy against the Germans."[156] This description would also suggest the view that both the French and the Germans were descendants of the Franks, what we may call "successor peoples", which may be in line with the possibility of gradually forming new nationalities as described above.

In describing the dissolution of the Frankish Empire, Hegel lists up all the successor states, and what territories belong to which new monarchy. For our purposes, i.e. Germany or the German-speaking world, we may note a few of these. The most important is what Hegel calls "the German Empire". This entity consists of "Eastern Franconia, Saxony, Thuringia, Bavaria, [and] Swabia".[157] We may also mention Lorraine, occupying the territory "between the Rhine and the Meuse",[158] though its national status is uncertain (being located right between 19th century France, Germany, and the Netherlands and later Belgium, as well as its short-livedness during the early Middle Ages). Hegel also mentions Upper Burgundy, with its territories in modern Switzerland. For instance, regarding the Magyar invasion of central Europe he says "[the Magyars] laid waste to the whole of *Southern Germany*. Through Bavaria, Swabia *and Switzerland* they penetrated into the interior of France (…)".[159] It is

[155] Hegel 2001, 383
[156] Hegel 2001, 384
[157] Hegel 2001, 384
[158] Hegel 2001, 384
[159] Hegel 2001, 385 (my italics)

uncertain whether Southern Germany here is meant to include Switzerland as it does Bavaria and Swabia, or whether Hegel means Switzerland to be a separate entity in addition to Southern Germany. This comes back to the ambiguity of using terms such as "Germany" when writing historically; it is important to note that names and terms have their own history, and their meanings are not immune to change over time. It is unclear exactly what the terms "Germany" and "Germans" [160] did signify during the early Middle Ages, and how these differed from terms such as "Eastern Franks"[161]. It is difficult to interpret exactly what Hegel means using these terms, when we take these problems and ambiguities into account. By the time of Hegel's lectures Switzerland had been independent for almost 200 years, as its independence from the Holy Roman Empire had been confirmed by the Peace of Westphalia.

What really sets Hegel apart from Herder and Fichte, is his insistence on the importance of the *state*. Hegel goes to great lengths in order to describe the justice and social order the Frankish Empire establishes, particularly during the reign of Charlemagne.[162] However, as mentioned, this socio-political order was only held together by the person of the king. The Germanic peoples themselves were still tribal and pre-political, and "[t]he capacity of appreciating legal order and the common weal *is* altogether absent, has no vital existence in the people themselves."[163] Because the Germanic peoples still were at an apolitical stage, and did not recognize a responsibility for the collective good, they do not form states for the reason of military defence. Rather, they subjected themselves to the nearest lord, which Hegel maintains is the origin of European *feudalism*. In this political model, law and justice are no longer matters of state, but belong to the sphere of private interests. While this was a general European phenomenon, Hegel maintains that this had particularly dire consequences in Germany. The German emperor[164] became a mere figurehead, while the real power lay with the German princes. In time, this became formalized as the constitution of the Holy Roman Empire and furthered the famous concept of German freedom:[165] because the Empire had the form of an elective monarchy, monarchs-to-be had to compromise with the electors, and were in no position to strengthen central authority at the expense of the German princes.[166]

The specific territories comprising Germany (it is not clear whether by "Germany", Hegel refers to the Holy Roman Empire or rather a kind of geographical, linguistic, or cultural

[160] Also consider "Teutch"/"Deutch", with another etymological origin.
[161] Reynolds 1997, 289-98
[162] Hegel 2001, 379-83
[163] Hegel 2001, 386
[164] The Holy Roman Emperor. Gradually did Eastern Francia/Franconia (i.e. most of what was later called "Germany") become identified with the Holy Roman Empire (Scales 2012,178-9).
[165] Originally meant as the German princes' great freedoms from imperial authority (Whaley 2012, 2:351).
[166] Hegel 2001, 386-90

entity) at this point[167] consists of "the great duchies of Saxony, Swabia, Bavaria, Carinthia, Lorraine and Burgundy, the Margraviate of Thuringia etc. with several bishoprics and archbishoprics. Each of those duchies again was divided into several fiefs, enjoying more or less independence."[168] To Hegel, this seems a cruel state of anarchy; politics exists in the context of private power and military force, with no state to enforce universal laws.

All in all, Hegel seems extremely unsympathetic to the European Middle Ages. He is perhaps particularly so regarding Germany, given 1) its particular constitutional structure, undermining a centralized state and 2) the contradiction arising from the powerless Holy Roman Emperor and his perceived role as the strong, secular arm of Christendom. Apart from the mentioned rule-of-force so prevalent, the contradiction of ideals and reality is a further testament to its backwardness: the anarchy and violence co-exists with fervent religious sentiments, which only serve to highlight the vast extremes of the age. This being pre-1517, the Church is further unable or unwilling to curb this perceived violence and crude political culture; the institution of indulgences means there can be no limits for immoral behaviour.[169] Given these thoughts, Hegel's response to contemporary Romanticism should come as no surprise: "[s]o self-contradictory, so deceptive is this mediaeval period; and the polemical zeal with which its excellence is contended for, is one of the absurdities of our times."[170]

Politically, the later stages of the Middle Ages involves the transition from feudalism to more centralized monarchies throughout Europe. To Hegel, the decline of feudalism entails "a reviving sense of freedom."[171] However, this "revival" implies a conceptual change. Because ancient Germanic freedom was non-hierarchical, it was 1) positive, that is, one was free only if one was free to act in such and such a way, and 2) individualistic, in that individuals looked to themselves and their kin for protection from external danger. While Hegel was, as we saw, sparse with the details concerning the ancient Germans before the establishment of the early medieval kingdoms, he writes that "each individual [is] enjoying an independent freedom; and yet there is a certain community of feeling and interest, though not yet matured to a political condition."[172] Further, they "had known of none other than free possession."[173]

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[167] The 11th century, as Hegel refers to the reign of Holy Roman Emperor Henry III (r. 1046-56).
[168] Hegel 2001, 390
[169] Hegel 2001, 401
[170] Hegel 2001, 400
[171] Hegel 2001, 402
[172] Hegel 2001, 364
[173] Hegel 2001, 402. "Free possession" here apparently refers to political and economic independence (because of Hegel's insistence on the pre-political nature of the ancient Germanics, I use the term "independence" instead of "sovereignty").

Freedom as it is "resurrected" has taken a different form. "Post-feudal" freedom derives from guilds and corporations with their bases for the most part in urban settings. Hegel presents this process as collective defence against the abuses and capriciousness of the feudal nobility. This took the form as work on *common* projects such as infrastructure, military defence, promoting economic interests as well as forming local, municipal governments. Gradually, the towns became stronger and more independent of the economic and political power of the feudal lords. While struggles against the feudal nobility continued, and factional fighting took place *within* the cities themselves, all in all Hegel shows these centuries to be characterized by increased urban independence from the feudal nobility, and the emergence of (within the Holy Roman Empire) autonomous city-republics.[174]

However, while Hegel means to say that this marks the point at which "a social organization on a basis of Right was first resuscitated",[175] it is not clear why this is so. The rise of these city-republics is shown as a reaction to feudalism, not necessarily as an establishment of a universal judicial code. Considering how political strife continued within the cities (with that of the Ghibellines and the Guelfs in Italy being a noteworthy example), and that the patrician nobility continued to oppress the common people as the feudal nobility had done earlier,[176] it is not clear how Hegel argues that stronger city-republics represent something like a more just or righteous stage of socio-political progression. Hegel's answer to this conundrum seems to be a negative one: because feudalism was marked by brute force and princely wilfulness, *anything* rebelling against this order is bound to be its opposite. Medieval urban independence is therefore characterized by lawfulness and justice, simply because the feudalistic order was not.[177]

While the emergence of independent and autonomous city-republics signals marks the negative aspect of the decline of feudalism, the emergence of monarchies (as proper political states) signals the positive one. Unlike feudalism, monarchism is characterized by "the rise of a supreme authority whose dominion embraces all – a political power (…) whose subjects enjoy an equality of rights and in which the will of the individual is subordinated to that common interest which underlies the whole."[178] Regarding the contrast of feudalism/monarchism, these two aspects are linked. Feudalism is decentralized ("a

[174] Hegel 2001, 402-5
[175] Hegel 2001, 405
[176] Hegel 2001, 404
[177] Hegel 2001, 405
[178] Hegel 2001, 417

polyarchy"[179] Hegel calls it), that is, a weak hierarchy with multiple points of power. Ostensibly, there is a sovereign at the top, but his ability to enforce his will is entirely dependent on the ratio of power between liege and vassal(s). With monarchism, the key word is *right* rather than *might*. Power is concentrated in the monarch, with no subject possessing power in their own right. Vassals, previously local and capricious warlords, are changed into functionaries and deputies, performing state duties. Likewise, the power of the monarch itself is not (merely) that of capricious egotism; it is a tool for further the interests of the *state*.[180]

However, the monarch is derived from the old order of feudalism and is therefore in theory a capricious agent that cannot be checked. Hegel has three retorts to this: 1) this is the historical and political reality of forming a state, through a founding act of forceful subjugation, 2) while there is one capricious will, it doesn't clash with others and violence is therefore not a consequence, and 3) a capricious monarch does not equal an absolute one. The decline of feudalism involves subjects "organising" themselves and becoming members of estates. While on the one hand this creates a power balance between the monarch and the different estates of the state, it is also an essential part of the transition from arbitrary force to rightful rule. Ruling with the *consent* of the different estates is necessary if the monarch is to rule as sovereign rather than as the strongest warlord, and in order to have that consent, "he must will what is just and reasonable."[181]

While this is the idealized model for the transition from feudalism to monarchism, in reality this process was certainly more complicated. For Germany in particular, it was not the case that it was centralized under the Holy Roman Emperor; conversely, it was the German *princes* who broke out from feudalism and became monarchs in their own right. While Hegel is not explicit why this happened, he seems to imply it through a comparison with France. The problem of a political unification of Germany, according to Hegel, seems to be the great ethnic variety of its inhabitants. "Swabians, Bavarians, Franks, Thuringians, Saxons, Burgundians: to these must be added the Sclaves of Bohemia, Germanized Sclaves in Mecklenburg, in Brandenburg, and in a part of Saxony and Austria; so that no such combination as took place in France was possible."[182] Hegel is not explicit as regarding the relationship between these different groups and modern Germans (as the latter are not mentioned in this part of the text); he is not even explicit about whether these groups constitute nations or belong to some other category. What he *does* is mention names of places

[179] Hegel 2001, 418
[180] Hegel 2001, 417-8
[181] Hegel 2001, 419
[182] Hegel 2001, 419-20

(like Bohemia and Austria) making up part of Germany, as well as peoples he assumes to be living there (many of which we have seen with Herder and Fichte, particularly during the Migration Period and the early Middle Ages).

While the exact reason why Germany broke up into lesser principalities is not addressed in detail (only that "barbarism got the upper hand throughout Germany"[183]), Hegel seems to imply that this has to do with what Fichte called "national character".

> [T]he basis and essential condition of such a political formation [in the case of Germany, the political fragmentation] is to be looked for in the *particular nationalities* in which it had its birth. Europe presents particular nations, constituting a unity in their very nature, and having the absolute tendency to form a state. All did not succeed in attaining this political unity (…)[184]

German political fragmentation seems to be rooted in the German nation, then (though we must carefully note that in this chapter, Hegel so far has mentioned "Germany" or the above-mentioned groups; he has yet to mention "Germans" or the German nation). However, whether this is due to an essential German character or due to the ethnic patchwork of Germany, he does not say.

At the close of Hegel's German Middle Ages, the Germany as a political entity[185] is thus fragmenting into tiny principalities, the latter becoming more or less autonomous. This pattern is reinforced by the electors only electing weak emperors who are unable to infringe on princely independence: "the unity of the state was virtually annulled. A number of centres were formed, each of which was a predatory state: the legal institution recognized by feudalism was dissolved, and gave place to undisguised violence and plunder; and powerful princes made themselves lords of the country."[186] While a kind of statehood has been achieved in Germany, the violence and instability of feudalism still remains. Surprisingly enough however, Hegel ends the Middle Ages on a perhaps unjustified positive note. Again, he emphasizes the role of cities, or rather intercity alliances across Germany (the Hanseatic League, the Rhenish League, and the Swabian League in the southwest), and claims these to function as a bulwark against feudal lords. However, he is unclear about this actually worked, as he merely writes that "that state of absolute anarchy was at last put an end to by

[183] Hegel 2001, 420
[184] Hegel 2001, 420 (Hegel's italics)
[185] This part is particularly difficult regarding terms such as "Germany", "state", "emperor"/"imperial". Hegel uses the term "Germany" rather than "Holy Roman Empire" or the like, but he frames this *in terms of* the Empire. The country "Germany" is being torn apart by independent-minded princes who consistently elect weak emperors, which goes a long way to suggest the equivalence of geography (Germany) and politics (the Holy Roman Empire). This is further complicated by another inclusion of Switzerland into the Empire; whether it's also part of "Germany" is not addressed. See Hegel 2001, 420-1
[186] Hegel 2001, 420

associations having general aims in view (…) the aim of all these confederations was resistance to the feudal lords (…) with a view to the subversion of the feudal condition and the restoration of a peaceful state of things throughout the country."[187] Further, it is uncertain whether these alliances and their struggles against the feudal lords are meant to be the same conflict between cities and feudal lords as described above, i.e. whether this is the "German reality" of the ideal Hegel describes,[188] or whether this is supposed to occur at a later stage in his chronology.

Modern Germany: the end of the Empire

In *Lectures*, the modern age is bookended by two events: the Reformation and the French Revolution. Hegel views them as part of the greater idealistic project he describes in this work ("the History of the World […] is this process of development and the realization of Spirit"[189]), and other events, notably political ones, are read in the context of these. A main purpose of this section is providing an explanation for the differences between modern France and modern Germany[190] (summarized by Hegel's question: "why did the French alone, and not the Germans, set about realizing [the revolution]?"[191]) As a consequence of this, Hegel is scant on references to the political and territorial development of modern Germany in and of itself. What he *does* say about Germany in this part are the by now familiar continuations from what we have already seen; as the sovereign of Germany (i.e. the Holy Roman Emperor) was elected, this hindered imperial centralization and consolidation.[192] This fragmenting of the imperial political constitution were confirmed by the Peace of Westphalia. By guaranteeing the rights to all but sovereignty and autonomy for the hundreds of principalities and states making up the Holy Roman Empire, nothing could force these polities to work together for the benefit of a united German state. The treaty, therefore, "completely terminated the career of Germany as an Empire (…)"[193] This further worsened imperial weakness on the international stage; on the eastern frontier the Habsburgs were dependent on Polish military force in order to defeat the Ottomans, while in the west a perpetual territorial fragmenting process were taking place. During wars of the 17th and early 18th century France

[187] Hegel 2001, 420
[188] What may be a general European pattern of transition from feudalism to monarchism, as Hegel explains on pp. 417-8. Later on he describes how this actually took place in different national settings, e.g. Germany, Italy, France etc.
[189] Hegel 2001, 477
[190] Mah 1990, 7-10
[191] Hegel 2001, 463
[192] Hegel 2001, 447
[193] Hegel 2001, 456

expanded closer to the Rhine, and "[Germany] allowed Burgundy, Lorraine, Alsace, and other parts of the empire to be wrested from it."[194] Finally, near the end of *Lectures* Hegel revisits Germany during and after French revolutionary occupation. While the French occupation is a "yoke", it also reveals how weak the Empire really is, and promptly puts an end to it.[195]

What is perhaps more important in this section, is rather the separate mentioning of Prussia and Austria. This also ties in with the themes of *The German Constitution* (1802). While Hegel doesn't treat either Prussia or Austria in any great detail (particularly not politically; he appears to focus more on their differing responses to the Reformation), it is telling that they take part on the world-historical stage right as the Holy Roman Empire becomes all but powerless. *Lectures* is no way a history of Germany, but it is worth to note that this point in time serves as a watershed in German history.

Protestantism and Prussia seem to be inextricably bound together, according to Hegel: "The Protestant Church increased and so perfected the stability of its political existence by the fact that one of the states which had adopted the principles of the Reformation raised itself to the position of an independent European power. This power was destined to start into a new life with Protestantism: *Prussia* (…)"[196]. Prussia's success is in large part due to Frederick the Great, acting both as the saviour of Protestantism during the Seven Years' War (1756-63) and as an enlightened despot, as he was "the first sovereign who kept the general interest of the State steadily in view, ceasing to pay any respect to particular demands when they stood in the way of the common weal. His immortal work is a domestic code – the Prussian municipal law."[197]

As the Holy Roman Empire exits the world-historical stage, so does Austria leave Germany. Hegel is also relatively sparse with details regarding Austria, but what he does say is extremely telling regarding German identity and territory:

> *Austria* is not a Kingdom, but an Empire, *i.e.*, an aggregate of many political organizations. The inhabitants of its chief provinces are not German in origin and character, and have remained unaffected by "ideas." Elevated neither by education nor religion, the lower classes in some districts have remained in a condition of serfdom, and the nobility have been kept down, as in Bohemia; in other quarters, while the former have continued the same, the barons have maintained their despotism, as in Hungary. Austria has surrendered that more intimate connection with Germany which was derived from the imperial dignity, and renounced its numerous possessions and

[194] Hegel 2001, 451
[195] Hegel 2001, 476
[196] Hegel 2001, 457 (Hegel's italics)
[197] Hegel 2001, 461

> rights in Germany and the Netherlands. It now takes its place in Europe as a distinct power, involved with no other.[198]

Apart from one earlier, possible geographical exclusion of Austria from Germany (it is mentioned along with Hungary, Venice, and Poland as an Eastern European power fighting against the Ottomans[199]), we find here several points suggesting Austria as non-German (or no-longer-German). One of these is the problem of nationality and ethnic make-up of the polity. The Austrian Empire consisted of Germans, Italians, Hungarians, and Poles,[200] as well as several other (mostly Slavic) nations. Austria was further removed from Germany and towards Eastern and Southern Europe with the Congress of Vienna (1814-5). Austria gave up the Austrian Netherlands in exchange for territory in Italy and Dalmatia, and gained no new lands within Germany (though it dominated the German Confederate Diet together with Prussia, also established by the Congress).[201] Further, Austria did not regain territories it had lost by the Treaty of Pressburg (1805), whereby Austrian territories in Southwest Germany had been annexed to Baden, Württemberg and Bavaria.[202] Even later, while Germanization of the Empire was imperial policy until the *Ausgleich* of 1867, and the German-speakers were the leaders of imperial politics, trade and finance until 1918, they only made up about a quarter of the total population.[203]

There seems also to be the discrepancy of modernization, which can be read as differing German and Austrian responses to revolutionary ideas and French military occupation. In occupied Germany, the French turned the old social and political order upside-down: "The French overthrew the existing secular and ecclesiastical princes, abolished the tithe, ended seigneurialism, eliminated guilds, overturned monopolies, nullified privileges, emancipated the Jews, introduced religious toleration, and secularized church lands (…) These and other changes transformed economy, society and political rule."[204] Austria, on the other hand, was never conquered by the French, and serfdom there finally survived until the Revolution of 1848-9.[205]

This is an early expression of the perceived divergence within the Holy Roman

[198] Hegel 2001, 473
[199] Hegel 2001, 452
[200] Sked 1990, 124
[201] Chapman 1998, 44-9
[202] "Le traité de paix de Presbourg," conclusion date: December 26th, 1805. See article 8.
[203] Sked 1990, 130
[204] Blackbourne 1997, 71
[205] O'Rourke 2017, 432

Empire just as it is collapsing.[206] In spite of these two problems, it seems as Austria ceases to be German only with the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire (possibly meaning that ethnic diversity[207] and perceived lack of modernization were not insurmountable problems). Hegel seems to describe this event as though several problems came to the fore at once: as Austria gave up their minor German possessions and in time focused more on the multinational nature of their empire, the one institution that had bound it with the rest of Germany disappeared.

This transition away from the Holy Roman Empire to powerful individual German states such as Prussia or Austria is also present in Hegel's earlier text, *The German Constitution* (written 1798-1802, during the War of the Second Coalition).
While the text in full describes the disparate condition of Germany (apparently identified with the Holy Roman Empire), and proposes constitutional rectifications in order to strengthen the Empire,[208] I will focus on the advent of Austria and Prussia, as the Empire itself is on its last legs. Though allegedly united, the Empire has been so divided at this point that Hegel speaks of four different "leagues" or factions within and including the Empire itself.[209] These are intertwined, though not as united as to not prioritize their own interests over that of the whole (one of the main reasons for why Hegel argues that the Empire can no longer function as a state[210]).

As the Holy Roman Empire, "Germany is no longer a state."[211] The first criterion for statehood is a centre of political authority with a certain power and which other parts are dependent on.[212] However, due to German freedom[213], this is precisely not the case in Germany. The German princes have jealously been guarding their sovereignty and acquired political rights from the Empire against the threat of "common, free subjection to a supreme political authority."[214] The second criterion of statehood (or rather, lack thereof) has been demonstrated through war with France: while political unity is most clearly expressed through military co-operation and common defence in war, the emperor is unable to force individual

[206] According to John Deak, *Lectures* seems to be one of the earliest works to articulate the common historiographical conception of "modern Prussia" and "backwards Austria". See Deak 2015, 2-3
[207] Though it must be noted that the non-German parts of the Habsburg lands were mostly outside the Holy Roman Empire. Hegel unfortunately does not make clear the distinction between the Austrian Empire and Austria proper.
[208] Interestingly enough, it seems as though Hegel thinks large and powerful German states (e.g. Prussia or Austria) pose a more dangerous threat towards the Empire than France at this point. See Hegel 2004, 93
[209] Hegel 2004, 84. Hegel identifies these as 1) the Empire itself, 2) Austria, 3) Prussia and its Northern German satellites since the peace of Basel (1795), and 4) neutral medium-sized states.
[210] Hegel 2004, 86
[211] Hegel 2004, 6
[212] Hegel 2004, 12-3
[213] Compounded with the religious schism accompanying the Reformation (Hegel 2004, 53).
[214] Hegel 2004, 10

German states to subject themselves to his authority, and they are free to conduct their own military and foreign policies.[215] Other factors are irrelevant regarding statehood; among these we may note "customs, education, and language; and identity in these respects, which was once a pillar of national union, now counts as one of those fortuitous circumstances whose nature does not prevent a mass [of people] from constituting a political authority."[216]

Concerning Austria, Hegel's thoughts foreshadow what he would later write in *Lectures*. Two factors seem to bind Austria to Germany. The first is the fact that the Habsburgs had provided Holy Roman Emperors since the 15th century, thereby claiming a particular authority over the lesser states within the Empire. Conversely, these lesser states were (or ought to have been) supportive of Austria *as* imperial house, since the imperial framework and institutions is what protects these smaller states from being annexed by more powerful neighbours.[217] The second is venerable age. Hegel compares the difference between Prussia and Austria as "a [middle-class citizen] who has laboriously accumulated his assets penny by penny to a free nobleman with inherited wealth whose property is based on his land and remains the same."[218] However, Austria is also handicapped by its status as imperial house. Presumably by a conflation of Austria as imperial house with the Empire itself, it is (unlike Prussia) unable to make ordinary treaties with other states without the rest of the German states making a commotion, as this was seen to threaten the balance of power inside the Empire.[219] Unlike *Lectures* though, there is no mentioning of Austrian possessions outside the Empire, and likewise no hints of its exclusion from Germany.

Hegel's admiration of Frederick II in *Lectures* is quite distinct from his assessment of the Prussian state in *The German Constitution*. Prussia is characterized by a "complete lack of scientific and artistic genius"[220], and, like the French republic, it has a totalitarian state administration.[221] Further, Prussian wilfulness and strength serves to illustrate German disunity. Ever since the Seven Years' War, Prussia has been sufficiently powerful that it has no need to ally with other states; conversely, it may serve as a threat itself to smaller German states. Prussian tendencies to serve its own interest at the cost of that of the united Empire were shown through its occupation and annexation of purported allies during this period,

[215] Hegel 2004, 13
[216] Hegel 2004, 19
[217] Hegel 2004, 12; 89
[218] Hegel 2004, 89
[219] Hegel 2004, 88
[220] Hegel 2004, 25. This was written before the Prussian Reform Movement, in which reformers tried to modernize e.g. Prussian administration and economy in response to Prussia's crushing defeat by Napoleon in 1806. See Clarke 2006, 338-344
[221] Hegel 2004, 21-2

conducting its own treaties and ratifications independent of the Empire, as well as transferring some states' allegiance from the emperor to itself. Hegel also blames Prussia for following its own interests as France annexed the Left Bank of the Rhine (1797/1801),[222] thereby illustrating Prussia's status as being too powerful to be quelled by imperial restrictions.

At this point, the Empire itself is impotent. In its present condition it is unable to defend the German states from France, but also from its "political successors", Austria and Prussia. "Austria remains predominant in Germany, i.e. more powerful than any single German estate (…) But Prussia has now likewise achieved this status. As a danger to the German estates, Austria and Prussia are on the same level. What used to be called German freedom should be on its guard against them both."[223]

Heine's satire over Germany, past and present

The Rhine as political border

Around the time of Hegel's death, the poet Heinrich Heine went into exile in France. He represented a new, politically conscious generation: inspired by the liberal promise of the July Revolution in Paris, and equally appalled by censorship on the part of the reactionary German authorities.[224] While Heine would live and write in Paris until his death in 1856, he would always feel like an outsider.[225] An admirer of French culture from his youth, he still remained a German patriot: in the preface to his political poem *Germany. A Winter's Tale* (1844) he defends himself against allegations to the contrary: "Plant the black-red-gold flag on the heights of German thought, make it the banner of a free humanity, and I will give my heart's blood for it. Calm yourselves: I love the fatherland just as much as you do."[226] While a patriot, Heine would never come to terms with the reactionary German authorities: he would remain a political discontent until his death.

As *Germany* was written only a few years after the Rhine crisis of 1840 (in which the French government threatened to use military force in order to annex the Left Bank of the Rhine, though no military action were ultimately taken either on French or German side[227]), Franco-German tensions regarding the Rhine as German or as the Franco-German border was at an all-time high. This is demonstrated by the enormous popularity of the song *Rheinlied*

[222] Hegel 2004, 84-7
[223] Hegel 2004, 93
[224] Sammons 1979, 154-5
[225] Sammons 1979, 168-71
[226] Heine 1982, 482
[227] Brophy 2013, 1-2

(which theme is summarized by its line, 'They shall not have it, the free, German Rhine') by Nikolaus Becker, inspired by this event and for which Becker was honoured by both the Prussian and Bavarian king. The Rhine crisis also served to disassociate German nationalism from French liberalism, infusing it with a more antagonistic, Francophobe vein.[228]

Already in the preface Heine addresses this conflict, with the Rhine as the "prize":

> I foresee (…) the hue and cry that will be raised by those pharisees of nationalism whose antipathies coincide with those of the governments, who fully enjoy the love and esteem of the censorship, and who can set the tone for the daily press when it is a question of attacking those opponents of theirs who are also the opponents of their anointed rulers. Our hearts are fortified against the displeasure of these lionhearted lackeys in black-red-gold livery. I can already hear their beery voices: "You even slander our colors, you despiser of the fatherland, you friend of the French, to whom you want to surrender the free Rhine!"[229]

Later, in caput 5, the narrator converses with the Rhine itself. The river (and Heine himself) laments the *Rheinlied* ("that stupid song"[230]), suggesting that the song and the sentiments behind it have turned the Rhine into a political prize, or a pure virgin to be protected from the ravenous French.[231] If this is the German view, then it is already too late:

> About my claimed virginity
> The French are sure more knowing:
> How often have their conquering streams
> Into my own come flowing.[232]

The Rhine seems more sympathetic to the French than to the Francophobe Germans, and would "certainly like to see them again"[233], something which probably points to the post-Revolutionary experiences in the Rhineland. The region was probably the part of Germany most affect by the French Revolution, due to being occupied by the French for almost twenty years. During this time, the French abolished feudalism and noble privileges in the region,[234] and later on they instituted the Code Napoleon. This liberalized and modernized Rhenish law and the judiciary system, and the Prussian authorities tried repeatedly (but mostly unsuccessfully) to replace it with Prussian law (Rhenish law was only abolished in 1901 when it was supplanted by the all-German civil code[235]). The legacy of the Revolution was therefore still very much tangible in the region during the revolutions of both 1830-32 and 1848-9;

[228] Brophy 2007, 90-1
[229] Heine 1982, 481-2
[230] Heine 1982, 492
[231] Heine 1982, 491-2
[232] Heine 1982, 492
[233] Heine 1982, 492
[234] Rowe 2003, 193-4
[235] Haferkamp 2012; Sperber 1989, 201

during the former, riots broke out, revolutionary iconography was employed, and Napoleon was celebrated.[236]

These sentiments are explicitly referenced later in the poem. In caput 8, the narrator is travelling through Mülheim, then a part of the Prussian Rhineland. As the narrator is thinking back to the same town when he was *leaving* Germany in the spring of 1831, several contrasts are made. After the revolutions of 1830, Mülheim's inhabitants are happy and hopeful that their Prussian overlords will be leaving and be replaced by "freedom" (depicted as the *Tricolore*). There is even an explicit yearning for Napoleon. The situation as of 1844 is considerably bleaker. Earlier, the Prussians "used to look / Like Love, Faith and Hope in prim poses"[237] (possibly a reference to earlier hopes of liberal reforms and constitutions promised by German princes during and after the Wars of Liberation, the disappointment of which will be discussed in the next section). Not only are they still in the Rhineland in 1844, but they have even made themselves comfortable, having grown fat and being drunk on Rhenish wine. The honeymoon after the July Revolution in France also seems to be over:

> And Freedom has sprained her ankle since then,
> And no longer can romp and revel;
> On Paris towers the tricolor droops
> Dejected as the devil.[238]

This shows that while the situation is precarious in the Rhineland and Germany in general, the situation in France is not perfect either. Going back to the Rhine, it fears that its long separation from France will make it a target for French ridicule and attack (made concrete with Alfred de Musset[239]). The narrator reassures the Rhine and tells it to wait for a "better song"[240] rather than those of Becker or de Musset, and continues on his way to Hamburg.

Satirizing conservatism

During the narrator's pit-stop in Cologne, we may glean some information of Heine's attitude towards themes such as conservative Romanticism, as well as pre-Reformation religion (all in

[236] Sperber 1989, 200-4
[237] Heine 1982, 499
[238] Heine 1982, 499. This is probably a reference to the increasingly repressive nature of the July Monarchy during the 1830s, see Rapport 2008, 23-7
[239] French author, wrote the poem *Nous l'avons eu, votre Rhin allemande* ("We've had that German Rhine of yours") as a response to the *Rheinlied* (*The Encyclopedia Americana* 1918)
[240] Heine 1982, 493. Throughout the poem Heine hints at a coming "revolution" or event that will upheave the status quo. However, this is not necessary something of practical politics: it may instead be something like a spiritual or intellectual emancipation of humankind. When Heine threatens the Prussian king at the end of the poem (535-6), these are not threats of violence or revolution, but rather of an ill reputation in Heine's writings.

all, his attitude to traditionalism). Before Luther, Heine portrays the history of Cologne as particularly violent and dark:

> Here books and men were burned at the stake
> While pious bells were rung out,
> The leaping flames devoured the pyre
> And Kyrie Eleison was sung out.[241]

It is also worth noting that for Heine, the Reformation and the German nation are intrinsically linked. While the Cologne Cathedral is "papist" and linked to the religious Inquisition as described above, it is also a way to suppress German culture. That the construction ceased in the 16th century was therefore a national boon, "a monument to Germany's strength / And to the Protestant mission."[242] While construction was resumed in the 19th century (notably with the support of the Prussian king), Heine does not believe (or at least hope) this to be a feasible project.

Another one of Heine's targets is demonstrated through his treatment of the biblical Magi. They were said to be interred in the Cathedral, as their bodies were thought to have been brought to Germany during the Crusades. For Heine, they represent the old conservatism that was being questioned at this time, with Heine as one of these critics. At the end of caput 4, Heine refers to them as the "Holy alliance of the east"[243], a probable reference to the Holy Alliance as established just after the Congress of Vienna.[244] This alliance was committed to preserving traditional and Christian values from the new revolutionary forces of liberalism and republicanism. While most European states were part of the alliance, it was led by Prussia, Austria and Russia. Though the alliance proved relatively insignificant,[245] the alliance fit right in with the political repression taking place in Germany in the period 1815-48. Further identification of the Magi with conservative forces is made as they "sought a safe solution / When they felt the pinch of the people's demands / And promised a constitution / And later failed to keep their word"[246]. Heine expresses the disappointments of German liberals and nationalists from the congress of Vienna onwards, as they had been promised liberal constitutions from the princes since the War of Liberation (though these promises were often broken). Hopes of a German nation-state had also been crushed with the establishment of the German Confederation and the general anti-nationalist programme of the authorities.

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[241] Heine 1982, 489
[242] Heine 1982, 489
[243] Heine 1982, 491
[244] Alexander 2012, 25
[245] *Encyclopedia Britannica* 1998b
[246] Heine 1982, 491

Heine's "solution" to this is possibly a literary one. In caput 6 the narrator meets an enigmatic, cloak-clad figure carrying an axe. While the identity of this stranger is never explicitly stated, it is in one place suggested that this is the narrator's artistic or creative genius.[247] However, it refers to itself as whatever *results* from the narrator's thoughts: "whatever your mind thinks up / I carry it out, I *do* it (…) I make your thoughts realities— / You think, I do the acting."[248] While it is unclear as to what this means precisely, as the narrator is heavily implied to be Heine himself (i.e. a writer), it is possible that the figure is meant to be Heine's writings.

As the narrator and the cloaked figure later meet the Magi in the Cathedral, the resulting exchange explicitly demonstrates the antagonistic relationship between reigning conservatism (tradition, royalty/nobility and religion) and up and coming liberal, national and modern elements. The Magi are depicted as skeletons smelling of rot and decay, decked in regalia. They demand respect based on the above-mentioned conservative elements: "First of all, because he was dead / And second, a king, to speak rightly / And third, a saint—such was his case"[249]. However, these arguments do not impress the narrator. He ridicules the Magi, and tells them to go away, as they have been supplanted by modernity. The caput ends with the cloaked figure smashing the skeletal Magi to pieces.[250]

A similar, but much more elaborate episode occurs later in the poem. The narrator recalls his old nurse telling him of the Kyffhäuser legend, in which the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I 'Barbarossa' (r. 1155-1190) was asleep inside the Kyffhäuser mountain, waiting to burst forth to save the German nation in time of need.[251] The nurse describes him as a stately figure; with a massive, red beard, he lives with thousands of his soldiers and their horses in great halls beneath the mountain, with a enormous arsenal of weapons and the black-red-gold flag. When the right time comes, they will ride out to destroy the enemies of Germany.[252]

When the narrator later falls asleep, he meets the emperor in his dream. While he is a relatively sympathetic character to begin with, he is not as majestic as described in the legends. He "waddles", talks pragmatically of his treasures and belongings, and spends his days performing menial tasks, like polishing rust of his weapons, dusting, and taking pride in trivial achievements:

[247] Heine 1982, 494
[248] Heine 1982, 494-5
[249] Heine 1982, 497
[250] Heine 1982, 497-8
[251] Hahn 1995, 15-6
[252] Heine 1982, 507-9

He dusted the banner as well, and said:
"I'm proudest of all to confirm now
That not one moth has eaten the silk,
You can't find a single worm now."[253]

In the next caput, the narrator updates the emperor on events from the world above. The conversation veers towards the guillotine, and the narrator explains to the horrified emperor that social status is irrelevant for this method of execution. This demonstrates the divergence of pre-modernity and modernity, and therefore the absurdity of the Romantic notion of appealing to medievalism for nationalist purposes. Heine as the narrator is oriented towards the future:

"Mr. Redbeard," I cried aloud, "you're just
A myth dreamed up by dreamers.
Go back to sleep—without your aid
We'll be our own redeemers.[254]

The emperor Frederick as the manifestation of the conservative Romanticism is "[a] ghost with scepter and crown",[255] and is simply no longer relevant in the modern world.

The future of Germany

As early as caput 2, Heine hints at two possible futures for Germany. As the narrator is enraptured by a beautiful song, he is quickly brought down to earth by Prussian custom officers searching through his luggage for illegal literature.[256] This seems to create two alternatives: 1) a Prussian-led united Germany and 2) a liberal, spiritual Germany.

As the Prussians are searching for illegal books, another traveller explains to the narrator how this will lead to a future united Germany. The customs officers represent the *Zollverein*[257], which the traveller predicts will unite all the disparate German state into a single nation-state, politically, geographically, and economically. Equally as important is the work of the customs officers concretely; while the *Zollverein* would create a *political* Germany, censorship and suppression of illegal literature would stamp out all dissent, thereby creating a *spiritual* Germany, united in thought and opinion.[258] As the narrator travels through Germany and as we read the poem, the Prussians are ubiquitous; as we've seen, they are described as intruders in the Rhineland, and at the forefront of censorship and conservative

[253] Heine 1982, 510
[254] Heine 1982, 513
[255] Heine 1982, 513
[256] Heine 1982, 485
[257] At the time of the writing of *Germany*, the *Zollverein* included most of the German states.
[258] Heine 1982, 485-6

Romanticism. In this potential Germany, it will be a "macro-Rhineland": sour Prussian soldiers parading everywhere, looking for illegal and subversive literature, and worshipping Gothic cathedrals and long-dead emperors. It is probable that this is the future the narrator hints at late in the poem: having arrived at Hamburg, the goddess Hammonia[259] offers to show him "the shape of the coming Germany"[260]. While the narrator doesn't reveal what this future Germany holds, it is telling that he sees it in the old chamber pot of Charlemagne – it smells so horribly that the narrator loses consciousness.[261]

While the other alternative is not as explicitly stated, it is clear that it is the narrator's preferred alternative. This is linked with Heine's own type of nationalist sentiments, which partly are explained in the preface, and partly can be extrapolated from the poem itself. As mentioned, contrary to what Heine's Francophobe opponents might think, Heine is very much a German patriot; however, he represents a subversive, anti-authoritarian patriotism, not merely parroting the powers that be who, as we've seen, use Romantic nationalism for political goals. Instead, Heine wants to "[p]lant the black-red-gold flag on the heights of German thought [and] make it a banner of a free humanity"[262]. This is the way forward towards freedom and modernity: as Heine evidently believes the French revolution to be a progressive step in this direction,[263] it is up to the Germans to complete the revolution the French had only began, in order to free the entire mankind from the shackles of pre-modern "servitude"[264]. This better future that Heine imagines is a negation of the conservative strategies he has described so far; he prefers this "song" to the "[l]ullaby Heaven simpers / To lull the People back to sleep"[265], again highlighting the alliance between conservative political forces and religion for suppressing the common people. The themes of cosmopolitanism and freedom from conservative religion is bound together in a later stanza: "the maiden" Europe has married "the spirit of freedom" without any priestly sanction.[266] While the Germans have the potential to complete the path to freedom as begun by the French, this path, free from noble lords and priests, is open to all peoples. While Heine does not go into detail, he mentioned that he carries "diamonds in [his] head / The future time's crown jewel"[267] in his head while the Prussians are searching through his luggage. Heine is bringing French ideas of

[259] A poetical personification of Hamburg.
[260] Heine 1982, 530
[261] Heine 1982, 531-2
[262] Heine 1982, 482
[263] Henley 1997, 88
[264] Heine 1982, 482
[265] Heine 1982, 484
[266] Heine 1982, 485
[267] Heine 1982, 486

freedom and liberalism (if not revolution and socialism) into the still backwards Germany.

In spite of all of Germany's past problems and future dangers, the poem ends relatively hopefully. Considering that the main targets of Heine's criticism are the conservative authorities, it appears as "the better song" for Germany will come to pass with a newer, freer generation:

> The old generation of hypocrites
> Today, thank God, is dying;
> It's slowly perishing, done to death
> By its own disease of lying.
>
> A new generation is growing up
> Without any shamming or sinning
> It's free in thought and free in joy—
> I'll proclaim a new beginning.[268]

Heine's preferred German future is thus the antithesis of the Prussian-led one. It is fundamentally one of *freedom* – freedom from censorship, freedom from religion-induced apathy[269], and freedom from chauvinistic nationalism spearheaded by the Prussians. Such a Germany will perfect and complete the French revolution, to free not only the Germans themselves, but the entire world from oppression.

[268] Heine 1982, 534
[269] In *Ludwig Börne. A Memorial* (1840), Heine uses the metaphor "spiritual opium" for religion – later paraphrased by Karl Marx in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843). See Heine 2006, 95

Chapter 4 – The Prussian conception of 'Germany'

Treitschke's history of Germany

Prussian Rhineland during *Vormärz*

At this point, we may note an important factor asserting it at this point in our examinations: the gradual supplantation of the old Holy Roman Empire to the advantage of individual German states, most notably Prussia and Austria. Regarding Prussia in particular, we have also seen different attitudes towards it. While Hegel's views were mixed and changed throughout his career (as Prussia itself changed, particularly with the Reform Movement), post-1830 radicals and liberals such as Heine and Karl Marx absolutely despised it for its reactionary authoritarianism. With Heinrich von Treitschke we find a diametrically opposite view; for the Prussian school of History, of which both he and Heinrich von Sybel were representatives, Prussia was the only possible saviour of the German nation. Treitschke stated explicitly that "Prussia was the heir to the old Empire!"[270]

Regarding Treitschke's presentation of Prussian territory, I will focus on the Rhineland, which was handed to Prussia with the congress of Vienna. The Rhineland, as we've seen, had a rocky relationship to their Prussian overlords. Its strategic area between France and the German world meant that it had connections to both, and as mentioned the legacy of the French revolution were felt long into the Prussian rule.

In summarizing territories gained by Prussia during the Congress, Treitschke foreshadows the Austro-Prussian war of 1866 and the Prussian conquest of Northern Germany. Indeed, this is a teleological presentation of Prussian territory and place within Germany: "[Prussia] was not *yet* complete, (…) the territories which constituted the natural connecting links between [Rhineland and Saxony] had not *yet* been acquired. (…) Prussia had gained through the Viennese negotiations the possibility of healthy and vigorous further development."[271] Further, in gaining the Rhineland and other areas west of the Elbe, as well as handing most of its Polish possessions over to Russia, Prussia and the rest of Germany were tied closer together: "Henceforward, there were no German interests which were not intimately associated with the Prussian state."[272]

While Treitschke is relatively sparse regarding Prussian acquisition of the Rhineland

[270] Treitschke 1916, 2:555
[271] Treitschke 1916, 2:91 (my italics)
[272] Treitschke 1916, 2:91

during the Congress, there are a few telling details regarding his thoughts. While Metternich (therefore Austria) is unhappy with Prussia gaining territory in Southern Germany, the silver lining is that this area will prove a vulnerable protuberance and hard to defend (comparing it to the former Austrian Netherlands). While a dangerous position, Prussia accepts this condition. However, it does so not on behalf of itself, but for the benefit of all of Germany.[273] That is, should France retry revolutionary or imperial warfare in Europe, Prussia will be at the frontlines, ready to defend Germany.

Post-1815, this selfless attitude exhibited by the Prussians were not appreciated by the Rhinelanders. In Treitschke's narrative, the Rhinelanders seem like petulant children who do not know their own best interests. They have to be forced back into the German nation by their stern but just soverign, the Prussian king. This applies particularly to the areas along the upper Rhine which had notably had few dynastic traditions (e.g. imperial bishoprics or free cities). For Treitschke, such forms of government are not "properly German": "[h]ere were completely lacking the monarchical traditions wherein was rooted the German sense of the state (…)".[274] Opposition to Prussia was also a result of the traditional Catholicism practised in the Rhineland: "[t]he Rhinelanders in the episcopal territories complained as loudly as did the Poles of the way in which their homeland was invaded by a swarm of foreign immigrants."[275]

However, Treitschke seems to imply that this is merely a façade. In addition to the constitutional superiority demonstrated by the Prussians (i.e. their autocratic, dynastic monarchism), there is also a *natural* affiliation between the Rhinelanders and Prussians. This is *language*: "in secret these Germans were in truth heartily pleased that they could once more converse with their officials in their mother tongue."[276] Even Rhenish liberal tendencies are to Treitschke further proof of their Germanness: as liberal reforms had been instituted by the French twenty years earlier, it had simply become Rhenish tradition, so it was only natural for the Rhinelanders to defend it.[277] Further, Treitschke goes out of his way to demonstrate Prussian administrative mildness, particularly compared to Napoleonic authoritarianism. The Prussian king personally orders that local Rhenish administrators are not arbitrarily replaced by Prussians, as well as that the province is mildly taxed, particularly compared to most other

[273] Treitschke 1916, 2:75-6
[274] Treitschke 1916, 2:554-5
[275] Treitschke 1916, 2:556
[276] Treitschke 1916, 2:557
[277] Treitschke 1916, 2:559

provinces.[278]

Treitschke portrays the French as foreigners whose possession of the Rhineland had been "unnatural", with the period of occupation "bracketing" Rhenish culture. Only when the Prussians liberate the Rhineland is its traditional culture restored, and in time (mostly due to able administrators and a thriving economy[279]) did the Rhineland become integrated into the Prussian state.[280] Thus, the Prussians *saved* the Rhineland from degradation, and returned it to Germany:

> It was only the deplorable sloth of the local political system, only the unnatural conditions of the theocracy and of the foreign dominion, which had debased the highly gifted stock: a strong state could alone raise it from this debasement, and could refertilise the most beautiful and the oldest of all German lands with the vigorous energy of the new national life.[281]

Treitschke does not treat the status of the Prussian Rhineland in the context of the 1830 revolutions in any great detail, only that the calm exhibited by the Rhinelanders meant that the region had finally been properly integrated into the Prussian state.[282] It is precisely the authoritarian nature of the Prussian state Treitschke emphasizes to explain the relative calm in Prussian territories during 1830: "(…) among all the German territories Prussia had best surmounted the storms of the day. This state, whose unlimited monarchy had been subjected to so much abuse, exhibited energy and health that were offensive to all persons of liberal sympathies. Amid the uproar round its frontiers, it stood firm like a rock amid raging sea."[283] Prussia is almost described as an anachronism or rather as disproving history; this state is so close to perfection that all contemporary discussion of liberalism and constitutionalism does not apply to it.

The uneasy calm of the Prussian Rhineland continues in the 1830s, with themes we've already seen. As the Rhinelanders obstinately are holding on to their legal system, "simply because it was termed Rhenish"[284], and because bungling Prussian ministers and deputies are antagonizing the Rhinelanders, the Prussians are unable to replace the Rhenish law code with their own. While this was the necessary course of action for the time being, Treitschke still presents it as somewhat bizarre situation: "(…) no one would have thought it possible that the liberators of Rhineland would allow the indefinite continuance of the foreign conqueror's

[278] Treitschke 1916, 2:557-9
[279] "The bond of economic interests proved stronger than their French sympathies." (Treitschke 1916, 2:560)
[280] Treitschke 1916, 2:562-3
[281] Treitschke 1916, 2:566-7
[282] Treitschke 1919, 5:221-2
[283] Treitschke 1919, 5:215
[284] Treitschke 1919, 6:69

legislation."[285] Thus the liberal and Catholic Rhinelanders taste blood; while a strong economy means that no one wants to break away from the kingdom of Prussia, a younger and even more anti-Prussian generation wants to loosen its ties to Prussia proper.[286] Treitschke thus portrays the Rhinelanders as conceited and convinced of their own superiority and modernism who do nothing but complain about the backwards Prussians, merely tolerating them because of the economic benefits association with Prussia brings the Rhineland.

The Rhine crisis of 1840 seems like a turning point for Treitschke, for several reasons. It changes the Rhenish attitude towards Prussia, it changes Prussia's role within Germany, and it serves further to consolidate German national feeling (temporarily at least). The crisis itself was precipitated by French setback in international diplomatic affairs: whereas France supported the Egyptian revolt against the Ottoman Empire, the latter was supported by Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Austria. In order to save face on the international stage, French authorities reiterated the old concept of France's natural borders, i.e. that the Left Bank of the Rhine belonged to the French. This threatened to turn into war: France called up almost half a million conscripts during the summer of 1840.[287]

In describing the immediate German reaction, Treitschke depicts what is almost a turn from modernity to pre-modernity. Gone is the modern liberalism imported from France; the German reaction to the military threat is rather depicted in terms of antiquity, medievalism, and 1813.

> [F]rom all the valleys of our land there arose (…) the old battle-cry of the Teutons (…) Germany was unanimous in the resolve to defend in knightly fashion her ancient and gloriously regained inheritance. The foreign ideals of the previous decades seemed to have been dispersed by a current of fresh air; the heroic figures of Dennewitz and Leipzig scintillated once again before German eyes (…)[288]

Treitschke ascribes a degree of authenticity to this sudden and widespread outburst of German patriotism; while the militaristic nationalism in France apparently is driven (in part) by the press, in Germany it "sprang from the heart"[289].

It is in this context in which Prussia gains the reputation of an all-German protector. As we've already seen, the Rhinelanders to a high degree chafed under Prussian rule, and their liberal and constitutionalist sentiments could often lead to a longing for French or Napoleonic rule. Treitschke argues that with the Rhine crisis these attitudes changed

[285] Treitschke 1919, 6:69
[286] Treitschke 1919, 6:70-1
[287] Brophy 2013, 1-2
[288] Treitschke 1919, 6:394
[289] Treitschke 1919, 6:395

diametrically: "[h]ow often over their beer had the Prussian Rhinelanders mocked at Ehrenbreitstein[290] (…) now they were all grateful to find themselves so well protected by these bulwarks of German freedom."[291] South Germans too, saw and longed for the effective militarism displayed by the Prussians. As noted with the Prussian Rhinelanders, membership in the *Zollverein* would go a long way towards ensuring Prussian loyalty. These factors, combined with disillusionment with the July Monarchy, thus led to increasing Prussia's status among the South Germans. National solidarity also applied to the German princes: "[t]here was no trace now, of that Rhenish Confederate sentiment (…)"[292]

Treitschke all but presents the Rhine crisis as a watershed in German national history, as this was "the first time in immemorial years the German nation was wholly at one with its princes."[293] The German liberals were also affected. The national mood dictated that even these would confirm the "Germanness" of the Rhine; at the very least, overt criticism of Prussian militarism was softened. This also forced liberals to make a choice: either continue on agitating with their Hambach-style liberalism (described in the next section), or "adapt their ideals to existing conditions (…)"[294]. While German liberalism still was an important intellectual force which would later take the lead during the March Revolution, Treitschke argues that the Rhine crisis killed off the cosmopolitanism demonstrated at Hambach, where French, German and Polish liberals celebrated together.

Regarding territory during the crisis, Treitschke notes that at no point were German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine official policy. While thoughts of conquest or recompense could be entertained in private, Treitschke presents this exclusively a defensive military effort "of Germany's right"[295] (that is, to "our western frontier"[296]). France is indubitably the aggressor; even as Prussia is preparing for potential war, "the aims of Berlin (…) remained entirely peaceful."[297]

While Treitschke thus emphasizes Prussia as a national leader and main defender during the crisis, this comes at the cost of Austria and the German Confederation. This is a role the Prussian king takes reluctantly, out of necessity: "[Frederick William IV] at length came to recognise that he must overcome his veneration for the archducal house of Austria,

[290] A fortress in the Prussian Rhineland.
[291] Treitschke 1919, 6:395
[292] Treitschke 1919, 6:396
[293] Treitschke 1919, 6:399-400
[294] Treitschke 1919, 6:399
[295] Treitschke 1919, 6:396
[296] Treitschke 1919, 6:397
[297] Treitschke 1919, 6:405

and must himself assume the leadership."[298] While the Prussian king wants to strengthen the federal military, he is hindered by the evasiveness of Austrian chancellor Metternich. Treitschke's Metternich keeps stalling and avoiding preparing for potential war with France, and urges neutrality, because "he did not consider that the decaying realm of Austria had power to withstand the dangers which such a war would entail (…) all the rusted cogwheels of the clumsy machine of state were groaning and grating as they turned."[299] Metternich (and Austria in general) is thus depicted as old and static, as well as being too weak and inefficient for protecting the German world in a possible war with France. As Austria still entertains the idea of neutrality as France is preparing for potential war, Treitschke quotes the Prussian diplomat count Maltzan: "[t]o-day Austria and Prussia have changed roles. The spirit of the imperial cabinet is essentially pacific. Prussia on the other hand, strong in her physical and moral energy, now excels Austria, and it is plainly the mission of the former to initiate and to guide the movements of the two great powers and those of Germany"[300].

While Austria shows its incompetence during the crisis, Treitschke doesn't believe the German Confederation is capable for acting on behalf of the German people, either. As king Frederick William was known as a romanticist, he "[cherished] the illusion that the Germanic Federation might become an independent power side by side with Austria and Prussia, and that Germany might thus intervene in the destinies of the world with the formidable momentum of three great powers."[301] The confidence in the lesser German states proves to be misguided, however. While these pay lip service to Prussian leadership and German solidarity, Treitschke spends much of the chapter demonstrating their ineptitude and unwillingness to commit resources in order to strengthen the confederate military forces. While suspicion of Prussian intents was partly to blame, more important is liberal and constitutional progress particularly in South German states. Treitschke blames the latter for prioritizing parliamentary discussions, low military spending and public opinion rather than doing what was necessary for national defence: "[h]ardly credible was the degree to which this new decade of constitutionalist glories had undermined the very foundations of military defence in the German south."[302] Treitschke ridicules the Confederation as its deputies are unable to agree on even trivial matters such as regulations for military salutes, much less contributing to a common military force. Instead, they are happy to mooch off of the

[298] Treitschke 1919, 6:404
[299] Treitschke 1919, 6:402-3
[300] Treitschke 1919, 6:402
[301] Treitschke 1919, 6:405
[302] Treitschke 1919, 6:407

Prussians, who seemingly are the only ones fighting for Germany: "It was plain that the petty courts were ready enough to allow Prussia's strong arm to help them in their need, but that they had absolutely no intention of doing anything to put an end to the scandalous defencelessness of quite a third of the territory inhabited by the bravest nation in the world."[303]

Treitschke laments the fact that as the danger of war with France diminished, so did German national feeling. The question of a confederate military force devolved into petty squabbling among the German princes; Treitschke mocks these discussions about who were to supply soldier for building pontoon bridges and who were to control trade on the Rhine (During a dispute between Hesse-Darmstadt and Nassau in 1841, Hessian workers sang the *Rheinlied*, except the enemy in this case was Nassau, not France)[304]. Despite this setback to German national unity, Treitschke notes one positive effect of the Rhine crisis: "(…) it was impossible that German liberalism should ever again suffer a complete relapse into the cosmopolitan frenzy of the previous decade."[305]

Ridicule of liberalism: Wartburg

It is to this earlier liberalism we now turn, exhibited through two festivals. Treitschke's descriptions of these is telling for his view of constitutional issues and the political activity outside official channels during *Vormärz*. While sympathizing with some of the participants' goals (German unification), Treitschke ridicules their liberal and constitutionalist ideals, and denigrates the festivals themselves as merely drunken parties with little political value.

The Wartburg Festival of 1817 was a double celebration, both of the tercentenary of the Reformation and of the four-year anniversary of the battle of Leipzig. The participants were mainly young, liberal members of the *Burschenschaften* (student associations), as well as some of their more liberal-minded professors. The festival took place near Wartburg Castle (which Martin Luther for a time had used as a refuge) in the duchy of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, a small state located in Central Germany.

For Treitschke, the Wartburg Festival of 1817 seems to really be three festivals, or rather, three distinct conceptions of the Wartburg Festival. As will be shown, he disparages all three of them. The "true festival"[306] seems merely to be a silly, but harmless expression of youthful enthusiasm. The celebration of liberation from foreign oppression seemed the most

[303] Treitschke 1919, 6:410
[304] Treitschke 1919, 6:418-24
[305] Treitschke 1919, 6:420
[306] Treitschke 1917, 3:56

important expression of German national unity: "Arminius, Luther, Scharnhorst, all the great figures of those who led Germanism in the struggle against foreign encroachments, became fused into a single image in the conceptions of these young hotheads."[307] However, already with its emphasis on Protestantism the festival has failed to become a pan-German celebration. Due to poor communication, the exclusion of Catholic southerners (particularly Austrians), and even of Prussians meant that most participants came from the lands that had been organized in the French-dominated Confederacy of the Rhine. Thus, liberal-minded students were to dominate the festival.[308]

As mentioned, Treitschke portrays the "true festival" as youthful folly: "(…) all were inspired by the happy self-forgetfulness of youth which is still able to immerse itself in the pleasures of the moment."[309] The one speech Treitschke emphasizes is also an "emotional and exaggerated (…) but thoroughly harmless outpouring of sentimentality (…)"[310], concerned as it was with perceived broken promises of liberal and national reforms during the Wars of Liberation. Even this relatively moderate speech Treitschke proposes to be the most radical, thus stressing the trivial political contents of the festival.

What we may call the "extremist festival" begins with the book burnings. These were the doings of a radical minority, members of the circle around *Turnvater* Jahn.[311] Treitschke presents this as all but a coup, giving the festival a much more antagonizing character. As books perceived as representing reactionary and antinational forces were being burned (as well as military effects), Treitschke quotes Jahn's associate Hans Ferdinand Massmann: "(…) all the world of Germany can see what we desire; can know what is to be expected from us in the future."[312] Treitschke still describes this as an "indescribably silly [farce]"[313]. He is clearly mocking the participating professor Jakob Friedrich Fries, who says "you have visited the land where the German people is free, where German thought is free. . . Here there is no standing army to burden the nation! A little land shows you the goal!"[314] Treitschke's opposition to liberal, open political discussion is clearly demonstrated here, as his proponents of liberalism are these blasphemous professors (mimicking Luther's burning of the papal bull

[307] Treitschke 1917, 3:54
[308] Treitschke 1917, 3:54
[309] Treitschke 1917, 3:55
[310] Treitschke 1917, 3:55
[311] Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) was a German soldier, nationalist and gymnast. He founded the Gymnastics Society (*Turngesellschaft*) in 1811, not only to strengthen the physique of young Germans, but also to foster their communal and national feelings, as well as to prepare them for fighting the French when the time came (Schulze 1991, 51).
[312] Treitschke 1917, 3:56
[313] Treitschke 1917, 3:57
[314] Treitschke 1917, 3:57

with their book burnings) who are spouting subversive ideas to (drunken) young students.[315]

What we may call the "conceptual festival" does not take place at Wartburg. Rather, it takes place later, in the liberal press and in the minds of the conservative authorities. "A whole library of writings and counter-writings illuminated the extraordinary drama from all sides, raising this outburst of students' revelry to the level of a European event."[316] On the participants' side, these writings spoke (hopefully) of national renewal and liberal reformism, and as the festival of a sign of greater things to come, though without any concrete political programme.[317]

The Wartburg festival and the written exhortations of it were negatively received by the conservative authorities. In addition to the writers whose books were burned, Treitschke describes the reactions of the German great powers, Austria and Prussia (though he also notes that the only monarch giving due credence to the festival was duke Karl Augustus of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach). Frederick William III is concerned (which Treitschke ascribes to his ignorance of student life), and even Metternich is worried: "for the first time [Metternich devoted] serious attention to German affairs, which he had hitherto treated with profound indifference, for he recognised with terror that behind the fantastical activities of these young men there lurked the deadly enemy of his system, the national idea."[318] The conservative reaction encourages the young radicals, and fed into the idea that they were on the right track. Treitschke thus gives the impression that while the Wartburg festival in itself was unremarkable, the radical students and the conservative authorities were whipping each other into a frenzy over the great and potentially dangerous meanings they both later ascribed to an insignificant event.

Ridicule of liberalism: Hambach

As Treitschke ridiculed young, enthusiastic national-liberalism as it was exhibited at the Wartburg festival, his writings of the Hambach festival are telling regarding his attitudes towards revolutionary activity, as well as Prussia's place within Germany. While Treitschke did not finish his volume on the March Revolution, it seems likely that he considered the Hamburg festival an even more impotent and deluded precursor to 1848, particularly regarding its liberal (and even republican) aspirations. While Treitschke considered the Hambach participants for the most part to be patriots with their heart in the right place,

[315] Treitschke 1917, 3:57-8
[316] Treitschke 1917, 3:58
[317] Treitschke 1917, 3:59-60
[318] Treitschke 1917, 3:60

attempting national unification in this manner would ultimately prove to be a dead-end, both in 1832 and in 1848.

Most of what Treitschke writes about the Hambach festival is actually dedicated to the liberal atmosphere and actors in Southern Germany before the festival itself was arranged. This is thoroughly described in negative terms. In describing the misplaced priorities of the liberal journal *Politische Annalen*, Treitschke writes that "[n]o word was said here about Germany, no word about the duties of national honour and self-preservation[, only about radical cosmopolitanism.]"[319] Said cosmopolitanism is in high degree equated with national solidarity with the French, having just gone through the liberal July Revolution, and the Poles, at the time engaged in a national uprising against the Russian czar. As these sympathies, liberal and cosmopolitan, are also anti-Prussian, they become *anti-national* in Treitschke's view: as one liberal writer argues in favour of taking the side of France in case of conflict with the Holy Alliance, this is "[advocating] the disintegration of his fatherland."[320] This appears to be perhaps Treitschke's main issue with these liberal activists; the preference of *freedom* over national unity. By prioritizing constitutional issues over those of national-political importance (or, as expressed by Badenese liberal Karl von Rotteck, "I would rather have freedom without unity than unity without freedom"[321]), when push comes to shove these liberals are ultimately unwilling to grant ultimate political authority to the one German monarch capable of uniting the German states. Their convictions of the rightness of constitutionalism or even republicanism are held too strongly for them to accept absolutism, meaning they would never support a Prussian-led Germany.

When it is time for the actual festival to be arranged, then, there was never any chance of it succeeding with any of its political goals: "(…) since the initiators had no definite or coherent aim, mischief and disorder were the inevitable results."[322] Treitschke describes the themes of some of the speeches made at the festival: anti-Prussian sentiments (particularly exhibited by attending Rhinelanders), hatred towards nobility, and republicanism. Organizer Johann Georg August Wirth even advocated a European confederation of republics.[323] Such cosmopolitanism was also shown through the attendance of French and Poles, as well as the through the theme of national solidarity against the noble ruling classes.[324]

Treitschke points out how these high-spirited speeches were gradually replaced by

[319] Treitschke 1919, 5:299
[320] Treitschke 1919, 5:300
[321] Treitschke 1919, 5:322
[322] Treitschke 1919, 5:317
[323] Wirth 1832, 1:48
[324] Treitschke 1919, 5:319-21

drunkenness and riots. While the mood of the festival was indeed enthusiastic, when time came for practical politics, the organizers failed. As none had the mandate to form any kind of formal political group, they were unable to enact anything concrete. Divergent goals also led to the dichotomy mentioned above: when Rotteck was advocating liberalism and democratic opposition to the nobles rather than national unification, this was meant as a correction of a younger student who attempted to unfurl an all-German banner.[325]

Thus did the Hambach festival go out with a whimper; the most concrete legacy of the festival in Southern Germany was simply that its remembrance became an excuse for excessive drinking. For Treitschke, this was also characteristic of the March Revolution: "(…) the idealism and the indiscipline of the year 1848 were largely generated by the continuous intoxication of these public banquets."[326] Treitschke's disdain for the Hambach Festival is also apparent by the recurring dichotomy of German particularism (with political and civil rights) vs. national unification (under an absolute monarch), and the Hambach participants' preference for the former. His own priorities were of the latter, supported by Prussian militaristic expansionism: "[h]e[327] had no inclination for the never-ending wine-seasoned cries of Long live Germany—what time the German flag could not float over Strasburg nor the German warfleet sail to Kronstadt."[328]

Territorial questions during 1848

The problem of Schleswig-Holstein

As we turn to our final text, Heinrich von Sybel's *The Founding of the German Empire by William I*, we continue to move forward in time. With the March Revolution of 1848/9 the possibility of a united Germany for the first time. For the Frankfurt Parliament, considering themselves the supreme authority of this new Germany (in accordance with progressive ideas of liberalism and constitutionalism), this entailed new problems and challenges for the deputies. The task of writing an all-German constitution of course would involve determining the political structure of the new state; however, the physical territories of 'Germany' would also have to be decided. While I will focus on Sybel's thoughts on the Frankfurt Parliament's territorial discussions, as we will see, questions of territory, political constitution, and political factionalism were closely related.

[325] Treitschke 1919, 5:321-2
[326] Treitschke 1919, 5:322
[327] Almost definitely the poet Karl Gottfried Nadler (1809-49), whose views in this case correspond with Treitschke's own.
[328] Treitschke 1919, 5:322

Next to the question of Greater- or Lesser-Germany, of all territorial discussions during the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848, the most important and controversial one was probably that of Schleswig-Holstein. Of all extra-German or non-German territories meant for incorporation into the supposed German nation-state, this is also the one Heinrich von Sybel devotes most pages to.[329]

Before 1848, the two duchies of Schleswig and Holstein were ruled in personal union with the king of Denmark. Schleswig were in addition a fief of the Danish kingdom, and demographically it was populated by Danes in the north and Germans in the South. Unlike Schleswig, Holstein was a member of the German Confederation and almost exclusively populated by Germans.[330] From 1830 onwards, the Danish king were attempting to integrate Schleswig more closely into the Danish kingdom, while a growing German national movement were insisting on the indivisible connection between Schleswig and Holstein – and thus on the connection between Schleswig and Germany. As neither the Danish king, his son nor his brother were likely to beget any more sons, the problem of succession also reared its head.[331] While women could inherit the Danish crown, the case of Schleswig was controversial. In Holstein women were excluded from ducal succession, and it was expected that the ducal title would revert to the Duke of Augustenburg upon the termination of the Danish line. Holstein would also be expected to apply for membership in the German Confederation. However, in 1846 the Danish king proclaimed that Schleswig and parts of Holstein would be subjected to Danish succession law, thus maintaining the duchies' connection with Denmark. [332]

For Sybel, this is the beginning of the conflict over Schleswig-Holstein. In *Founding*, this conflict appears both as an attempt at oppression and as a national (proxy) conflict. The duchies are merely "tolerating" Danish rule as they will pass from the Danish royal line of succession upon the king's death. At that point, they will "be freed from all Danish control."[333] With the 1846 proclamation however, the conflict between Denmark and the two duchies transitions into what appears as a national conflict. All of Germany voices its opposition to the proclamation, and Sybel stresses that all political camps (though each with their own approach) takes the side of the duchies. However, the German Confederation proves

[329] In the first volume of Perrin's translation (1890) of *Founding* (mostly dedicated to the March Revolution and the Frankfurt Parliament), "Schleswig" is mentioned 124 times. "Posen" is mentioned 23 times, "Bohemia" 11 times, and "Limburg" 2 times.
[330] *Encyclopedia Britannica* 2010
[331] Nipperdey 1996, 273-4
[332] Carr 1991, 38-9
[333] Sybel 1890, 1:129

to be a disappointment in this regard. "[W]ith customary diplomatic politeness, [the Confederate Diet] expressed its confidence in the royal judgement of the Danish king."[334], According to Sybel, all of Germany is united in its disgust with Confederate toadyism.

In March 1848, Denmark annexed Schleswig.[335] Sybel highlights how this action transgressed the historical and legal rights of the duchy: "King Frederick VII, (…) though in flagrant violation of the ancient rights of the land, had torn Schleswig violently from Holstein (…)"[336]. In opposition to these "unlawful proceedings of Denmark"[337], the Germans in the two duchies formed a provisional government and prepared for armed resistance. As fighting broke out in Schleswig (notably, Sybel claims the Schleswig Danes to be the aggressors), the Confederate Diet recognized the provisional government and accepted their incorporation into the Confederation. They were also to elect representatives for the upcoming all-German parliament.[338]

At this point in Sybel's narrative, the conflict in Schleswig-Holstein turns into a war between Denmark and Prussia. After fighting broke out in the duchies, the Confederation commissioned Prussia to defend them. While Prussia originally occupied the whole of Schleswig, British and Russian pressure forced them to move to Southern Schleswig later that spring.[339] According to Sybel, the Germans were (partly) themselves responsible for this diplomatic situation: by insisting on the inclusion of Schleswig into the Confederation, and even more grievously, by accepting deputies from Schleswig to the Frankfurt Parliament before Schleswig had been confirmed as a member of the Confederation. "This was quite as much in contradiction to what had hitherto been regarded as legitimate as, on the other side, the threatened incorporation of Schleswig into Denmark Proper (…)"[340]. While this serves to make the Germans the guilty party rather than the Danes, Sybel argues that this "feeling gained ground the more [on the international stage], because of the increasing anxiety and jealousy with which Germany's attempts to rise into a united nation were regarded."[341]

Things are even more difficult for Prussia, as German national solidarity and indignation does not comprise actual military support. Sybel emphasizes the hypocrisy and entitlement of Austria: "[t]hat Government which was more than ever determined to assert its claim to continued presidency of the Confederation (…) announced that it was unable just

[334] Sybel 1890, 1:129-30
[335] Nipperdey 1996, 554
[336] Sybel 1890, 1:164
[337] Sybel 1890, 1:164
[338] Sybel 1890, 1:170-2
[339] Nipperdey 1996, 554-5
[340] Sybel 1890, 1:254
[341] Sybel 1890, 1:254

then to send troops to Schleswig."[342] Rather than acting as a German state, it rather preferred to appear as a European great power, one that might like the others pressure Prussia into standing down. The actions of the lesser German states were perhaps more justified; while contributing manpower and resources wherever possible, they were limited by the need to protect their own states during these troublesome times. Sybel therefore more than sympathises with Prussia who alone has to deal with the aftermath. Prussian acceptance of British mediation and retreat from Jutland is seen as a great betrayal by the impotent Frankfurt Parliament. They also confirmed their view of the intertwined status of the duchies and the German nation: "(…) the National Assembly passed a decree, that the cause of the Duchies was the cause of the German Nation, and that it involved the honor and interests of Germany (…)"[343].

In Sybel's view, Prussia's worst mistake was made signing the Malmö Compact (26th August 1848), which brokered a seven-months truce between Denmark and Prussia. It is in this part of his narrative that we may find most explicitly his own thoughts on the Schleswig-Holstein question, and where he writes from a German point of view, rather than a Prussian one. One of the clauses of the compact was the creation of a new four-man government of the duchies, with its president chosen by the monarchs. The great mistake was the selection of the Danish strict anti-separatist count Carl Moltke, who was also instrumental in working out the question of the Danish constitution.[344] This was due to the all-importance of this government;

> (…) nothing less than everything depended on its composition. If it should be actuated by patriotic[345] motives, (…) it might call again into life all the important laws of its predecessor [346], and preserve the loyal sentiment of Schleswig in its full vigor. But if it should fall under the direction of a man like Carl Moltke, the opposite of all this would be effected before the end of the seven months, and the union of Schleswig with Holstein actually severed.[347]

Prussia's signing of the compact proved particularly controversial. Within Germany, the Frankfurt Parliament was dissatisfied with the terms of the compact, which almost exclusively were in Danish favour. Criticism also took the form of accusations against Prussia that she had the ratified the compact without having the mandate to do so; rather, that was the

[342] Sybel 1890, 1:256
[343] Sybel 1890, 1:260
[344] Jørgensen 2014
[345] Referring to German, rather than Danish, patriotism. While Sybel doesn't state explicitly that the former would be more "appropriate" for Schleswig, it is clear that he finds it preferable.
[346] The German-friendly provisional government of Schleswig-Holstein. With the Malmö Compact, both it and the decrees it had instituted were repealed (Nipperdey 1996, 555).
[347] Sybel 1890, 1:268-9

prerogative of the German provisional government.[348]

As Sybel writes about the German reception of the Malmö Compact, he emphasizes the reaction of the Left-wing of the Parliament. Sybel is thoroughly antipathetic towards them: "[t]he Left, in general little interested in the cold-blooded Schleswig-Holsteiners, now fairly yelled with delight, that a battle-cry had been found (…)"[349]. He implies they are merely opportunists, treating this as a pretence for criticizing both Prussia and the liberal majority of the Frankfurt Parliament. The Left is also the strongest proponents for rejecting the Compact and resuming warfare, as well as continuing the March Revolution:

> (…) more and more violent agitation of the Left in favor of a revolutionary dictatorship. (…) it was the Democratic party that branded every longing for peace as a disgrace to national honor and a hindrance to national prosperity; only too palpably did they betray their ruling idea, the acquisition of revolutionary power by means of war, following the example of the French in 1793.[350]

As the majority of the Parliament did not wish to further the revolution, Sybel thus implies that fear of leftist agitation and violence pushed them toward accepting the Compact. Other factors pushing them in this direction was fear of a European-wide war, certain Danish concessions of the Compact, as well as a lack of resources. As the Parliament had no army or treasury, it was dependent on those of the German states; however, the most powerful of these was pro-Compact.[351] By a small majority, then, the Parliament voted on the 16th of September to accept the Compact.[352] Sybel evidently thinks this was the proper decision; "[t]he further course of events in Schleswig-Holstein confirmed the wisdom of the decree of the 16th of September."[353] The new president of the government was "a man of unquestioned patriotism"[354], and reinstated the laws and the constitution which had been abolished with the compact.[355] Thus, in 1848, the question of Schleswig-Holstein ends inconclusively. Sybel's last mentioning of the matter in the context of the Frankfurt Parliament is during the discussions of a future German constitution: while the new German nation-state would consist of the territories of the member-states of the German Confederation, Sybel soberly reports that the possible inclusion of Schleswig would be postponed indefinitely.[356]

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[348] Nipperdey 1996, 555
[349] Sybel 1890, 1:270
[350] Sybel 1890, 1:272
[351] Sybel 1890, 1:272-3
[352] Nipperdey 1996, 556
[353] Sybel 1890, 1:277
[354] Sybel 1890, 1:277. As the man in question, Theodor Reventlow, was a Schleswigian, the patriotism mentioned would consequently be of the German kind (Rerup and Larsen 2011).
[355] See note 346.
[356] Sybel 1890, 1:280-1

The question of Posen

Like Schleswig-Holstein, the questions of Posen and Poland also concerned the incorporation of non-German lands into the new German state. Also, in both cases, the territories to be incorporated were closely affiliated with a member-state of the German Confederation (while Schleswig was in a personal union with Holstein, the duchy of Posen was a client state of Prussia). However, there are some differences in how Sybel writes about these two cases. Firstly, while we saw that the case of Schleswig-Holstein could work as a pretext for criticizing both the German Confederation and the Frankfurt Parliament, the case of Posen amplifies such criticism. Secondly, while Sybel hardly ever mentions Danes aside from specific individuals, he is much more explicit regarding the Polish nation. He is thoroughly negative to the Poles, and particularly to any question of equality or Polish autonomy within a German state. As we will see, in Sybel's narrative these ideas are interconnected with liberalism or even republicanism (through the Frankfurt deputies advocating in favour of Polish interests). By demonstrating what he perceives as Polish violence or rebellions, he may also express his antipathy towards liberal and left-leaning constitutional sympathies.

The question of Posen begins with the March Revolution in Prussia, and it begins with what to Sybel appears as the main characteristic of the Prussian Poles: ingratitude. As the revolutionaries initially gained the upper hand in Berlin, they demanded the release of the leaders of the failed Polish uprising of 1846. Once freed, these leaders "hastened immediately into the Province of Posen[357], and there, in token of their gratitude for the amnesty, incited an insurrection against the Prussian authorities, and inflamed their compatriots against the half-million German residents of the Province."[358] In addition to the perceived ingratitude, this quote also demonstrates another reason for Sybel's Polonophobia: violent and unjust behaviour against Germans living in Posen and West-Prussia. This latter reason serves also to justify German domination of these Polish-inhabited lands. Within the duchy itself, Sybel strongly implies that only the Prussian army is capable of deterring Poles from subversive actions. Out in the countryside, where the military presence is not as pronounced, the Prussian nobility is gearing up for rebellion: "[they] compelled Polish peasants to join their ranks (…) levied tributes of money and of supplies upon both Poles and Germans; tore down the Prussian eagle (…) drove out the Prussian officials; and maltreated Germans and Jews who

[357] This is an anachronism. At this point Posen was still a duchy, only to be formally made a Prussian province the next year.
[358] Sybel 1890, 1:166

refused to obey them."[359] As the Germans in Posen[360] protested this and appealed to Berlin, and because (as Sybel is careful to note) the Polish militia leaders did not comply with Prussian authorities, Posen was by royal decree effectively partitioned. 'National reorganization', that is, autonomy, would only be given to the eastern, "Polish" half of the duchy.[361]

While Sybel glosses over the resulting Polish uprising, he notes that "the Poles manifested (…) a barbarous cruelty towards the defenceless Germans and Jews."[362] This is evidently a way of defending Prussian intervention and suppression of the rebellion on both moral and national grounds: "[t]he Poles had shown what Germans living under their rule might expect to suffer; and had testified that by their own repeated declarations, that it was not only the whole province of Posen, but West Prussia, which had just been admitted into the Confederation, that they wished to recover."[363] (As a tangent, we may note the use of the word "recover"[364]. The area constituting West Prussia had been part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth until it was annexed by the Prussian kingdom in 1772. However, early on in *Founding* Sybel mentions both East and West Prussia as Holy Roman Imperial territory having been lost to Poland. Co-incidentally, Sybel describes the transferral of Schleswig-Holstein to Denmark in a similar manner. [365] Later, though, Sybel seems to abandon such historical arguments for territorial acquisitions, as we will see). Ultimately the Polish militias were unable to keep up with the Prussian military force: on the 9th of May they surrendered and the Polish National Committee (described below) disbanded itself.[366]

For both the Poles themselves and of left-leaning Germans, Sybel emphasizes the ambitious (and dangerous) dream of restoring an independent Poland. Regarding the Poles, this is presented as a pretentious grab at power: the new and liberal Prussian government had promised to appoint a commission consisting of German and Polish representatives in order to work out the details of a "national reorganization" of Posen. Even before this promise had been made however, the new Polish National Committee had "roundly declared that their aim

[359] Sybel 1890, 1:175
[360] Mike Rapport points out how exact demographic surveys of the region are difficult to carry out, as these are often coloured by national prejudice. He estimates twice as many Poles as Germans (Rapport 2008, 126); Sybel claims that Posen's demographical composition were that of 500,000 Germans and 700,000 Poles (Sybel 1890, 1:175).
[361] Rapport 2008, 128-9
[362] Sybel 1890, 1:177
[363] Sybel 1890, 1:178
[364] 'zurückerobern' in German (Sybel 1913, 1:115)
[365] Sybel 1890, 1:10
[366] Rapport 2008, 129

was nothing less than the restoration of entire Poland."[367] During the overwhelmingly liberal Pre-Parliament (most of its representatives were from Southern Germany and the Rhineland[368]; as we've seen, these were areas aligned with France during the Coalition Wars and educated middle-class elements there had long held liberal sympathies), we find similar attitudes. While, as we've seen, Schleswig and East- and West-Prussia were to become members of the German Confederation, the question of Posen (in particular, the parts of Posen with a German majority) was to be deferred to the future National Parliament; Sybel ridicules the liberal representatives in that this was due to "tender consideration for their beloved Poles; (…) the restoration of Poland (…) was proclaimed to be a sacred duty of the German Nation."[369] As we've also seen during the Schleswig-Holstein, such a scenario would probably result in war, as most of Polish territory at this time was part of the reactionary and staunchly anti-revolutionary Russian empire. Again, Sybel notes the belligerence of the left-leaning representatives, particularly the republicans. This serves to demonstrate the divergence of factional party politics, even across the span of time: while parts of the German Left in 1848 may have wanted a European-wide war against reactionary Russia[370], Sybel exhibits Prussian pragmatism and propensity for practical politics. Unlike for the radical Left, then, Sybel evidently does not find it "a glorious thing to march forth in league with their French brethren, to the overthrow of the Asiatic barbarian and the prince of all despots."[371]

However, the uprising in Posen changed these thoughts of a restored Poland, even among liberal Germans. During the Frankfurt Parliament, the question of Posen and Poland featured most prominently during a discussion held 24th-27th of July. While Sybel only presents extractions from this discussion (possibly because they are mainly meant as an illustration of the growing divisions along partisan lines within the Parliament), these extractions are particularly telling about his views on German-Polish relations and territorial disputes resulting from it.

While the discussion concerned 1) whether the division of Posen had been legal and 2) whether the German half of Posen ought to be incorporated into the German Confederation and the future German state, or whether to support the restoration of a Polish state, Sybel thinks this three-day discussion was redundant as he considers the matter open and shut.

[367] Sybel 1890, 1:166. However, Sybel fails to mention that this became the goal of the National Committee only after it had included elements from a radical, democratic organization; before this had happened, the National Committee had only wanted national autonomy (Rapport 2008, 128).
[368] Nipperdey 1996, 538
[369] Sybel 1890, 1:170
[370] Nipperdey 1996, 555-6
[371] Sybel 1890, 1:170

"After the Decree of the Confederate Diet, [German Posen, East and West Prussia] belonged to Germany[372]; their inhabitants, who were for the most part of German origin, and had been shamefully maltreated by the Poles in the last insurrection, gladly hastened to become members of the German Empire (…)"[373]

This quote gives us a few possible pointers of Sybel's own attitudes. Sybel refers to a Confederate decree dated April 11th which accepted West- and East-Prussia into the German Confederation (and the incorporation of German Posen later that spring).[374] As this decree was issued between the Pre-Parliament and the Frankfurt Parliament, the Confederate Diet was at this time the only all-German political body.[375] This points to a close association (if not outright identification) of the Confederation and 'Germany'. Sybel seems to accept that as the Confederate Diet unilaterally decrees incorporation of territories, this makes said incorporation factual (due to the connection/identification of the Confederation with 'Germany' we may speak of territorial *annexation* in addition to territorial *incorporation*). He does this, as we've seen, partly on moral grounds (Polish violence against Germans in Posen), and it is in this regard he notes Wilhelm Jordan, who "was far ahead (…) in his thorough knowledge of the history of Poland, and in his appreciation of the inextinguishable hatred of the Germans that prevailed among the Poles."[376] In this section, there seem to be an almost "epistemological-moral" assumption of historical knowledge. Jordan is in the right because of his superior knowledge of Polish history, and the fact that a three-day debate of the Polish question was held "was no gratifying evidence of historical knowledge on the subject, nor of a just and national sentiment (…)"[377]

It is in this section that Sybel seems dismissive of what we may call historical-territorial arguments, that is, assigning a territory to a nation because said nation has historically inhabited the territory. Echoing Jordan, he rejects one such argument using nationalist-moral language:

> [a]n observation had been made to the effect that since the German inhabitants of Posen had of their own free will settled in ancient Polish territory, they should not complain if they found themselves now destined to be counted as part of a re-established Poland. To this *unfitting* remark Jordan aptly and forcibly retorted, that

[372] 'gehörten (…) zu Deutchland' in German (Sybel 1913, 1:152).
[373] Sybel 1890, 1:235-6
[374] Sybel 1890, 1:172-3
[375] Sybel 1890, 1:235. The Pre-Parliament was in session March 31st to April 3rd; the Frankfurt Parliament May 18th 1848 to May 31st 1849.
[376] Sybel 1890, 1:236
[377] Sybel 1890, 1:235

> whoever wished to expel from Germany a half-million Germans was, to say the least, unconsciously guilty of *high treason*.[378]

We may again recall the unquestioning assumption of Posen as part of Germany, on the basis of the Confederate Decree. Sybel ends the question of Posen in favour of the German nation-state: the Frankfurt Parliament votes to incorporate Posen into Germany, and it votes to reject a motion criticizing the historical partitions of Poland.[379] Because of the uprising in Posen (but also due to arguments given by e.g. Jordan about perceived German cultural superiority) there would be no more serious talks in Germany about restoring Poland.[380]

Austria's exit from Germany

While we've so far only touched indirectly upon the question of Austria in a wider German world, Sybel often seems to portray Austria as playing two distinct roles at the same time, both as a German state *and* as a European great power. He repeatedly criticizes Austria for choosing the latter when it ought to have chosen the former. Already during the elections to the Frankfurt Parliament,

> [t]he citizens feared lest Vienna, when once it had become part of a German Empire, should sink to the rank of a provincial city (…) [the manufacturers] were not to be protected against their western German neighbours by any system of customs; and the artisans would not listen to those notions of the liberty (…) of emigrating without paying duty (…) The politicians took up the watchword: we are first Austrians and then Germans.[381]

These are some of the issues which made Austria wary about joining together with the rest of the German states: the fear of Austria losing itself in a great German state; the fear that membership in the *Zollverein* would wreak havoc on the Austrian economy; and the discrepancy in ideology, with Southern Germany and the Rhineland in particular being more open to French-style liberalism and constitutionalism. In spite of this, Austria was not prepared to withdraw from the German world and relinquish its special position. Sybel again criticizes perceived Austrian entitlement: "(…) they relied upon their traditional right to expect that Germany would, of course, give up whatever might seem disadvantageous to Austria."[382] Sybel also presents this wavering between positions as an expression both of opportunism and insincerity. Earlier, while the March Revolution was at its height, in order to stop Prussia from gaining too powerful a position in Germany at the expense of itself, "it

[378] Sybel 1890, 1:236-7 (my italics)
[379] Sybel 1890, 1:237-8
[380] Rapport 2008, 129
[381] Sybel 1890, 1:189
[382] Sybel 1890, 1:190

declared itself now to be German in every vein."[383]

As the Frankfurt Parliament worked on the future constitution throughout the winter of 1848/9, it became apparent that the Austrian question would have to be answered. Though Austria may have been distant and even backwards in the eyes of the western Germans, it was obviously part of the German world.[384] As well as being one of two German great powers, it also had the prestige of having supplied Holy Roman Emperors from the 15th century until its dissolution. However, the Austrian Empire also consisted of territories outside the German Confederation (consisting of a multitude of nationalities). The problem was how to reconcile Austria's presumed leadership in a German nation-state with these non-German territories. The Frankfurt Parliament's preferred solution would be the Greater-Germany arrangement: the new German state would consist of the territory of the German Confederation (with the status of Schleswig-Holstein pending); leaving out Austria's non-German territories.

Sybel seems to place the blame for Austria's break with Germany squarely on Austria itself. The final break came as early as October 1848. At this point, a violent uprising had taken place in Vienna, leaving radicals in control of the city. When counter-revolutionary forces managed to retake the city, one of those who were executed was liberal Frankfurt deputy, Robert Blum.[385] To Sybel, this was a counter-revolutionary message to Frankfurt, functioning as a repudiation of its project: "[t]he attitude of Austria towards German Unity and the Central Government was thus indelibly defined."[386] This was confirmed with the new Austrian prime minister Felix von Schwarzenberg stressing the unity of the Austrian Empire, greatly endangering the Greater-Germany solution. While Schwarzenberg also declared that Austria was committed to continuing performing her Confederate duties, Sybel believes this merely to be a way of continuing its influence in the German world without accepting any limitations of its own imperial status.[387] Sybel further lambasts Schwarzenberg's support of the proposition[388] of organizing the German states into six groups under an imperial regent, where the powerful German powers would dominate the lesser:

> (…) a sharper contrast to the national desire for unity could not be found than this dismemberment of Germany into six fatherlands, whose Kings (…) should all be

[383] Sybel 1890, 1:163
[384] Nipperdey 1996, 583
[385] Nipperdey 1996, 569-70
[386] Sybel 1890, 1:288
[387] Sybel 1890, 1:301-2
[388] This idea originally belonged to Frederick William IV; Sybel is surprised how he could come up with this "quite anti-Prussian idea" (Sybel 1890, 1:293).

> subordinated to polyglot Austria (…) [Schwarzenberg wanted] with one stroke of his pen, to annihilate the independence of about thirty legitimate Governments.[389]

Another way of demonstrating Austrian indifference and hostility to German national unity, as well as its perceived opportunism, came in March 1849. The Austrian ministry issued the March Constitution, which confirmed the legal indivisibility of all the Austrian lands. Schwarzenberg requested that the entire Austrian Empire, with all its non-German territories, would be accepted into Germany.[390] "[F]orty million German and thirty million non-Germans, all united in brotherly concord in the common service of Austria. It was indeed no favorable sign of national consciousness nor of political maturity (…)"[391]

This demand seems to Sybel to be the death of the Greater-Germany solution, and that which excluded Austria from Germany. Such a massive, multinational state would not be compatible with the constitution being drawn up by the Frankfurt Parliament, and Austria therefore demanded major changes to it. Anything like a liberal nation-state with political representation was off the table; what Austria proposed would be a gigantic, multinational confederation of states under Austrian leadership. Out of 70 deputies in the legislative assembly, 38 would come from Austrian territories. Germany itself would be divided into six regions, as mentioned above. To Sybel, this was the exact opposite of a German nation-state. Rather than incorporating Austria into Germany, it appeared as an attempt to incorporate the German states into an enormous Austrian Empire:

> (…) instead of the unity of Germany, its dismemberment into six minor sections; instead of the preservation of a national basis for the constitution, the admission of thirty million non-Germans (…) Germany's affairs should be arranged according to the needs or commands of Austria. This system meant not the mediatization of the German Petty States, but of the entire German nation.[392]

While the Revolution would be running on fumes for a few more months, Austria would no longer participate in the German national project. As Sybel ends his book on the Frankfurt Parliament with the Prussian king rejecting the offer of the German crown, he only mentions Austria a few more times, seemingly in passing. In these, Austria's wavering between Germany and its own status as a great power is again demonstrated: while Schwarzenberg no longer recognizes the Frankfurt Parliament and announced Austria would never be part of a German state in which it was not its leader, it would still hold on to its old Confederate

[389] Sybel 1890, 1:309
[390] Nipperdey 1996, 584
[391] Sybel 1890, 1:333
[392] Sybel 1890, 1:341-2

privileges.[393] This encapsulates Sybel's Austria: wanting to remain a European great power, while using its "Germanness" for its own purposes; wanting to lead the German world, while not having to commit to anything that would undermine its distinct imperial status.

[393] Sybel 1890, 1:354-5

In conclusion

In summarizing our finds, we see that the intellectual conceptions of whatever Germany was, or ought to have been in the minds of these thinkers and writers, changed considerably over this century. Of course, this was to be expected; Germany and Europe had changed enormously from the French Revolution until the Germans finally had their own nation-state. The questions we have tried to answer are therefore *how* the conception(s) of Germany had changed, why it had done so, and whether any general trend can be discerned. I proposed a dialectical structure in explaining these changes: the thesis being 'Germany' as a territorial and linguistic, but non-political *Kulturnation*, the antithesis being a re-definition and delineation of 'Germany', preferably as something (potentially) political, and the synthesis being a (re-)expansive 'Germany'. Thus, we took a dialectical rather than a straight-forward diachronic or comparative approach to the source material for this period. We therefore did not compare different usage of terms employed by the writers (as our three main themes *territory*, *nation*, and *political constitution* were emphasized to different degrees by different writers and the periods in which they wrote, terminological comparison would run the risk of being "hollow"). The point was rather to approximate what 'Germany' meant for the individual writers, and from there demonstrate these conceptual changes throughout the century.

I hypothesized that the Enlightenment philosophers and early 19th century thinkers envisioned 'Germany' more or less as a *Kulturnation*, where it existed more as an abstract conception of language and culture more than a political entity. Fichte was probably the most radical example of 'Germany' as a *Kulturnation*, because in his case it was even non-territorial, or at least as something other than (merely) territory. What had originally separated the Germans from the other Germanic-speaking peoples was geographical migration patterns, with the former staying in what was a "Germanic homeland" while the latter spreading throughout Western Europe. However, in terms of "Germanness", that is, German identity or German qualities, geographical distribution or migrations were insignificant. The political geography of the German world also seemed to be of slight importance: neither the *Kleinstaaterei*, the confessional division nor the lack of a unified German nation-state mattered much to Fichte when conceiving of what 'Germany' was. This partly seems like a pragmatic solution. At the time when Fichte was grappling with these ideas, the German world had been completely overturned politically and territorially: France had annexed large parts along the Rhine, smaller states had been annexed by their larger (German) neighbours,

the thousand-year-old Holy Roman Empire had unceremoniously been dissolved and replaced by a French vassal state, and the former great power of Prussia had been easily defeated and crippled by the French war machine. If Germany had been defined strictly in terms of territory and politics, Napoleon would surely have wiped it out! Fichte indeed thought of these years in such world-shattering terms (quite literally); the wars with the French had ended the old Germany characterized by decadence and immorality. Fichte could take up the role of a national prophet, and guide the Germans in a new direction. This was the new 'Germany': that of the *German nation*. National identity was to be assumed and emphasized in time of national crisis; political, religious or local identities would correspondingly have to be suppressed.

While a German national identity would entail a self-awareness of oneself as German and as part of a German community (and empathy with the rest of the community), what *really* set the Germans apart from other peoples was their language. However, this was not the particular language of *German*; rather, it was the perceived uninterrupted continuity of the German language since antiquity. Unlike most other European peoples (notably the French), the Germans were thought never to have adopted any foreign language, and all linguistic change had developed gradually. This led to the conception of German superiority: as Germans could authentically express themselves through their language, this elevated them morally, intellectually, culturally, socially and politically. They were also the only people dynamic enough to look towards the future, not merely being stuck in the past, meaning that the new Germany would be the one nation able to lead the rest of the world's nations into the future.

Herder had taken a different approach. He was writing at a time before the ramifications of the French Revolution had hit the German states. While it was obvious that the Holy Roman Empire was as weak as it had ever been, there was immediate no need to establish any new German identity in the face of territorial upheaval. Further, Herder had different interests than Fichte. *Outlines* was written more as a historical-philosophical treatise whereas Fichte was more concerned with (among other things) providing a philosophical justification for German national unity. The world history of *Outlines* was mostly centred around political and cultural entities such as nations, states and kingdoms, and interactions and conflict between them. Geography was therefore an unavoidable issue. In the case of Germany, we see what appears as a transition from non-territorialism to a concept that is more anchored in geography, but still non-political. Herder's non-territorialism concerned first and foremost the ancient Germanic tribes. Non-territorialism in this regard derived from their

national character; strong and brave, the Germanic tribes were more concerned with warfare, and did not have to adopt a sedentary lifestyle for an agricultural economy. Instead, they could spread throughout Europe, and intrude on lands already settled. “German territory” would therefore be anachronistic or irrelevant during this context of migratory activity.

As Herder’s history progresses, he transitions from terms such as ‘Germanics’ during antiquity to ‘Germany’ during his chapter on the German Middle Ages. A territorial ‘Germany’ (a German “homeland”, or a “natural habitat” for the German people) seemingly crystalizes in so doing, apparently as a response to external pressure. On both the western and eastern frontier of Central-Europe non-German peoples were invading and conquering the native German population. In the east Slavs and Hungarians were settling parts of what was in Herder’s time considered the German parts of the Habsburg dominions. However, there’s on the Western front we find a more concrete delineation of German territory: as the Franks subjugated different Germanic tribes from the modern Netherlands to Switzerland (i.e. along the Rhine), they also penetrated as far as modern Schleswig-Holstein and the northern Balkans.

The Frankish Empire was particularly important for Herder’s conception of Germany, both as an opponent and as a predecessor, and both in terms of territory and in terms of ideological succession. In addition to the incursions and conquests along the western borderlands, the Franks also forced the Germanic tribes to its east to convert to Christianity. When the Frankish Empire later fell, ‘Germany’ succeeded it as the foremost protector of Christendom within Europe when the title of ‘Holy Roman Emperor’ fell to the East Francians. As well as ideologically, Germany succeeded the Frankish Empire territorially; East Francia (‘Germany’) was the eastern third of the former Frankish Empire. It is in this context Herder conveyed one of his more enigmatic ideas, i.e. the unification of the Rhine and the Danube. Whether this referred to a unified Germany is doubtful; considering German territory made up part of the Frankish Empire, it may rather have hinted towards a pan-European empire like that of Charlemagne (Herder seemingly ignored the Holy Roman Empire in this context, though it during his time was the closest thing to an all-German “polity”).

While Herder thus conceived of something territorial called Germany, with a relatively defined western border with France (while the eastern border is somewhat more porous), neither he nor Fichte did describe Germany as any kind of polity. As we saw, Fichte, in taking a jab at the invading French, proclaimed the importance of national unity over that of political unity. For Herder, states and state boundaries resulted from dynastic issues and centuries of

politics and warfare in Europe: they had little to do with questions of culture, language, or peoples. It is therefore important to note that when discussing *Germany*, both Herder and Fichte inevitably rather brought up the *the Germans*. For Herder, this was more apparent during his discussions of the ancient Germanic tribes; while, as mentioned, Herder described them as non-sedentary and in a sense "non-territorial", they likewise had no settled political state. When he wrote of 'Germany' during the Middle Ages, it was mostly as a territory (the Germanic/German homeland, though the term "homeland" might make it sound more emotionally or spiritually charged than Herder meant; for him it was more of a "natural habitat"), and then seemingly only when it became surrounded by hostile non-Germans. Fichte advocated a national unification and an extension of consciousness of oneself and one's compatriots as Germans: whether this happened inside a unified German or hundreds of states was irrelevant. While their interests were not completely overlapping and Herder and Fichte partly emphasized different factors when trying to articulate what 'Germany' was (Herder was more concerned with territory, while Fichte was completely "non-territorial" and stressed language and qualities deriving from language), what they both unequivocally had in common is what Germany was not: it was not something of politics.

During and after the Congress of Vienna this changed completely. The French invasion of the German states and the resulting national humiliation experienced by young German intellectuals politicized this group; these now clamoured for a unified German state along liberal and constitutional lines. This "politization" of Germany is demonstrated in Hegel's writings. In following his history of Germany, we again met the specific territories and tribes constituting the geographical entity that was Germany. We also revisited Fichte's linguistic dichotomy between the Germans staying in their Central European "homeland", and those migrating and establishing kingdoms in other parts of Europe. The most important of these, and the origin of Germany as something political rather than merely territorial, was the Frankish Empire. While a "German empire" with Central European territories was one of the successor states of the Frankish Empire, it almost immediately (due both to the apolitical "nature" of the German people, as well as the ethnic diversity of Central Europe) collapsed into a decentralized feudal state. Thus, the Holy Roman Empire, while a German state, took on its characteristic constitution, which would only increase throughout the centuries towards Hegel's own time. This was a period plagued with anarchy and warfare: justice and enforcement of law ceased to be universal (i.e. enforced only by the central imperial authority), but became subject to each of the hundreds of the German princes' egotistic will.

During the late Middle Ages and early modern age, as state-building was taking place

throughout Europe, the German world was no exception. In this region however, Hegel emphasized that the states in question were the *individual estates* within the Empire, breaking away from central authority; the imperial constitution itself became merely an empty shell. The German world had become politicized, and was teeming with states; however, "the" German state (the Holy Roman Empire) was without power, as this gradually had been appropriated by the princes. This process continued throughout the early modern age, famously with the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War, and was combined with territorial fragmentation along the Empire's western border.

The last stage in this "politization process" of Germany was the end of the Empire, and the simultaneous rise of Prussia and Austria. While these were the two most powerful of the German states (and thus partly responsible for the decline of the Empire, as well as being dangerous to their smaller neighbours), Hegel described them in very different terms: Prussia was rational, modern, and utilitarian to a fault regarding state matters. Austria on the other hand, represented pre-modernity: it was multinational and had large territories outside of the Empire. Further, Hegel described it as "backwards" and uninformed by French Enlightenment ideas. As it further lost its connection with the rest of the German world as the Empire collapsed, it was on its way to become an entity of its own, uninvolved with the rest of Germany.

While Heinrich Heine later would grapple with partly different ideas, the idea of 'Germany' as a (potentially) political entity had firmly taken root by the time he wrote his political poetry. However, it is noteworthy that the Holy Roman Empire had thoroughly taken the backseat to the advantage of individual German states, Austria and particularly Prussia. Heine represented a new generation of young intellectuals often holding liberal, national and constitutionalist ideas inspired by the French revolution. With their opponents being the reactionary German princes, the conception of Germany was no longer merely territorial or national: it was now a constitutional battle as well.

The spatial focus of his poem *Germany. A Winter's Tale*, the Rhineland, is noteworthy because it was not only a geographical area: constitutionally, it was an intersection between Western and Eastern Europe. Thus, it had the potential for conflict. For French nationalists, the Rhine represented the "natural border" between France and the German states, and almost led to war in 1840. Most of the area had been ruled by the French or their allies during the Coalition Wars and its educated inhabitants were thus familiar with French political traditions. This led to a state of constant uneasiness with their reactionary Prussian overlords throughout the period we examined. As a Rhinelander himself, Heine was thus born into one of the most

politically charged regions in Germany, and he presented it as such in his poem. His political sympathies were on full display in the particular case of the Rhine and the Rhineland. While a German patriot, he derided the kind of Francophobic, impulsive nationalism that became so prevalent both during 1813 and 1840. The German proponents of this ideology seemed only to claim the Rhine in a fit of drunken, belligerent anger, wanting the Rhine as a "prize" only to keep it out of French hands. While the Rhine did not rightly "belong" to the French either[394], the French revolution and Napoleonic rule had left their indelible marks, and to Heine this was a positive.

This French legacy thus made itself felt during Prussian rule. This also became a source of the conflict which would characterize German history during *Vormärz* (and is present in the sources we have looked at for the later parts of our period): the question of constitutionalism. As mentioned, Heine took the side of the progressive liberals. In *Germany,* he demonstrated this by way of attacking German conservativism and reactionary forces through satire and ridicule. An important target for Heine's satire was the notion of conservative Romanticism. By attacking this, he was able to criticize several proponents of reactionary traditionalism: Christianity (in particular Heine attacked Catholicism as being anti-German), pride in German history (the Holy Roman Empire was ridiculed as "mouldy rubbish"[395]) and the conservative princes fighting against the new liberal-constitutional forces were all fair game for Heine's writings.

However, Heine's main opponent was unquestionably Prussia. The latter represented everything Heine hated: absolutism, crude traditionalism, militarism, as well as artistic and intellectual censorship. Prussia had had a hand in all the previously mentioned bastions of conservatism; however, it was not only looking to past German history and traditions. Heine implicitly sketched out a literary battle for Germany's future. One possible outcome of this, Heine's greatest fear (and later reality), was a Germany led by Prussia. To be precise, this entailed not merely Prussian leadership in the German Confederation or in the *Zollverein*, but a politically unified German nation-state under Prussian rule. Such a Germany would in reality be an oversized Prussia – with the same exaggerated proclivities towards traditionalism, absolutism and censorship.

Heine's alternative conception of Germany was prescriptive – 'Germany' *ought to be* everything it would be not under Prussian rule. This would of course be a Germany in the

[394] For Heine, the Rhine was not merely a political border that could change hands over and over; it properly "belonged" to the Rhinelanders (Heine 1982, 482). However, as we saw, it "longed for reunion" with the French.
[395] Heine 1982, 514

French tradition, thus characterized by liberal constitutionalism, i.e. *freedom*. While these were political questions, and Germany in this sense had become politicized and subject to delineation and definition, Heine did not argue for establishing a unified state, or indeed changing the political-geographical landscape of the German world. His future hope for Germany was the future hope of a general historical development in Europe. This idea is similar to the one espoused at the Hambach Festival of 1830; a Europe consisting of liberal and democratic nation-states, united in peace. Germany would take the leading role in this humanistic cosmopolitanism and complete what the French had begun in 1789.

As the poem was written and published in 1844, only a few years before the March Revolution, we can see how the battle lines are already drawn. Progressive, liberal constitutionalism was ready to challenge the conservatism that held the reins of power. While Heine himself did not participate in the either the French nor the German revolution of 1848, and his assessments of both were mixed,[396] the poem still articulates the ideological struggles characterizing the *Vormärz* era. It was clear that 'Germany' no longer merely referred to a territory or a constellation of territories; nor was it *only* a nation united by language and culture; it was the subject of political and constitutional struggles, and concrete enough to warrant a revolution.

When the revolution arrived, the new German nation-state as conceived by the Frankfurt Parliament was defined by what became the Frankfurt Constitution of 1849. Constitutionally, it would be a liberal, constitutional monarchy with a strong parliament. In terms of territory, the new Germany was to be a federal state comprising the territory of the German Confederation. However, this was not enough. Questions of German expansion in Europe led to war with Denmark; revealed factional strife within the Parliament; provoked violent uprising in Poland; and raised the question of whether Austria with its non-German territories was to be part of Germany. All these issues went a long way toward bringing down the entire revolutionary project.

As the revolution failed and Germany was not united through parliamentary means, the liberal intellectuals were not in the position to set the tone for later German intellectual life or historiography. Because Germany was instead later united by Prussian troops, it was Prussian historians, anti-liberal, anti-Catholic and fiercely nationalist who got to write "the official history" of Germany and (earlier attempts at) German unification. These Prussian historians wrote of the same themes and constitutional struggles as Heine had done; however,

[396] Sammons 1979, 298-302

as their political sympathies lied elsewhere and they were armed with the knowledge that their conception of Germany had "won", they came to radically different conclusions than Heine and the other liberals had.

A major change was the revision of the role of Prussia. Gone was the Holy Roman Empire, and Austria was progressing on its own path out of the German world; the leading role within Germany then "naturally" reverted to Prussia. As we saw with Treitschke, he inverted the conflict in the Rhineland which Heine wrote about; now it was no longer about suppression, militarism or censorship, rather, it was about *order*. Far from being a bastion of backwards reaction within Germany, Prussia was instead the great (and only) defender of the nation. This is why (Treitschke claimed) Prussia accepted the Rhineland during the Congress of Vienna: in case of any resumption of war with France, Prussia would be the first line of defence of all of Germany. Whereas Heine highlighted the Rhinelanders' desire for freedom and longing for French enlightenment ideas (if not rule), Treitschke seemingly conflated these ideas with selfishness. With the Prussians at the front during the Rhine crisis, the Rhinelanders accepted their military defence and the economic privileges Prussian rule brings. Their ingratitude and entitled egotism was still constant though, as they resist all Prussian efforts of cultural and judicial assimilation.

In the writings of the Prussian historians, the theme of Prussia standing alone for a righteous cause (national defence or unity) is common. With Austria urging neutrality during the Rhine crisis, and the lesser German states going back to petty squabbling after the crisis has been resolved, Prussia alone stood as the upholder of German interests. However, the process towards 1871 had begun: during this moment, Prussia wrested German leadership away from Austria, and the Third Germany noticed, if only for a while. Prussia standing alone is also discussed in Sybel's presentation of the First Schleswig War during the March Revolution. Austria continued its own path towards out of Germany, embracing its multinational imperial status instead (a development already pointed out by Hegel), while the smaller German states for the most part were unable and unwilling to help Prussia in the war effort. As the Prussians had no choice but sue for peace with Denmark, they were unfairly criticized by the belligerent Frankfurt Parliament.

The emphasis on Prussia was accompanied by Austria's exit from Germany. The Prussian historians were thoroughly negative regarding Austria, considering it ossified both in terms of its constitution and in its leading role within Germany. Treitschke pointed this out during the Rhine crisis; while Austria advocated neutrality due to fear of war, Prussia rose forth as the national defender. Something of this kind is also present in Sybel's discussion of

the First Schleswig War: while Austria traditionally had been the leader of the German states, and still claimed this position during 1848, it also tried to assert itself as a non-German great power with an identity of its own. A perceived lack of commitment to the national cause combined with a continued (egotistic) claim to leadership thus gives the Prussians the moral high ground, as the latter (as we have seen) was perceived to act selflessly for German interests. This again ties in with statements made by both Treitschke and Sybel, in that these national and military crises led Prussia to supplant Austria as the national-moral leader of Germany. This development came to a climax during 1848 and the question of Austrian leadership of the new German state. Sybel mentioned the disadvantages Austria would gain as member of a federal union with the other German states; but again, there was an unwillingness to leave Germany completely behind and relinquish the leadership role to Prussia. The major hurdle was the fact that with massive non-German territories outside of the German Confederation and the newly proposed German state, any inclusion of Austria into the latter would have entailed a partition of the Austrian Empire, as the Frankfurt Parliament would not have tolerated the inclusion of tens of millions of non-Germans into what was supposed to be a nation-state. By prioritizing the Austrian Empire rather than an Austrian-led Germany, but still claiming a leading role within a proposed looser-aligned confederate Germany, Austria upheld the ambiguity of its national status. While Austria's exclusion would not be completely confirmed until the war of 1866, it is clear from the writings of these Prussian historians that they believed Austria had failed the rest of the German states by this ambiguity, and had practically excluded itself from Germany by the lack of commitment to the national cause. For these writers then, both in their own time of the late 19th century and in the time of which they wrote (the 19th century up until 1848), Austria became something distinct from 'Germany'.

Regarding the territory of Germany as conceived of by the Prussian historians, we saw some justification for an expansion of Germany during 1848. The duchies of Schleswig-Holstein are presented as attempting to distance themselves from Denmark, and Sybel emphasized the Danish annexation of Schleswig as illegal. The resulting war between Denmark and Prussia became a national war (with the Frankfurt deputies supporting the war effort, regardless of political position). Sybel also highlighted the German patriotic feeling, not Danish, as proper in the region. Despite the "properness" we may infer from this regarding the incorporation of these territories into Germany, Sybel still sympathized with those elements supporting Prussia in accepting a truce with Denmark: declining would have meant following the radical leftists into war with the great powers of Europe.

In the case of Posen, we also found claims to German supremacy, though in much harsher terms. In this case, Sybel argued mostly on moral grounds: as the Poles in the region rioted against the Prussian authorities, Polish violence against both Germans and Poles in the region justified Prussian suppression of the uprising. As we saw how Treitschke described the Rhinelanders, we also saw Sybel characterize the Poles as ungrateful: the uprising came to be in part due to Polish revolutionary leaders Prussian authorities just had granted amnesty. As in the case of Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark, there was also the conflicting state-building project among the Poles themselves. This Polish nation- and state-building was thoroughly disparaged by Sybel as dangerous and incompatible with German interests, as the Germans were attempting the very same things (in terms of territory, both German and Polish nationalists claimed at least parts of the duchy of Posen, as well as West Prussia). For him, this entailed no controversy: a unilateral claim to these areas by the German Confederation (at this time the only all-German institution) meant that these belonged to Germany, disregarding any Polish claim.

As in the case with Schleswig-Holstein, German supremacy in Posen also brought with it certain constitutional issues, and aggravated factional disputes within the Frankfurt Parliament. This particularly concerned the left-leaning deputies supporting the idea of a restored Polish state. As Sybel ridiculed these deputies supporting the Poles, we may note that the disdain of liberalism, constitutionalism and democratic ideology was a prevalent feature with these "official historical chroniclers" of the new German Empire. In addition to criticism of liberal and left-leaning deputies of the Frankfurt Parliament, we also saw this as the Prussians struggled with asserting their authority in the Rhineland; one of the sources of Rhenish contrariness was indeed a tradition of non-absolutist rule. However, the perceived frivolity of *Vormärz* liberalism is perhaps most overtly on display with Treitschke discussing the two festivals of Wartburg and Hambach. While both festivals had a theme of national-liberal unification, Treitschke dismissed them as drunken revelries with no concrete or realistic programme for achieving their goals. Treitschke dismissed the Wartburg festival more as a spontaneous expression of youthful enthusiasm and a flawed celebration of the German nation that had been blown out of proportions in the minds both of its participants and its opponents. The problem with the Hambach festival was that it more dedicated to a liberal-constitutional rather than a national programme; if uniting Germany meant it being an absolute monarchy (as Treitschke mentioned was the political constitution most fitting for Germans), then the Hambach liberals would have preferred German particularism. It therefore became actively anti-national in Treitschke's eyes. While the deputies at Frankfurt sixteen

years later were aiming to establish a unified German nation-state (and thus "had their hearts in the right place", as it were), it was clear that to Treitschke and the Prussian historians that any attempt to unify Germany through liberal and parliamentary means had been doomed from the start, as these were un-German political ideologies.

Thus, we have seen how certain conceptions of what Germany was and what it ought to have been had changed among leading prominent philosophers, writers and historians, c. 1780-1871. These changes reflected the changing political and historical circumstances. For Herder, 'Germany' was an historical and territorial entity. Located in Central-Europe, its western borders were more distinct than the eastern frontier. Historically, it has evolved from the eastern regions of the Frankish Empire but was apparently not (completely) identical with the Holy Roman Empire. As the massive upheavals of the Coalition Wars separated Herder from Fichte, Fichte had to take a different approach. Given that the wars had destroyed or changed so much of the old Europe with its institutions, states, and territorial configurations, he had to identify 'Germany' with the German nation defined by its language and the national character which had arisen from it.

In the wake of the Coalition Wars, liberalism and constitutionalism had become new ideological forces among the urban youth and the educated middle-class in Europe. The German world was no exception. We therefore find a new approach: a redefinition of 'Germany' as something political. As Hegel held his lectures on the philosophy of world history during the 1820s, he followed Herder in broad strokes regarding the origin of the German people and how 'Germany' (as the Holy Roman Empire) evolved from the old Frankish Empire. However, this 'Germany' was a failed political state which quickly fragmented into hundreds of principalities, ecclesiastical states and free cities, with a central authority too weak to force them to uphold justice and band together for the common good. As the German state gradually faded out, the power vacuum was instead filled by particular German states, Prussia and Austria. This new politization of Germany also led to constitutional struggles between the progressive and liberal middle-class elements and the reactionary elites. With Heine, we saw that issues of this kind led to the question of what a future Germany would be: one which would fulfil the liberal French Revolution of 1789, or one led by the reactionary Prussians.

As it was the second alternative that became a reality, we see that the constitutional questions were decisively settled in favour of the conservative elites and their supporters. As Prussian historians post-1871 wrote of Prussian and German 19th-century history, Prussia became the foremost defender of German national interests (making it easy to conflate the

two), while Austria consistently were portrayed as either exiting Germany, or not fully committing to it. Liberal and constitutional struggles during *Vormärz* could thereby be portrayed as misguided at best, anti-national and subversive at worst. Finally, the new Germany (and Prussia) were now expansive entities: while Treitschke foreshadowed Prussia's "manifest destiny" in Northern Germany, in the writings of Sybel the borderlands of Denmark and Poland became German territories, regardless of any national minorities who may have made their homes there.

'Germany' thus went from signifying an historical territory inhabited by a nation speaking a common language, to something possibly political (a failed state as the Holy Roman Empire, but something worthy of political and constitutional debate and even resistance during *Vormärz*), then finally to a definite state with a potential for and a claim to expansion (unfulfilled by the liberals in 1848, but still becoming an important concept for the Prussian ideologues later on). The concept of what 'Germany' was or should have been changed dramatically in the minds of these leading German thinkers during this century, and our hypothesis of a "dialectical" development, or that of a three-stage development of 'Germany' as a concept therefore has yielded fruitful results.

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