

# The Kingdom of Württemberg and the Making of Germany, 1815-1871.

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*For  
Kevin and Ric;  
and for  
June, Malcolm and Kristian.*



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## ABSTRACT

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THE TRADITIONAL DISCOURSE of the German unification maintains that it was the German great powers - Austria and Prussia - that controlled German destiny, yet for much of this period Germany was divided into some thirty-eight states, each of which possessed their own institutions and traditions. In explaining the formation of Germany, the orthodox view holds that these so-called *Mittel-* and *Kleinstaaten* existed largely at the whim of either Vienna or Berlin, and their policies, in turn, were dictated or shaped by these two power centres. According to this reading of German history, a bipolar sociopolitical structure existed, whereby the *Mittelstaaten* would declare their allegiances to either the Habsburg or Hohenzollern crowns.

The present work rejects this model of German history, through the use of the case study of the southwestern Kingdom of Württemberg. It demonstrates that Württemberg's state government was dynamic and fully in control of its own policy-making throughout most of the nineteenth century. While it did often align itself with Vienna, it did so for pragmatic reasons of self interest; sometimes, it would forsake that alignment in favour of ties with Prussia, or its neighbouring *Mittelstaaten*, or even France, if it felt that such ties were in the state's best interests. Keenly involved in the national question, successive governments and monarchs in Stuttgart manoeuvred the country so as to gain the greatest advantage. These manoeuvres included decades-long attempts by Stuttgart, in conjunction with state ministers in Munich, Karlsruhe, Darmstadt, and sometimes Dresden, Kassel, and Hanover, to unite the smaller German states to form a southern 'bloc' (the so-called 'Third Germany') against the aspirations of Austrian or Prussian hegemony in the German hinterland.

This thesis demonstrates that the shape of German unification was not inevitable, and was in fact to a great extent driven by the particularist desires of the *Mittelstaaten*, rather than the great powers. The eventual *Reichsgründung* of January 1871 was merely the final step in a long series of negotiations, diplomatic manoeuvres, and subterfuge, with Württemberg playing a vital, regional role.





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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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BArch.	Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde, Berlin
fl.	<i>Gulden</i> or <i>Florin</i> ; Württemberg unit of currency
FO	Foreign Office, London
GStAPK.	Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin
GlaB.	Generallandesarchiv Baden, Karlsruhe
Hes.StAD.	Hessisches Staatsarchiv Darmstadt, Darmstadt
PAAdAA.	Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Berlin
StadtAE.	Stadtarchiv Esslingen, Esslingen
WVLG.	<i>Württembergische Vierteljahrshefte für Landesgeschichte</i> (en. <i>Württemberg Quarterly Journal of State History</i> )
ZWLG.	<i>Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte</i> (en. <i>Journal of Württemberg State History</i> )

## DECLARATION

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I CERTIFY THAT this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution in my name and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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## NOTES

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GERMAN IS A logical and relatively easy language to learn, speak, and write. It is, however, not as easy to integrate it into an English-language thesis. Adjectives change their suffixes depending on what grammatical case the sentence takes. For example, the newspaper *Schwäbischer Merkur* could, in fact, be written as *Schwäbischen Merkur* or *Schwäbischem Merkur*, depending on whether it appears as the subject, direct object, or indirect object in a sentence. If preceded by its definite article (*der*), it would also be written as *der Schwäbische Merkur*. This, naturally, can become confusing, since the bulk of this text is written in English. For the ease of reading, this thesis will display such titles, regardless of what position they appear in a sentence or whether they are preceded by a definite article, as though they are in nominative case without article. Hence, *Schwäbischer Merkur*, *Württembergisches Heer*, or *Schwäbische Kronik*.

Where possible, footnote references and index entries include the noble rank held by many of the prominent figures in the story of the German unification. So, for example, Karl von Varnbüler will be referred to as a baron (*Freiherr*). In a very few cases, however, some ranks change over the course of the years studied. Otto von Bismarck, for instance, was at various points a count (*Graf*), a duke (*Herzog*), and a non-hereditary prince (*Fürst*). For ease of reference, instead of constantly altering Bismarck's title, he is referred to throughout this work as a count, as this is the rank he held throughout the majority of his time in power that is pertinent to this work (1865-1871). Similarly, while his surname was technically "Bismarck-Schönhausen", the Prussian chancellor is almost universally known as "Bismarck"; this is also reflected in footnotes. Kings, regents, princes, and dukes are listed under dynastic surnames. Hence, Grand Duke Leopold of Baden is listed under "Zähringen", while the Prussian kings appear under the name "Hohenzollern."

This work also uses a number of contemporary newspaper sources. In many cases, presumably depending on the copy editor or journalists working on a given day, title formats and other details often altered on an issue-by-issue basis. Thus, the Württemberg newspaper whose title translates as "State Gazette" appears within the same year, month or week, as *Staats-Anzeiger für Württemberg*, *Staatsanzeiger für Württemberg*, or, simply, *Staats-Anzeiger* or *Staatsanzeiger*. Sometimes, the issue number is listed along with the date. Other times, it is not. For the purposes of clarity, this work will commonly refer to this particular paper as the *Staats-Anzeiger für Württemberg*, regardless of the titular flourish of that particular issue. Otherwise, details will be provided when they are available. Therefore, if the masthead included an issue number, that will be listed in the footnotes. If the issue number was absent, it will similarly be absent from the footnotes. Otherwise, spellings appear as they do in the original source. Hence, the German word 'defence' (*Verteidigung* in modern German spelling) may be rendered in the archaic *Vertheidigung*, just as *Rat* (advice, or council) may appear as *Rath*.