

War, Sovereignty, and the Longing of Nations: An Investigation into the Influence of the United States of America on German Unification (1861 – 1871)

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Abstract

This essay provides an in-depth analysis of the effects of American influence and the American Civil War on German unification from 1861 to 1871. First, there is a review of the recent literature on the German-American relationship of the nineteenth century with an emphasis on the lack of information concerning American influence on German internal affairs, which is followed by an analysis of important developments in public opinion, such as the increasingly ethnicized view of the United States throughout Germany. The importance of those foundational changes in public opinion are then contextualized through a detailed portrayal of how the newly defined American influence affected parliamentary and public debates concerning military reform in Bavaria and Prussia, but also including Württemberg and Austria, which were geared towards achieving both new heights of monarchical power and increased societal control. This essay concludes with an overview of how American influence affected German unification after the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 including the defeat of German liberals, the continuity of the American exemplar, major constitutional reforms, the continuing importance of newly formed ethnic associations, and the role of U.S. and Swiss support in the Franco-Prussian War as well as in the unification process in general. Above all, it is hoped that these conclusions will contribute to the broader conversation on challenging narratives of “national” history.

Keywords: History, Imperial Germany, Transnational

1. Introduction

The United States has always held a conspicuous place in the German mind, not only as a great political power or champion of democracy, but also as a country with ethnic and structural characteristics as well as needs mirroring those of Germany, a view developed as early as 1815.¹ In general, American influence was often tied to the use of the U.S. and its development as key material in debating German affairs. Directly following American independence and stabilization and lasting roughly until German unification in 1871, a desire to form a country based on federalized structures, a democratic or parliamentary system, and basic civil rights of equality and liberty tied to citizenship formed the core of the research, exchange of information, and communication across the Atlantic.² However, most previous works concentrating on American influence during the period of German unification have focused largely on the diplomatic relations between Prussia and the U.S., have been confined purely to analyzing German-speaking popular opinion, or have elaborated on America’s role in Bismarck’s foreign policy.³

This has left a considerable gap in terms of what the United States and its Civil War meant for internal German development. The fact that the 1860s and early 1870s marked a period when both countries were developing new self-definitions via internal conflict and achieving statuses that, for the first time, resembled something similar to a centralized nation-state, implies great opportunities for research. Pursuing this general pattern of thought can go in many directions, but the various effects of American influence, specifically of the American militia model and the

American Civil War, on the reform and solidification of Prussian military systems leading to German unification have proven to be an extremely rich topic and will thus serve as the main focus of this work.⁴

In particular, this paper will focus on one of the most important decades in nineteenth-century German history, the era of German unification from 1861 to 1871, and on one institution that has arguably influenced the trajectory of German history more than any other, the Prussian-German military.⁵ The latter is, of course, by no means a new topic in itself. On one hand, the German military has been irrevocably tied with the propagation of nationalism and the blurring of the line between citizen and soldier through universal conscription and thus served as a key prerequisite to the rise of the militaristic and imperialistic state that eventually waged two *total* world wars, although in highly differentiated ways.⁶ On the other hand, it has also been recognized as a societal power free of all parliamentary restraint and as a key institution used for political and social control and education, or rather indoctrination.⁷ Given this background, the Prussian-German military has attracted the attention of many scholars, but what has not yet been established is the role of American influence in the development of that institution.

Specifically, this paper posits that the American military model and its relative successes and failures during a time of bloody and incomparable internal conflict played a major role in the attempts of liberal and progressive figures throughout the German Confederation in the 1860s, especially those in Bavaria and Prussia, to attack and prevent the solidification of new military models proposed in 1859, which were largely based on the maintenance of a massive standing army. America, in this situation, served together with Switzerland as prime ethnicized examples of states that could protect themselves from threats without financially and physically funding such armies as those formed by the Prussian government in the 1860s; in other words, it served as a main reference point for the liberal alternative to Prussian military systems that would allow the German nation to defend itself through arming the people (*Volksbewaffnung*) without major hindrances to everyday life or accepting Prussian hegemony.

The full analysis of the effects of such debates, however, will also require looking at how the outcome of the American Civil War fared in comparison to the influence of the Wars of Unification from 1864 to 1871.⁸ The paper will also stress that these arguments went much farther in their implications than simple protection of economic well-being and maintaining the convenience of civil life, especially in Prussia. In contrast, this paper argues that such arguments surrounding military reform constituted part of a larger political debate that would decide the form of governance and identity for any conceivable future German nation; this was, by all accounts, a struggle for political power between the parliament and the monarchy over an absolutely key institution for societal control.

2. Public Opinion and The American Civil War

The ways in which the American Civil War was perceived by German and European society has attracted a considerable amount of attention, but the scholarship on this subject has also been insufficiently contextualized in relation to German opinion and regional perspectives,⁹ especially the unique character of Southern German opinion, which is key for understanding how and why American affairs affected German conflicts over military and political reforms. In general, the German view of the U.S. between 1848 and 1871 shifted between two different extremes. The U.S. was seen either as a threat due to the political doctrine on which it was built and its continuing successful function as a democratic state, or it was celebrated for that same reputation. The first view was most commonly held by conservatives, aristocrats (*Junker*), monarchists, and members of government and military leadership, and the second was held by radicals, republicans, democrats, liberals, and most ordinary citizens. The U.S. was also the most attractive point for German emigration during the nineteenth century accounting for ninety percent of the total.¹⁰

Therefore, the vast majority of the populations in France, Great Britain, Spain and Central Europe viewed the American Civil War not simply as a tragic and meaningless bloody conflict over land and state's rights, but rather as a conflict between good and evil, right and wrong, freedom and oppression, especially after abolition became the main declared goal of the war in late 1862. The Civil War was viewed as the key to finally overcome the inherent American contradiction of claiming the equality of all men and maintaining a system of Black enslavement for the sake of economic gain; The final "stain" on American democracy would be washed away with the blood of brothers.¹¹

The detailed surveys of Prussian, Saxon, German, and even Swiss opinion reflect that view was by no means less popular among the German-speaking lands of Central Europe regardless of their geographical dispositions. A vast majority of German newspapers in all states continued to express their enthusiastic support for the Union throughout the war as the entity fighting for a righteous cause. The critical stance held by conservative newspapers such as the *Neue Preußische Zeitung* and the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* were the few exceptions to that rule. General public opinion only wavered toward the end of 1862 due to the "cotton famine" caused by the war and the increasing losses of the Union; but after the Emancipation Proclamation and the Union victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg in 1863, enthusiastic public support quickly recovered.¹² Furthermore, in comparison to previous periods of German

history such as 1848 when American influence witnessed a major climax and fall, the decade in question marks a period when the great republic “beyond the ocean” both revived old and gained new relevance.¹³

First, those long-standing German traditions of admiring and actively comparing American constitutional and structural development did not simply disappear during the most dramatic period of reform since 1848 – 1851. The American constitution regained relevance in the wake of the American Civil War due to the simultaneous wide-spread demand for reform of structural factors within the German Confederation, which also meant the German view of the conflict in the U.S. was largely different when compared to other Europeans. On one hand, the official secession of the Confederacy raised numerous concerns about the American success as a *Bundesstaat* (federal state). Many thus found it easier than before to discount this model in the first years of the war, but Union victories once again restored enthusiastic support and admiration after 1862/1863. This meant simultaneously the rejection of idealistic attempts to copy the American model and the revival of efforts to understand how American experiences and innovations could be applied *realistically* to those in the German Confederation. That is, the idea of using the U.S. as a model for German reform was both revived and called into question as a result of the Civil War, but in the end, the U.S. played a major role in shaping the constitution of the *Kaiserreich* and German unification within the framework of *Realpolitik*.¹⁴

Second, the Prussian and Bavarian governments’ attempts to introduce new military reforms pushing for the creation of large standing armies were directly challenged by the liberal parliamentary members on the grounds of financial and human costs, which in turn were supported by using the U.S. and Switzerland as examples of states with militia systems capable of defending themselves.¹⁵ Historically speaking, the U.S. and Switzerland were not associated with one another in any popular fashion until the Swiss *Sonderbundkrieg* of 1847 and the national reforms of 1848, when the democratic Swiss government succeeded in quickly quelling a conservative Catholic revolt and became the first state on the European continent to found and maintain a parliamentary republic, a republic whose constitution was based heavily on the U.S. example. Furthermore, this new shining European state also developed a militia system extremely similar to that in the U.S.¹⁶ Both the revolutionaries and liberals in Switzerland and its various supporters in Southern Germany solidified this association to such an extent that it remained equally relevant fifteen years later.

However, the focus of this association remained not only on the two countries’ long democratic and federal traditions embodied in their constitutions and their common military structures but increasingly on close political relationships and common ethnic make-up. The best example of this new ethnic focus in Southern German opinion can be found in the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* (AAZ) in 1861, arguably the most popular Southern German newspaper at the time. The author of this article not only referred to the American Civil War as the American *Sonderbundkrieg*, but also expressed emotional and aggressive support for the proud German soldiers fighting for the Union.¹⁷

It is also worthy of note that a vast majority of German newspapers continually adopted the same line of thinking and used the phrase “*Sonderbund*” to refer to the American Confederacy throughout the course of the war, which meant roughly a ‘confederation of special interests.’¹⁸ The South was thus inherently associated with the conservative Catholic revolt against Swiss centralization and democratic reform in 1847. In the case of the AAZ, however, one witnesses a very interesting shift of focus as the author even metaphorically compared the Union soldiers of German descent to a lion sweeping away the “vermin” of Latin origin (the Confederacy).¹⁹

In this bizarre mindset chillingly reminiscent of racist ideologies of the twentieth century, the Union is the only true leader of the United States, being of proud Germanic stock characterized inherently by concepts of democracy, equality, and federalized structures, while the citizens of the Confederacy are nothing but bastards of the Latin race whose self elected ethnic leader, Napoleon III, was also threatening revolutionary and oppressive takeover in coalition with the other traditional enemy of Central Europe, the Slavs, against the holy “*Germanenthum*.”²⁰

The fact that Napoleon III was attempting to reestablish his Latin empire in Mexico and threatening to support the Confederacy made this mental association even stronger. The article represents then not only the traditional historical association of the United States with Switzerland and the German aspiration to achieve similar standing, but also the effects of the increasingly popular *Nationalitätsprinzip* on the views of American conflicts during this time period, which was continually perpetuated throughout the German Confederation as evidence that what went on in both the U.S. and Switzerland during the 1860s was highly relevant and comparable to Germany as a whole.²¹

On the other hand, critical views of the United States were less widespread but still key to understanding the political dynamic leading up to German Unification. During his conversation with King of Bavaria Maximilian II, for example, the German historian Leopold von Ranke labeled the United States not only as the root of all revolutionary-democratic thought, revolutionary France being the state that first brought these concepts to Europe, but also as the largest threat to monarchical governments throughout the continent. Above all, Ranke emphasized that America’s power and influence stemmed directly from its functional existence as a state, something that France had only achieved for very short periods of time before 1870.²² This kind of dualistic depiction of the U.S. combining fearful romanticizing of its increasingly powerful existence with extreme disdain for that same existence was typical for most of the leaders in

the various German governments, including Bismarck, and explains perfectly the joy and celebration found in conservative circles throughout Europe in reaction to the outbreak of the American Civil War.

In terms of specifically Prussian perceptions of the American Civil War and of the United States and Switzerland as historical and contemporary entities, one of the earliest examples can be found in the memoirs of the former German revolutionary and highly influential American politician Carl Schurz. During his time as minister in Spain in 1861 directly after the outbreak of the American Civil War, Schurz made the acquaintance of a Prussian diplomat, Graf Galen, who expressed his own personal opinion about the war and elaborated on the supposed undercover feelings of German conservative circles. Galen explained that most conservative thinkers in Prussia held considerable sympathies towards the American Confederacy and internally hoped for the downfall of the Union or at least for a damaging separation of that “arrogant” democratic state.²³ This was rarely expressed openly due to the long-standing beneficial relationship between Prussia and the U.S. stretching all the way back to Frederick the Great, which was extremely important for the Prussian state in terms of foreign policy and economic dependency on German-American trade.²⁴

Another key example of Prussian interpretations regarding the U.S. and Switzerland can be found in Otto von Bismarck. The chancellor’s view of the United States was defined from the beginning by mixed experiences such as his permanent connection with the aristocratic Prussian world as the son of a *Junker* and his long standing close relationship with a liberal American friend from his university days at Göttingen, John Motley.²⁵ However, despite contradictory personal sentiments, his political opinions can clearly be differentiated between foreign and domestic concerns. For example, several scholars have shown that Bismarck hoped and pushed for an alliance with the United States from the beginning of his time as chancellor in 1862 until well after German unification in 1871 to protect German and Prussian interests against French and English competition, and he thus continually expressed his support of the Union leading up to 1871.²⁶ On the other hand, Bismarck clearly disliked those powers whose influence was revolutionary or subversive to Prussian domestic goals, which included Switzerland as much as the U.S.²⁷ In fact, Switzerland held a very similar role as that of the U.S. in the mind of the Prussian government, who often perceived it as an interesting yet symbolically threatening state whose military had been a topic of study since at least 1815.²⁸

Above all, the continuing need to maintain the U.S. as an ally in foreign political and economic policy, the simultaneous need to respect and accommodate government statements to the extremely pro-Union and increasingly ethnicized German public opinion, and the task of having to maneuver around or use those oppositional arguments based on the U.S. constitution and militia system to its own advantage posed a serious and contradicting problem for the Prussian government in justifying itself as a growing militarist power bent on hegemonic German unification.

3. Debates in Bavaria and The German Speaking South

Around the same time that Carl Schurz and Abraham Lincoln were drafting the Emancipation Proclamation and the Union began to turn the tide of the Civil War against the Confederacy, Otto von Bismarck became the new Chancellor of Prussia and began his struggle to unite the nation through “iron and blood” (*Eisen und Blut*).²⁹ The preceding course taken by the Prussian government under Bismarck, above all the act of taking the funds deemed necessary for military reform without justification, defied any responsibility to parliament and introduced a state of unconstitutionality that lasted until 1866, which in turn further embittered and alienated the liberal opposition.³⁰ A newly founded political party with fractions throughout the German Confederation, *die Fortschrittspartei* (Progressive Party), began to use new arguments to challenge the course of militarization across the board. Although some of the most important outcomes of the debate around military systems took place in Prussia, the original inspiration and most radical consequences came from a rather unexpected source that lay outside of party ranks. Namely, the formerly exiled revolutionary and radical democratic member of the Bavarian Landtag, Georg Friedrich Kolb, who spent the majority of his exile in Switzerland, acted as the spearhead for a new cooperative effort with the Progressive Party against the Bavarian government’s attempts to increase the size of the standing army. The proposals made by this group of liberal politicians also served as the model for similar proposals made in parliaments in Württemberg, Prussia, and Austria.³¹

The first traces of this combined effort appeared in 1861 through the liberal parliamentary member Dr. Edel, who pushed vehemently for the introduction of gymnastic training in all public schools, which was previously an activity confined to private gymnastic associations (*Turnvereine*). Edel argued that the public interest in gymnastic training had increased dramatically since 1859 and that such tendencies marked the revived want of the people to take up arms in defense of the fatherland. Furthermore, introducing this training into public schools with an apolitical curriculum would also allow the Bavarian government to prepare its youth for war without the stereotypically “republican” political influence to be found in the associations, that is through state-guided *Volksbewaffnung*.³² After using the gymnastic training in Switzerland as the main example for effectively militarizing the people, Edel also appealed to the patriotic and ethnically defined senses of his fellow parliamentarians through the American example:

“Even in the distant lands of North America our brothers are exemplifying the honor of their homeland in the fight for freedom against the economy of slavery, not only through military proficiency, which is an innate characteristic of every German, but also through regimental honor, through discipline and order, and through joy in the face of danger next to the boastful Yankees. The German gymnastic associations strive to recognize where their salvation lies and to avoid what brings suspicion and damage to their righteous goal. They want to foster and refine every beautiful characteristic of our national character, including not only military proficiency and physical power, but also discipline, order, and obedience to the law and to the lawful command.”³³

In this context, the German soldiers fighting in the American Civil War served not only to emphasize the ethnic character of German interpretations, but also reflected the belief of many Germans that their brothers of common origin (*Stamm*) in America represented the epitome of what it meant to take up arms in the name of the fatherland. This Germanic patriotic spirit defined by order, discipline and courage was the core of what could be found among soldiers of German descent in the ranks of the Union Army and was exactly what Edel wished to ingrain in every Bavarian citizen through public gymnastic training. Such a spirit was also perceived as the key aspect for preparing the country to fight against the ever growing enemy west of the Rhine in a massive defense campaign led by the people, which was indeed reminiscent of those peoples’ uprisings against the first Napoleon in 1813.

Above all, this statement reflects that Bavarian patriots espousing the gospel of *Volksbewaffnung* could look back on their own history with great pride in support of their proposals,³⁴ but they could not claim the same honor and prestige of the Landwehr as those in Prussia and required contemporary examples that such a spirit could succeed in war. Given that the European continent was extremely lacking in this area after forty years of relative peace, one needed to look across the Atlantic where thousands of Germans were fighting and dying in the struggle against another “Latin” enemy of oppression, which mirrored perfectly the looming conflict at home with Napoleon III.³⁵ Interestingly, this proposal was widely applauded for its goals and argumentation despite its liberal character, was approved by both houses of the Landtag, and was eventually given to King Maximilian II for implementation.³⁶ This, however, marked neither the end of the discussion around gymnastics nor new systems of *Volksbewaffnung*.

The succeeding period of debates in Bavaria were much more dramatic, heated, and multi-faceted as two separate and contradictory yet cooperative proposals were introduced by the radical member Kolb and his Progressive Party counterpart, Dr. Marquardt Barth. Kolb’s first proposal aimed at drastically reforming the military through making the Bavarian Landwehr (the reserves) the main body of the military with true universal conscription, an improved officer-corps, improved general training, and new flexibility for periods of inactivity.³⁷ On the other hand, Dr. Barth attempted to pass a bill that would completely dissolve or make inactive the entire Landwehr.³⁸ These two actions seem to be extremely contradictory, but as Barth later explained, these two proposals were based on the argumentation that if the Bavarian government would not reform the Landwehr along the lines proposed by Kolb, then it posed a massive and unnecessary burden on the people and should thus be dissolved until such reforms were possible.³⁹

The discussions concerning further financial credits for the army that led to the proposal made by Barth in 1863 for the dissolution or drastic reform of the Landwehr were, however, short lived. The supporters used the recent military reductions in Austria as evidence that such measures were justifiable but also espoused repeatedly the ideological foundations of *Volksbewaffnung*. Most conservatives viewed such arguments as an unnecessary assault on an important government institution needed for national defense. This led to the transfer of the bill to a special council and to the Reichsräthe (the upper house of the Bavarian parliament) for consideration in the next session in 1865.⁴⁰

What remains extremely important about this proposal are both its wide-spread support among the Bavarian population and the practical phasing of Barth’s proposal into the proposals made by Kolb in 1865. In relation to the former, the proposal was originally not an effort formulated by Dr. Barth himself or by his party, but was rather introduced as a reaction to the events of the summer of 1863; in a form of general mass protest of government policies, the various Landwehr-soldiers of cities and towns of all sizes, their families, and many ordinary citizens began to send in mass petitions to the Bavarian parliament calling for the reform of the Landwehr. This had very unsettling effects on the military and on the Bavarian government, as conflict broke out in the chambers of parliament and in the public sphere among the members of the Landwehr. For example, after being accused in the local newspaper several times by their officers of being unpatriotic traitors to the fatherland, the *Landwehrmänner* of Wasserburg replied:

“The motives with which we are pursuing reform do not lack patriotism as has been claimed, nor are the accusations of short-sightedness and trouble-making being spread in public flyers applicable to our effort. The justification of such measures lies in the fact that the entire citizenry could not be further from the spirit of revolt and is filled with the greatest support for monarchy and fatherland. It is, however, those same feelings

that drive the demand for the dissolution of active Landwehr service, which would ease the burden considerably given the high costs and would not mean any abandonment of our duties as citizens.”⁴¹

Despite such widespread support continuing well into 1865,⁴² the proposal was considerably reformed in the Reichsräthe in the same year and was considered irrelevant given that Kolb’s proposal introduced the exact reform Barth claimed was necessary to maintain the Landwehr.⁴³ He himself stated to his fellow deputies in 1865: “If you create a people’s army, a real and true people’s army, dear sirs, you will not receive another petition for its (the Landwehr’s) dissolution: that I promise you.”⁴⁴ Kolb’s proposals in 1863 and 1865 were introduced as amendments to governmental proposals for increased emergency funds for expansion and improved armament of the standing army and served thus to directly challenge those attempts as unnecessary.⁴⁵ In contrast to Prussia, the argumentation in Bavaria did not portray militias as a threat to monarchical rule and the autonomy of the military, but rather promoted them as the best means for protecting Bavaria from French and Prussian threats. In fact, the argumentation in Bavaria focused on militias as a form of *Volksvertretung* (representation of the people) that would allow for hefty decreases in government spending and burdens placed on the people by the standing army and outdated corrupt Landwehr.⁴⁶

The fact that even the earliest military training was to take place in public schools under the direction of the state in an apolitical atmosphere further secured the idea that a new militia system would strengthen rather than weaken the bond between “*Fürst und Volk*” in a liberalizing fashion. The flip side, however, meant acceptance of the major role that the Bavarian parliament would henceforth play in the administration of military structure and funding. In other words, such a system was to provide the perfect solution for making Bavaria *kriegsfähig* (capable of war) while continuing the long tradition of Southern German liberalism and disdain for standing military institutions.⁴⁷

In that context, both the Swiss and American examples were used increasingly after 1861 and reached their peak in 1863-1865 to show that even a small state like the former or a large power in a state of inner-chaos like the latter could defend themselves on all fronts with a militia system. For example, Kolb introduced his first proposal for the creation of a militia system in September of 1863, and he immediately used both historic German and contemporary Swiss examples to support his argument. Beyond quoting the General Radetzky, Kolb argued that Switzerland served as *the* prime example of a successful militia due to its highly trained, efficient, and affordable character. “No other state in the world with such a size” as that of Switzerland had produced a successful “*Volkswehr*” (people’s army) capable of holding its ground against French and Prussian ambitions and at such low costs.⁴⁸

The American example had to be used later in coordination with the Swiss example, as the massive costs of the American Civil War and early Union losses were still fresh in the minds of most Germans. In other words, it was difficult to argue in 1863 with the example of the U.S. that a militia system would actually save the government or the people life and money spent when the Civil War was proving to be so costly. This same counter-argument was used most heavily in Prussia as early as 1862 against similar liberal proposals, but Kolb learned from these precedents and preempted similar opposing views to state his case in terms difficult for any German or Bavarian patriot to dismiss.

After his first proposal had been rejected by the Reichsräthe for being unrealistic given the tense military climate in Europe and for supposedly lying outside of the jurisdiction of the parliament’s powers,⁴⁹ Kolb returned in 1865 with new found fervor combining the Swiss, American, and German historical examples to prove that no other system would be capable of defending the fatherland from exterior threats. This kind of combined argumentation allowed for Kolb to celebrate the cost-saving Swiss militia, which had never been battle-tested in any major fashion due to Swiss neutrality, while appealing to the new dramatic victory of the Union army in order to show that well-managed militias could transform a nation into something self-sufficient, proud, and completely capable of defending its sovereignty.⁵⁰

Kolb also emphasized that the Swiss training of officers and youth gymnastic training could serve as the foundation for how the American and Swiss models could be combined to form an unbeatable militia system not only in Bavaria, but across the entire German Confederation; that is, Swiss training would prepare soldiers for war and prevent those early disasters of the American Civil War from repeating in the future. Kolb believed that a true militia system could be transferred over to the federal military and would provide the power necessary to fend off any foreign enemies; with such an organization founded in the power of the people, neither Prussia nor Napoleon III could force their militaristic rule on the “*engeres Vaterland*” or the German nation as a whole.⁵¹ These opinions were widely shared in the Bavarian parliament, as expressed by the deputy Lerchenfeld, who supported the notion of the Bavarian *Volk* rising up in the tradition of 1813 as the only plausible defense against France given the widespread lack of trust in the army.⁵²

Considerable support can also be found in Bavarian and German public opinion. Beyond the radical claims regularly published by such figures as the former soldier and revolutionary Wilhelm Rüstow and the formerly exiled Gustav Struve,⁵³ even a local formerly state-run newspaper in the small town of Rosenheim exclaimed in 1865 that Europe, especially Germany, must learn from the American Civil War; it must learn that militias are founded in the strength and will of the people and thus cannot be defeated by any large standing army - these only drive states into ruin, as exemplified by the recent Austrian debt crisis: “America has provided the blood-soaked evidence that there are indeed

soldiers to be found even when they are not forced to spend years in barracks as wasted labor and to serve as orderly-marching parade-troops; America has proven that he who loves his fatherland is always prepared to protect it!"⁵⁴

Once again, this proposal was shattered in the upper house by the same deputy who had rejected it on ambiguous grounds in 1863. This time, however, he was forced to address the powerful argument around the Swiss and American systems. In an effort of statistical maneuvering and ideological combat, Karl Theodor Fürst von Thurn und Taxis attempted to systematically undermine the Union victories. He cited early cases of resistance in the face of the draft, desertion, the high number of casualties throughout, the massive amount of money and resources spent, and the increasingly negative economic situation during the war - all without mentioning the Confederacy.

Von Thurn spoke even of the "breadless families" in North America, which were supposedly an outcome of the militia system, but ignored entirely the problems created by the Union blockade and general conditions of war requiring an overhaul of the entire economy, which was by no means exclusive to militia systems. Similar arguments regarding funding were applied to the Swiss model with the added point that Switzerland did not require a standing military because its neutrality was guaranteed by all of Europe and was thus irrelevant. Despite the contradictory character of these arguments, ignoring the costs created by standing armies, and refusing to consider the arming of the people as a plausible argument, Thurn simply discarded Kolb's proposal as unrealistic and economically erroneous.⁵⁵

Overall, it is clear that the push made by Edel, Barth, Kolb, and many others for a militia system in Bavaria based on universal gymnastic education, increased training for soldiers, and equalization of the Landwehr across all levels of society was not only widely supported and celebrated for its argumentation but also posed real opportunities for cooperating with monarchical rule. Whether any change in willingness of the conservative parliamentary members and of the monarchy to consider such liberal reforms could have changed the outcome of the military situation rising out of Prussian secession and takeover of the German Confederation in 1866 is up for debate. However, neither the situation in Bavaria nor in Prussia proved itself ripe for such reforms despite the considerable efforts made by most German liberals. Major reforms take time, even with strong argumentation based on international models, and it is exactly this resource that the German states severely lacked in 1865 as the gears of the Prussian military steadily came back into destructive rotation.

4. Debates in Prussia and the German Bruderkrieg

In the beginning, the events of 1859 in Italy had shocked and deeply concerned all members of the Prussian parliament who not only feared war but witnessed the failure of Prussia to mobilize in aid of Austria no less than top military and government officials. This led to early support for the approval of funds, roughly sixteen million *Thaler* in total, which were used to bulk up the army in preparation for war. This support was never intended to be permanent, however, and after the danger of the Italian conflict had clearly subsided, parliamentary support for military armament largely followed suit; the Landtag refused after 1860 to give out further funds for what had now turned into a massive reform of the military increasing the size of the standing army by tens of thousands of soldiers, extending the active service period from two to three years, increasing the service period in the reserves from five to seven years, bulking up armaments and supplies, revamping the officer corps, and largely dissolving the Landwehr as a separate institution.⁵⁶

The proceeding discussions concerning the state of being prepared for war (*Kriegsbereitschaft*) were controversial and zealous, and the argumentation for and against the government's proposals for altering the foundational military law of 1814 was stretched by its extremes. Many conservative and some center members supported the government in its push for reform due to the claim that it was necessary not only to defend Prussia and Germany from the looming French threat but also for securing Prussia's position as a great European power (*Großmachtstellung*).⁵⁷ Most liberals rejected the reform based on its unconstitutionality and dangerous implications, but were open, albeit inconsistently, to the idea of increased militarization. The radical left tolerated no efforts for founding an imperialistic standing army and hoped to use the Landwehr as an institutional stronghold and possible gateway for introducing a militia.

Furthermore, the conflicts around the approval of funds (*Budgetrecht*) and army structure were tied to the maintenance of the constitution. The psychological association of standing armies (*stehende Heere*) with absolutism and of militias (*Milizen*) with democracy had been consistently engrained in German consciousness not only by personal or collective traditions of experience, but through major authors such as Moritz Arndt, Wilhelm Rüstow, and most recently Georg Friedrich Kolb.⁵⁸ The parliament not only feared that it would be forced to allow the construction of a large standing army that would financially and socially burden the average Prussian citizen and the state, but also that the government would use the army to make the parliament irrelevant; the Prussian king might erect a large standing army reminiscent of those from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and use it to revive an absolutist rule unchecked by parliament. As a result, the topic of *Kriegsbereitschaft* became closely tied to the American and Swiss examples regardless of argumentation, precisely because of the democratic character of their military systems.

However, the inconsistent position of the liberals, the offensive character of the government's reform proposals, and emphases on Prussian uniqueness also made these debates considerably different from those in Bavaria both in process and outcome. The fact that both liberals and the radical left largely put themselves in a defensive reserved position from the start and made no attempts to propose measures for counter-reform left the field of argumentation open and allowed supporters of the government to attack and delegitimize concepts being supported elsewhere with ease.

The left in Prussia began to defend the Landwehr only in national and historical terms, as an institution tied to the people since 1814 and one that is absolutely key to defending all fatherlands, Prussian and German, from the French threat. This allowed the government to wield the American and Swiss examples as an effective counter-argument to the liberal position, which was only strengthened by attempts by clearly disenchanted head liberals to find a solution in maintaining both the standing army and a militia with a well-trained officer corps. This was particularly damaging given that the liberals as a group held a majority in the lower house.⁵⁹ The liberal deputy and historian von Sybel, for example, claimed in early 1863 that only the Swiss tradition of sending officers abroad to fight in foreign wars and to gain pivotal experience allowed its dysfunctional people's army to stand at all. Sybel furthered this by claiming that the "superior" leadership of the American Confederacy was a direct result of its officer corps' training at West Point.⁶⁰

Sybel clearly attempted to use the untested Swiss example in combination with the early losses of the Union to show that militias only functioned with proper training, which partially reflected Kolb's argument in 1863; but his over-emphasis on the victories of the American Confederacy proved to be an ideological trap once the royal government went on the offensive. His use of the American and Swiss examples also mixed with the claims of the conservatives that the Prussian Landwehr of 1813-15 was only able to defeat Napoleon due to its highly experienced leadership, not due to a mystical *esprit de corps*, which required patriots to take up the dubious task of undermining their own national myth in order to delegitimize the Landwehr without insulting those who had fought and died in battle.

The hopes espoused by Sybel to find a compromise were generally supported by most liberals, such as the deputy Waldeck, who also insisted on the absolute need of maintaining a small standing army in cooperation with a militia as the main force. His statement also clearly reflects the liberal patriotic sympathies with the Prussian historical mission and the association of militias, above all the Landwehr, with democracy, which he claimed was "one of the best strongholds of our constitution and our community life; she serves as the point around which our communal life has been conglomerated in the most natural fashion."⁶¹ Waldeck even claimed that Prussia's position as a great European power could only be achieved with the *aid* of a militia, precisely because of its democratic character.

The government did not yet see it as necessary or advantageous to engage in such political battles, and the Minister of War von Roon even refused to comment on such topics. Claiming on the one hand that the Landwehr would largely remain intact, although in a rather meaningless form, Roon stated with some vehemence that those who opposed the military reform and sought to maintain the old system or the Landwehr as a militia were endangering Prussia's ability to defend itself and to fulfill its historic mission.⁶² The parliamentary "sentimentalists" (*Schwärmer*) of the Landwehr who ignored all logical sensibilities and rejected the reform proposals for the sake of financial concerns were, according to Roon, inherently traitors who had turned their back on the fatherland. This kind of empty rhetoric was quickly surpassed, however, as the benefits and implications of the American and Swiss examples were realized, especially as the contradictions within the liberal fractions of the parliament became increasingly clear.

Such major parliamentary members as Twesten, for example, who would later be one of the greatest proponents of the American example, stated in 1863 that copying the American or Swiss model would be highly erroneous while the alternative of following the government's plans for a large standing army would cause Prussia to "follow the example of several Latin nations and deteriorate to such a point that soon a demagogic radicalism and a brutal regiment of sabers rules over this land once more, which correct one another mutually, such as despotism moderated through assassination."⁶³ Clearly, few liberal parliamentary members in the Prussian Landtag believed that the introduction of a pure militia system was plausible for the progression of their country, as the "Kolb, Rüstow, Schulze" radicals had claimed and thus pushed for the protection of the Landwehr as a separate institution and a minimization of the standing army in direct correlation with Twesten's defensive argument.⁶⁴

The War Minister von Roon was the greatest challenger of the U.S. and Swiss examples throughout the conflict and he found it easy to consistently criticize that "respectable but tiny neighbor" to the South which had not seen any major conflict that could speak to the value of its militia.⁶⁵ The U.S. example proved more complicated, especially as the Union turned the tide of the war, but claims that Prussia's situation was incomparable to that of either state remained a strong point for supporters of the military reform. An early example of such criticism can be found in the deputy Lüning, who admitted the political and socio-economic costs of standing armies but also repeated attacks against Rüstow, Kolb and Schulz emphasizing that adopting a militia system during a chaotic era of European conflict meant completely abandoning Prussia's and Germany's *Kriegsfähigkeit*; the U.S. context was simply incomparable to Germany's constantly threatened position in the center of Europe, regardless of any ethnic similarities.⁶⁶

Beyond such attacks in the Landtag, conservatives also waged war on the American example in public opinion, above all through the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, which supported very similar political claims as those of Bismarck's government. An article from 1863 reflects well the rhetoric used against American influence in Prussian affairs continuing up to 1866 and also serves to reinforce how Bismarck and conservatives viewed the military as an institution for indoctrination and control. The author emphasized that both sides of the American conflict resulted in massive debt and bloodshed, all of which could have been prevented if the Union had possessed a standing army from the beginning. Furthermore, the author repeated the now widespread argument that Germany would have been conquered centuries ago by its "fearful continental neighbors" if *Prussia* had not maintained a standing army, which was pivotal to the orderly and efficient "education" of its people.⁶⁷

The debates in parliament were not taken up again until late 1864, by which time the situation in America had drastically changed. The liberal reservation and contradictory argumentation thus changed completely after the Union became increasingly victorious between 1863 and 1865 and cast the light of "pure humanity" across the American South.⁶⁸ The liberals no longer felt confined to hesitantly maneuvering around the events of the Civil War, and the supporters of the reform could no longer depend purely on Union losses and claims of Prussian exceptionalism to undermine liberal attempts to form a militia. In some cases, the leading liberals completely reversed their opinions from those expressed only a year earlier, and the Union was now celebrated as one of the greatest powers on earth.

One particularly revealing example of this new atmosphere lay in the discussions of the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. The sympathy expressed not only by the liberals but also by the majority of parliament for the Union and its great President were summarized in the address of condolence proposed by the deputy Dr. Löwe.⁶⁹ The only opposition to this proposal came from the most conservative side of parliament, the *Junkerpartei*, which supported the government's proposals from the start. Specifically, the deputy Wagener expressed his condolences and sympathy for the Union but followed this with a fairly mal-tempered attack on Löwe for supposedly violating the rules of parliament by suggesting that members sign such a "political" document during session, which clearly demonstrates the highly influential and politicized character that American events now carried in the Landtag discussions.⁷⁰

What came after this point was a rather extensive battle of comparisons between the liberals and von Roon, the most interesting of which came from the deputy Twesten, who heavily criticized both the American and Swiss examples in 1863. Now that the Union had largely turned the tide of the war and was near victory, Twesten claimed in 1865 that the costs of the Civil War were actually impressive when one considers the length, mass, and accomplishments of the war, and he even went as far to say that no standing army in the world, past or present, would be able to match the power of the American militia and its "glorious commanders." In his final statement, Twesten emphasized: "I believe, as a matter of fact, my dear sirs, that those unbelievable successes must not be left out of consideration when we push to ensure that the resources of the state are not used too much or too exclusively for the sake of war in times of peace."⁷¹

This rather amazing reversal in rhetoric, however, did not go unchallenged. Roon could no longer ignore such arguments, especially not ones that directly implied Prussian inferiority in comparison to the U.S., but he also had to move his tactics away from the previous line of conservative argumentation. Given that most liberals only wanted the maintenance of the Landwehr in its previous form and not its transformation, the same arguments made against it in Bavaria as a costly and burdensome institution could also be used by the government, but the American example had to be addressed directly. He could not at this point "deny any American soldier the glory he achieved in war," which reflects his awareness of the widespread celebratory public opinion of the Union victory, and the critical interpretation of the costs of the American Civil War and Prussian uniqueness thus served as his main arguments.

This argument was somewhat difficult to make given the enthusiastic atmosphere of celebration and support for the Union, but Roon was able to draw on previous conservative arguments and liberal weaknesses to formulate a new claim that would prove to be effective enough to sustain the opposition until the blood-soaked evidence of the Austro-Prussian *Bruderkrieg* in 1866 could be delivered. Specifically, the heavy Union losses in both life and resources in the first years of the war as well as the fact that both sides of the conflict used militia-style systems to wage war were combined with previous claims against Switzerland that its militia had not truly been tested.

That is, when the U.S. or Switzerland ever came into conflict with a professional army such as Prussia's, there would be no discussion as to who the winner would be. Furthermore, if the Union had developed a professional army in the first place, it never would have needed to lead such a drastic, bloody, and unnecessarily long war; the Confederacy could have been "ripped from the ground by the roots," just as Austria would be by the Prussian war machine a year later at Königgrätz.⁷² The Prussian Ambassador to Washington von Gerolt reinforced this in 1866 in a highly detailed brief to Bismarck describing the new structure of the American army and expressing the conviction that the Civil War would make any support for militias in Europe untenable.⁷³ It was also this opinion that would be thrown in the face of Carl Schurz in 1868 and repeated humbly to General Grant in 1878 during meetings with Bismarck.⁷⁴

In the end, the mixed and defensive character of liberal and leftist opposition regarding the American example, the delayed upturn in enthusiastic support for the Union and the American model, and the dynamic arguments against the

same solidified by the Prussian government in 1865 and 1866 caused any real American influence on the outcome of military reform to fall dead in its tracks as it had in Bavaria and Württemberg. No concrete compromises could be found on either side, the Prussian government continued to operate unconstitutionally until 1867, and General von Moltke used the new professional army to crush any opponents throughout the former *Deutscher Bund* in one great act of imperialistic power, finally fulfilling the Prussian historical mission of German unification.

5. Conclusion: German Unification and Transnational Perspectives

The period between 1866 and 1871 is pivotal for understanding how the accumulative American influence affected German unification. On one hand, we have seen how the influence of the U.S. led to transformations of political identities in Southern Germany to the extent that German affairs and Germanness were often interpreted through the framework of U.S. and Swiss affairs as a result of increasingly popular ethnic and political associations. The U.S. during this period, as represented by the Union, became a Germanic power in the minds of Germans, who subsequently combined ethnic identifications with political arguments to support or resist demands for reform. Southern Germans in particular engaged with images of common ethnic bonds between Germany, Switzerland, and the U.S. in order to create an alternative political identity to conservative and Prussian militarist nationalism that was bound instead to the democratic, federalist, and liberal traditions of ethnic Germanness embodied in the U.S. and Swiss examples.

Conservatives and governmental officials recognized the danger these identity politics posed for their legitimacy, as exemplified by liberal attempts to place a reformed military under parliamentary rule based on arguments of ethnic relatability with the U.S., but such arguments were still bound to the relative successes of the Union. Such argumentation was thus countered with more “realist” considerations of the relative costs and successes of militia systems in combination with claims of German or Prussian uniqueness. The failure of the Bavarian government to allow for liberal reforms, the early losses of the Union, the defensive character of liberal arguments in Prussia around the Civil War, and the introduction of Prussian hegemony through imperialist warfare in 1866 crushed any hopes for democratic political reform and thus for alternative mainstream definitions of Germanness to be shaped thereafter. The celebrated Prussian victories of 1864 and 1866 delivered sufficient evidence for conservatives and liberals that standing armies were superior to militias, especially when comparing Union victories to the costs of the Civil War.⁷⁵

However, this did not mean an absolute end to American influence. After 1866, the direct comparisons made between the two countries on both sides of the Atlantic and the atmosphere of mutual support reached such a level that, when the general inquiry was made in the Prussian Landtag in 1867 as to whether enough information had been gathered on American internal affairs, a simple nod from Roon was enough to quell such concerns and to erupt the halls of parliament with laughter.⁷⁶ The discussion of militia systems also did not end here as Gerolt, Bismarck, Roon, and General Moltke had hoped. Despite the strict Prussifying controls imposed on the South German states regarding military organization after 1866, which erased any previous gains through reform, the battle for the militia systems spear-headed by Kolb and liberals in Bavaria and Württemberg continued as late as 1869.⁷⁷ As the greatly disappointed and disillusioned Kolb expressed in 1871, the liberals in Württemberg were actually waiting to follow the Bavarian push for reform in 1868, but arguments based on Swiss and U.S. examples had become largely irrelevant for members of parliament after the Prussian take-over in 1866, and his last proposals to create a militia were shot down with ease.⁷⁸

In Prussia, the topic of American military systems would also not go without revived influence post 1866, but comments made by Moltke and Roon as well as support from the National Liberals were enough to quell any opposition.⁷⁹ Therefore, the general consensus to be found in Prussian circles leading up to 1871, with the exception of a few liberals and leftist radicals, seemed to follow the rather colorful statement made by the deputy Stolp in 1867: “This wisdom may be useful for America, but for us in Prussia such ideas are not suitable, for we do not move to the beat of the Yankee Doodle, we follow the Prussian path, which is somewhat different from that of the American.”⁸⁰ The path to the Prussification of Germany was opened further when an increasing number of liberals began to support Prussian led national unification in light of the final military conflict in 1870, which served as the final phase.⁸¹

The Franco-Prussian War was viewed in similarly ethnicized terms as the American Civil War, and it was widely perceived and propagandized as *the* conflict in which the new German state came to view itself as a unified nation. Bismarck indeed got his final wish; Germany as a unified entity was formed through a communal baptism of “blood and iron” against its traditional Latin enemy. However, despite egoistic Prussian exceptionalism and the experiences of the German military with French *franc-tireurs*, which further legitimized arguments that uprisings of the people were costly and accomplished little against large standing armies, Prussia could not simply ignore the influence of the Union, precisely because the perceived ethnic bonds with the U.S. had become so strong between 1859 and 1870.⁸²

Beyond the significant role the American example played in the shaping of the new German constitutional federalism, Bismarck did everything in his power to publicly perpetuate the close relationship with America as the

“blood relative” and “oldest historical ally” of Prussia, took advantage of war loans given to the Union in the early 1860s to finance the Franco-Prussian War, and propagandized the role of Switzerland and the U.S. as the two protectorates of the German people in France during the war in 1870, all of which undoubtedly increased sympathies for Prussia as the just party in the war and flipped the traditionally liberal argument of ethnic relatability to these two countries.⁸³ Most importantly, the Northern German Confederation under Bismarck’s rule established new beneficial relationships with American representatives and made great attempts to win over American sympathy for the sake of the Prussian cause leading up to national unification. Bismarck’s government not only received emotional and exuberant support from the new American minister in Berlin, George Bancroft, and the President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant, but also actively propagated this new relationship in order to achieve and justify unification.⁸⁴

Whether or not German unification would have taken place without American influence remains highly probable, but it is clear that American influence and the American Civil War provided an ethnicized political conduit through which liberal Germans, especially those in the South, attempted to fight for an alternative future for their united nation and its identity. To liberal dismay, this same ethnicized dialogue was subsequently flipped and propagated by the Prussian government in order to justify its militarist actions through provoking American and Swiss sympathies. In this framework, the national was shaped and justified through the international, which casts heavy implications for other areas of German history previously considered to be a part of a “national” narrative.⁸⁵

6. Acknowledgements

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7. Endnotes

1 Enno Eimers, *Preußen und die USA 1850 bis 1867* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2004); Reiner Pommerin, *Zwischen Eurozentrismus und globalem Staatensystem: Bismarck und die USA 1862 – 1890*, Friedrichsruher Beiträge, Band 34 (Friedrichsruh: Otto-von-Bismarck-Stiftung, 2007).

2 Charlotte A. Lerg, *Amerika als Argument: Die deutsche Amerika-Forschung im Vormärz und ihre politische Deutung in der Revolution von 1848/49* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2011); Bardo Fassbender, *Der offene Bundesstaat: Studien zur auswärtigen Gewalt und zur Völkerrechtssubjektivität bundesstaatlicher Teilstaaten in Europa*, Volume 161 of Jus Publicum Series (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); Albert Funk, *Kleine Geschichte des Föderalismus: Vom Fürstenbund zur Bundesrepublik* (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010); Reiner Pommerin, *Zwischen Eurozentrismus und globalem Staatensystem: Bismarck und die USA 1862 – 1890*; Kira Thurman, *A History of Black Musicians in Germany and Austria, 1870-1961: Race, Performance, and Reception* (New York: University of Rochester, 2013); Robert G. Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin, 2010); James Q. Whitman, *Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2017); Konrad H. Jarausch, “Rivalen der Modernen. Amerika und Deutschland im 20. Jahrhundert,” *Feinde, Freunde, Fremde?: Deutsche Perspektive auf die USA*, ed. Volker Benkert, Tutzinger Studien zur Politik (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2017).

3 Dr. Ralph Lutz, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten während des Sezessionskrieges* (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1911); George Müller, *Der Amerikanische Sezessionskrieg in der schweizerischen öffentlichen Meinung* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1944); Henry M. Adams, *Prussian-American Relations, 1775 – 1871* (Cleveland: The Press of Western Reserve University, 1960); Michael Löffler, *Preußens und Sachsens Beziehungen zu den USA während des Sezessionskrieges 1860-1865*, Studien zur Geschichte, Politik und Gesellschaft Nordamerikas, 10. Band (Münster: LIT, 1999); Enno Eimers,

Preußen und die USA 1850 bis 1867; Don H. Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 2015).

4 It is worthy of note that several other areas of German social and political concerns were debated with common usage of American examples. These various topics have not been empirically pursued and thus cannot be cited within the confines of this paper, but for the sake of future research, the following can be passed on. Upon reading the reports from the Bavarian and Prussian *Landtag*, American affairs seem to have been a topic of interest in Prussian naval concerns, the development of prison systems, concepts of ministerial responsibility (*Ministerverantwortlichkeit*), discussions around various governmental institutions such as federal courts, labor and welfare policies, general civil rights, copyright laws, and laws regarding religious freedom.

5 The phrase Prussian-German military will be used throughout this paper to refer to both the variety of the military structures inside the German Confederation before 1866 as well as the Prussian dominance thereafter.

6 Stig Förster and Jorg Nagler, eds., *On the Road to Total War: the American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861 – 1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Roger Chickering, “Militarism and radical nationalism,” *Imperial Germany 1871 – 1918*, ed. James Retallack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

7 Chickering, “Militarism and radical nationalism”; Ute Frevert, *A Nation in Barracks: Modern Germany, Military Conscription and Civil Society* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2004).

8 Förster and Nagler, *On the Road to Total War*.

9 Lutz, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten während des Sezessionskrieges*; Müller, *Der Amerikanische Sezessionskrieg in der schweizerischen öffentlichen Meinung*; Adams, *Prussian-American Relations, 1775 – 1871*; Löffler, *Preußens und Sachsens Beziehungen zu den USA während des Sezessionskrieges 1860-1865*; Eimers, *Preußen und die USA 1850 bis 1867*; Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War*.

10 Eimers, *Preußen und die USA 1850 bis 1867*: 126 – 146.

11 Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations*; *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, ed. John F. Marszalek, Mississippi State University’s Digital Collections (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964), 28: 407 – 410. Ulysses S. Grant also made use of the phrase “stain” during his conversation with Bismarck in 1878 to describe his motivations for waging war in the name of destroying the institution of slavery.

12 See endnote 3.

13 Carl Schurz, *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1913), 1: 397 – 405; Dieter Langewiesche, *Reich, Föderation Nation: Deutschland und Europa* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2008); Lerg, *Amerika als Argument*; Gustav Struve, *Diesseits und Jenseits des Oceans, 1863 – 1865*, BSB (Coburg: F. Streits Buchhandlung). This was the title of the popular journal published in Saxony-Coburg between 1863 and 1865 by the former revolutionary Gustav Struve who had spent time in the United States, which concentrated specifically on examining American conditions and their implications for German society. This journal was continually banned by the Prussian government and was only published due to the protection of Herzog Ernst II of the same duchy, who in general supported an atmosphere of radical political movements aimed towards the introduction of *Volksbewaffnung* through the various *Schützen*, *Schießen*- and *Turnvereine*, which was heavily connected to American and Swiss models.

14Dr. Eduard Reimann, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika im Uebergange vom Staatenbund zum Bundesstaat* (Stuttgart: Druck der Deutschen Verlags-Anstalt GmbH., 1955)(Originally Weimar: 1855); *Staatenbund, Bundesstaat und Einheitsstaat, Wodurch unterscheiden sie sich von einander und Was sind sonach der Deutsche Bund, die nordamerikanische Union und die schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft, und wie muß die Verfassung des deutschen Bundes reformirt werden*, BSB (Leipzig: Verlagsbuchhandlung von J.J. Weber, 1859); *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Deutschland und ihr Verhältniß zu Europa*, BSB (Hamburg: O. Meißner, 1860); *Der Wochenschrift des Nationalvereins*, June 22, 1865, BSB (Coburg: 1865); Otto von Bismarck, “Band 4. Reichsgründung: Bismarcks Deutschland 1866-1890 Bismarcks ‚Putbus Diktate‘ zur zukünftigen Verfassung Deutschlands (Oktober-November 1866),” *Deutsche Geschichte in Dokumenten und Bildern*; J. C. Bluntschli, *Die Gründung der Amerikanischen Union von 1787*, Google Books (Berlin: C.G. Lüderi’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1868); *Archiv des Norddeutschen Bundes: Jahrbuch für Staats-Verwaltungs-Recht und Diplomatie des Norddeutschen Bundes und des Zollvereins; mit Beilagen enthaltend: Verfassungen und Gesetze anderer Staaten*, ed. Dr. J.C. Glaser, BSB (Berlin: Fortkamp, 1867 – 1870); Julius von Gosen, *Das Bundesstaatsrecht der Nordamerikanischen Union, der Schweiz und des Norddeutschen Bundes*, BSB (München: Verlag der M. Rieger’schen Universitäts Buchhandlung, 1868); Johann Casper Bluntschli, *Denkwürdiges aus meinem Leben*, BSB (Nördlingen: Verlag der C.H. Beck’schen Buchhandlung, 1884), 3: 44; Herzog Ernst II von Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha,

Aus meinem Leben und aus meiner Zeit, BSB (Berlin: Verlag von Wilhelm von Hertz, 1889), 3: 68 – 70; Adams, *Prussian-American Relations, 1775 – 1871*: 90 – 105.

15 It is relatively possible that the U.S. and Switzerland were used as examples for militia systems in earlier periods of history, such as 1848, but any secondary works discussing this development are unknown to the author and empirical research goes beyond the abilities of this paper.

16 Volker Reinhart, *Kleine Geschichte der Schweiz* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2010).

17 Bluntschli, *Denkwürdiges aus meinem Leben*, 3: 164. This comparison was also drawn by the Swiss jurist Johann Caspar Bluntschli.

18 “Bayern. München, 15. Juni,” *Der Volksbote für den Bürger und Landmann*, BSB (München: Kirschbaum & Schuh, 1866), 1: 571 - 572. One particularly colorful example can be found in the conservative Catholic newspaper in Bavaria, *Der Volksbote*, which in 1866 raged against the Prussian secession by labeling it as a national traitor and as the equivalent of the American “Sonderbund” (Confederacy).

19 *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 23, 1861, BSB (München: Johann Friedrich von Cotta, 1861 – 1871).

20 Schurz, *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, 2: 65 – 245. This differentiation was supported generally by the fact that most German immigrants to the U.S. in the 19th century had indeed settled in the North and became almost unanimous supporters of the Republican party after the influence of prominent German-speaking politicians, most notably Carl Schurz, in the campaigns in the late 1850s and early 1860s, as well as by the fact that various states in the South, such as Florida and Louisiana, had been prominent colonies under French and Spanish, or together ‘Latin’, rule.

21 Leopold von Ranke, *Über die Epochen der neueren Geschichte, Vorträge dem Könige Maximilian II. von Bayern im Herbst 1854 zu Berchtesgaden gehalten von Leopold von Ranke*, ed. Alfred Dove (Leipzig: Verlag von Duncker und Humblot, 1906): 153; von Moltke, *Gesammelte Schriften und Denkwürdigkeiten des General Fieldmarschalls Grafen Helmuth von Moltke*, 2. Band: 198 – 228. Bismarck, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen*, 1: 258 – 276, North German Parliament, *Verhandlungen des Reichstages des Norddeutschen Bundes: Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstages des Norddeutschen Bundes*, BSB (Hildesheim: Olms, 1867 – 1870), Band 1: 205 – 269.

22 Ranke, *Über die Epochen der neueren Geschichte*: 141.

23 Schurz, *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, 2: 204 – 207; Der preußische Legationsrat Guido von Grabow an den Minister von Bismarck-Schönhausen, 19. Juli 1864, *Schriftwechsel mit der preußischen diplomatischen Vertretung in Washington*, Bd. 25. Jan. - Dez. 1864, GStA, III. HA MdA, I Nr. 7901: 206 – 207. The Legationsrat von Grabow, was extremely conservative, and his derogatory comments to Bismarck as late as 1864 also serve as the perfect example of general conservative resentment towards the Union, especially in Prussia.

24 Löffler, *Preußens und Sachsens Beziehungen zu den USA*; Eimers, *Preußen und die USA*; Adams, *Prussian-American Relations, 1775 – 1871*.

25 Hans Rothfels, ed., *Bismarck-Briefe* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955): 300 – 301, 313. Bismarck’s early comments to Motley regarding the American Civil War are particularly interesting.

26 Pommerin, *Zwischen Eurozentrismus und globalem Staatensystem*; Adams, *Prussian-American Relations, 1775 – 1871*: 90 – 105. Adams gives a good general overview of the positive attitude expressed by Bismarck throughout the 1860s.

27 Lutz, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten*: 30. Bismarck, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen*, Vol. 1: 1, 170, 174, 175-176, and 192; Vol. 2: 82. One of the best examples of Bismarck’s and the Prussian government’s fear of the United States as a domestic influence can be found in the ban in Prussia in 1863 of all German speaking newspapers from the United States and many non-Prussian newspapers published within the German Confederation discussing the U.S. as a model for reform, such as Gustav Struve’s *Jenseits des Oceans*, which would last much longer than the ban on other American newspapers.

28 *Militärverhältnisse der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, GStA, III. HA MdA, I Nr. 10586; *Verfassung der schweizerischen und englischen Miliz, Mai - Juni 1814*, GStA, III. HA MdA, I Nr. 10566; *Projektierte neue Militärorganisation in der Schweiz, Juni 1836 - Feb. 1838*, GStA, III. HA MdA, I Nr. 10582; *Militärangelegenheiten der Schweiz, 1859 - 1867*, GStA, III. HA MdA, I Nr. 10583; Brief an den Kriegsminister von Roon, 30. Mai 1861; Der Kriegsminister von Roon an den Minister von Schleinitz, 10. Juni 1861, *Militärangelegenheiten der Schweiz, 1859 - 1867*, GStA, III. HA MdA, I Nr. 10583.

29 Bismarck, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* (Stuttgart: Verlag der J.G. Cotta’schen Buchhandlung, 1898), 1: 283.

30 Bismarck and the Prussian government argued rather unconvincingly that the constitution provided no clear evidence as to whether the government could reform the military and use state funds without parliamentary approval. There was supposedly a gap between the power of the monarchy and that of parliament, which meant the government had to operate unconstitutionally to protect the state’s best interests (*Lückentheorie*).

31 Georg Friedrich Kolb, *Die Nachtheile des stehenden Heerwesens und die Nothwendigkeit der Ausbildung eines Volkswehrsystems: Vortrag*, BSB (Leipzig: A. Förstnersche Buchhandlung, 1862); Württemberg Chamber of Deputies, *Verhandlungen der Württembergischen Kammer der Abgeordneten auf dem Landtag: Protokollband*, BSB (Stuttgart: Württemberg): 220 – 226; The Upper House of the Austrian Parliament, *Stenographische Protokolle über die Sitzungen des Hauses der Abgeordneten des Österreichischen Reichsrates*, 1867/1869, BSB (Wien: Kaiserlich-Königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei), 6: 5336 – 5365, 5405 – 5423, 5920 – 5931; *Militär-Zeitung*, ed. Dr. J. Hirtenfeld, BSB (Wien: F.B. Geitler, 1859 – 1870).

32 Lower House of the Bavarian Parliament, *Verhandlungen der Kammer der Abgeordneten des Bayerischen Landtages: ... Landtagsversammlung: Stenographische Berichte*, 1859/1861, 2: 418 – 427, 429 – 431. The reference to the gymnastic associations as republican institutions came from the parliamentary member Schrauth (421).

33 Ibid: 425.

34 Ibid, 1859/1861, 1: 16 – 22. Edel and many other parliamentary members made consistent remarks throughout the period between 1859 and 1865 recalling the Bavarian role in the struggle of 1813 against Napoleon in support of *Volksbewaffnung*, including in the above cited debates in 1861. See the comments made by Edel in 1859 for a particularly aggressive example.

35 See Endnote 21.

36 Ibid. 1859/1861, 2: 304. 37 Ibid. 1863/1865, 1: 300. 38 Ibid. 1863/1865, 1: 119 – 120. 39 Ibid. 1863/1865, 2: 375 – 380. 40 Ibid. 1863/1865, 2: 391 – 392. 41 *Rosenheimer Wochenblatt/Anzeiger*, 29. Juli 1863, BSB (Rosenheim: Aibling und Prien, 1861 – 1871). Such conversations would later be censored by the government in its attempt to quell public unrest, see 6. September 1863 in the same paper.

42 The Lower House of the Bavarian Parliament, *Verhandlungen der Kammer der Abgeordneten des Bayerischen Landtages*, BSB, 1863/1865, Alphabetisches Repertorium: 52 - 54.

43 See endnote 39.

44 Ibid. 1863/1865, 2: 348. “Schaffen Sie eine Volkswehr, eine ächte, wahre Volkswehr, meine Herren, und Sie werden nicht eine Petition für deren Wiederaufhebung bekommen, dafür stehe ich Ihnen.”

45 Ibid. 1863/1865, 1: 300; 2: 92.

46 Ibid. 1859/1861, 2: 1 – 8; 1863/1865, 2: 92 – 96, 375 – 392, 427 – 446; „Das Landwehr-Institut in Bayern,“ *Eichstätter Tageblatt*, BSB (Eichstätt: Krüll'schen Buchhandlung, 1863). Corruption refers to the privileges given to upper-class men to serve in the officer-core of the Landwehr without any military experience what so ever. See the parliamentary debates (pages 375 - 392) and the article published by an anonymous Bavarian military figure in the Eichstätter newspaper for further details.

47 Frevert, *A Nation in Barracks*: 101 - 113.

48 Lower House of the Bavarian Parliament, 1863/1865, 1: 300 – 315.

49 Upper House of the Bavarian Parliament, *Verhandlungen der Kammer der Reichsräthe des Königreiches Bayern*, 1863, Beilagen, BSB (München: Bayern, 1863): 158 – 161.

50 Lower House of the Bavarian Parliament, 1863/1865, 2: 92, 100 – 110, 427 – 446; Ibid. 1863/1865, 2: 428.

51 Ibid. 1863/1865, 2: 427 – 446. 52 Ibid. 1863/1865, 1: 80.

53 *Militär-Zeitung*, ed. Dr. J. Hirtenfeld; Wilhelm Rüstow, *Stehendes Heer und Volkswehr, ein Beitrag zu der Bewaffnungsfrage der Gegenwart von einem deutschen Offizier*, BSB (Mannheim: Friedrich Bassermann, 1848). Gustav Struve, *Diesseits und Jenseits des Oceans, 1863 – 1865*. Rüstow was regularly cited and quoted by the newspaper operated by Hirtenfeld and serves to reflect the spread of his arguments made in 1848 and again in 1862. The proposals made by Kolb and Rüstow became so infamous and were so similar that they would be referred to together in various publications (Struve, 1863, 1: 89 -90) as well as in the Prussian parliament as a general ideological position, i.e. “the Rüstow, Kolb, and Schulze argument.”

54 *Rosenheimer Anzeiger*, April 23, 1865.

55 Upper House of the Bavarian Parliament, *Verhandlungen der Kammer der Reichsräthe des Königreiches Bayern*, 1863/65: 428 – 445.

56 The Lower House of the Prussian Parliament, *Verhandlungen des Hauses der Abgeordneten: Geschäftsübersicht des Preußischen Hauses der Abgeordneten*, Berlin: 1864, 2: 1203 – 1221. This extensive speech given by Roon in early 1865 gives a good overview of the government's proposals and the arguments laid out to defend them.

57 Green, “Political and diplomatic movements,” *Germany 1800 – 1870*, ed. Jonathan Sperber (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004)

58 Arndt, *Was bedeutet Landsturm und Landwehr?: nebst einer Mahnung an deutsche Männer und Jünglinge in Preußens rheinischen Landen*, BSB (Köln: H. Rommerskirchen, 1815); Rüstow, *Stehendes Heer und Volkswehr*; Kolb, *Die Nachtheile des stehenden Heerwesens*.

59 Green, "Political and diplomatic movements."

60 The Lower House of the Prussian Parliament, 1862, 3a: 1572.

61 Ibid., 1862, 3a: 1575 – 1577. 62 Ibid., 1862, 3a: 1600. 63 Ibid., 1862, 3a: 1696. "*le despotisme, modéré par l'assassinat*" 64 Ibid., 1862, 2b: 1137 – 1138. 65 Ibid., 1864, 1: 627 – 629. 66 Ibid., 1862, 2b: 1137 – 1138. 67 "Politischer Tagesbericht", 6. Januar, 1863, *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (Berlin: Norddeutsche Buchdruckerei und Verlag Anst, 1861-1871), Staatsbibliothek Berlin (GStA), Mikrofilm-Ausgabe, Bonn: Mikropress, 1967; Berlin: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, 1995; Dortmund: Mikrofilmarchiv der Deutschsprachigen Presse; Berlin: SAPMO-BArch, 1972-1989, M218/710 MR.

68 Ibid., 1864, 2: 1195 - 1996. 69 Ibid. 70 Ibid.: 1194 – 1997. 71 Ibid., 1864, 2: 1202.

72 Ibid., 1864, 2: 1207 – 1208; Geoffrey Wawro, *The Austro-Prussian War: Austria's War with Prussia and Italy in 1866* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

73 *Militärverhältnisse der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, GStA, III. HA MdA, I Nr. 10586. This letter is fascinating in relation to the topic at hand and, unlike other letters written by von Gerolt, has not been published in any work known to the author.

74 Schurz, *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, 3: 121 – 122, 263 – 280.

75 Green, "Political and Diplomatic Movements."

76 Lower House of the Prussian Parliament, 1866, 2: 1060.

77 Ibid. Concerning the military agreements of 1866 between Prussia and Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria, etc.

78 Georg Friedrich Kolb, *Lebenserinnerungen eines liberalen Demokraten, 1808-1884*, ed. Ludwig Merckle (Freiburg: Verlag Rombach Freiburg, 1976): 226 – 228.

79 North German Parliament, 1867, 3: 477.

80 Lower House of the Prussian Parliament, 1866, 2: 1223.

81 Green, "Political and diplomatic movements."; James Rettalack, "Introduction," Katharine Anne Lerman, "Bismarckian Germany," Thomas Kühne, "Political culture and democratization," Roger Chickering, "Militarism and radical nationalism," and Sebastian Conrad, "Transnational Germany," *Germany 1871 – 1918*, ed. Rettalack; North German Parliament, 1: 269 – 321, 535 – 553.

82 Manfred Messerschmidt, "The Prussian Army from Reform to War"; Wilhelm Deist, "Preconditions of Waging War"; Thomas Rohkrämer, "Daily Life at the Front", *On the Road to Total War*; Helmuth von Moltke, *Moltke in seinen Briefen: Mit einem Lebens- und Charakterbild des Verewigten* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1902): 226 – 227.

83 See endnote 15; See endnote 88; Rudolph von Delbrück, *Lebenserinnerungen von Rudolph von Delbrück* (Leipzig: Verlag von Duncker und Humblot, 1905), 2: 188 - 189; Eimers, *Preußen und die USA*. The Prussian Minister of Finance, Rudolph von Delbrück, emphasized in his memoirs the key role that the repayment of Prussian loans to America during the Civil War played in the financing of the war against France in 1870/71; Lutz, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten während des Sezessionskrieges*: 22.

84 Eimers, *Preußen und die USA*; Löffler, *Preußens und Sachsens Beziehungen zu den USA*; Adams, *Prussian-American Relations, 1775 – 1871*; *The Papers of the Foreign Office of the United States of America*, 1865, 3: 55 - 56; *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, 21: 163 – 165; *The Life and Letters of George Bancroft*, ed. M.A. DeWolfe Howe (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), 2: 221 – 224, 240 - 244; *Vereinigte Staaten von Amerika. - Beziehungen des Deutschen Reiches zu den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika und Beziehungen der USA zu anderen Staaten*, BaBL, R 1401/100: 84; Gerolt an den Minister von Bismarck-Schönhausen, 1. Dezember 1867, *Schriftwechsel mit der preußischen diplomatischen Vertretung in Washington sowie mit anderen preußischen diplomatischen Vertretungen und ausländischen Regierungen über die inneren Angelegenheiten der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, Bd. 2. Jan. - Dez. 1867, GStA, III. HA, I, Nr. 7905: 315 – 317; The North German Parliament, 1868, 5: 45; Lutz, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten während des Sezessionskrieges*: 22.

85 Jarausch, "Rivalen der Modernen. Amerika und Deutschland im 20. Jahrhundert."