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The Process of Becoming a Political Personality and the Factors That Determine It (the experience of the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck)

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ABSTRACT: The proposed article attempts to reveal the process of becoming a politician, and not merely an ordinary politician, but one who develops and imposes a large-scale policy that independently determines the options for the development of his country: the creator of the Second Empire in Germany, the great statesman Otto von Bismarck. The goal of the study was to analyze the legal, political, and psychological factors that contributed to the rise of the first civil servant in the empire. The life and fate of each person are in the crosshairs objective and subjective circumstances interact. The role of external, otherworldly forces, colloquially called chance, is also not to be excluded in any such rise. Contrary to popular belief, people are not born clean slates at all. Instead, each bears the stamp of parental education and the personality and health imposed by the genetics of distant ancestors. From the enormous variety of factors, experiences, and relationships within which a personality is formed, the authors of this study chose reference points that, in their opinion, contributed most to forming the contours (or images) of Bismarck as an outstanding politician. These include the aspects of his character that absorbed and reflected the influence of his ancestors and parents (most of all, his mother), as well as the principles that prevailed in the German educational system and the public service of Germany. In this objective review, the subjective (personal) properties of the applicant for the highest administrative position in the state were acutely manifested: a hypermotivation to acquire power and the ability to recognize the importance of representing state interests for themselves.

In their conclusions, the authors relied on collections of Bismarck's letters, on his parliamentary and political speeches, and other documents that "accompanied" his life. They also relied upon their own interpretation of the distant events of Bismarck's life and times. The study thus acquired an intersectoral character. Although the historical subtext of our research is obvious, the proposed material will also be of interest to modern politicians.

Keywords: Bismarck; Gerlach brothers; General Roon; Prussia; king; political personality; civil servant; education; power; career; reform; pietism; United Landtag.

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Процесс становления политической личности и факторы, его определяющие (опыт германского канцлера Отто фон Бисмарка)

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Аннотация. Предлагаемая статья есть попытка раскрыть процесс становления политика, причем политика не урядного, но крупномасштабного, самостоятельно определяющего варианты развития страны: создателя Второй империи в Германии, крупнейшего государственного деятеля Отто фон Бисмарка. В задачу исследования входил анализ правовых, политических и психологических факторов, способствовавших возвращению первого в стране государственного служащего. Понятно, что жизнь и судьба человека находятся в перекрестье взаимодействия объективных и субъективных обстоятельств. Не исключена и роль внешних, потусторонних сил, называемая игрой случая. Вопреки распространенному суждению, родившийся человек вовсе не представляет собой чистую грифельную доску. Но несет на себе печать родительского воспитания, наложенную генетику дальних предков. Из огромного многообразия факторов и разнообразных общественных отношений, внутри которых формируется личность, авторы выбрали реперные точки, которые, на их взгляд, помогают составить контуры (или образ) Бисмарка, как выдающегося политика. К таковым можно отнести особенности характера, вобравшего воздействие предков, родителей (прежде всего, матери), а также господствовавшие в образовательной системе и государственной службе Германии принципы. На этой объективной основе остро проявились субъективные (личные) свойства претендента на высшую административную должность в государстве: гипермотивация к власти, способность уяснить для себя важность представления государственных интересов.

В своих выводах авторы опирались на сборники писем Бисмарка, на его парламентские, политические выступления и другие документы, «сопровождавшие» его жизнь, а также на собственную интерпретацию тех далеких событий. Исследование приобрело, таким образом, межотраслевой характер. Хотя исторический подтекст нашего исследования очевиден, предложенный материал представляет интерес и для современных политиков.

Ключевые слова: Бисмарк; братья Герлахи; генерал Роон; Пруссия; король; политическая личность; государственный служащий; образование; власть; карьера; реформа; пиетизм; Соединенный ландтаг.

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An individual public official is very rarely independent in his activities, even the most senior one. More often than not, he has to set in motion the bureaucratic machinery that has already been set in motion. The Prussian public official is like an orchestrator. He may play first violin or strike the triangle; without any deviation or dissonance he has to play his part as instructed, regardless of whether he thinks it is good or bad. I, on the other hand, will make music that I think is good, or not at all.

From O. von Bismarck's letter to his father

Problem Statement. In today's scientific search for the skills and capabilities of individuals who can occupy high public office, the conditions of how historical figures rose to power must be analyzed. One of them is Otto von Bismarck, Germany's outstanding 19th century statesman. However, the origins of the statesman's formation remain a mystery for social scientists, especially historians and psychologists.

The historical mind is immensely connected with psychology, namely, the soul science. However, the soul, even for an experienced person, is a mystery. Psychologists believe that personality is formed under the influence of various factors, such as family, school, university, friendly and professional environment, and intellectual environment. However, determining which one plays a dominant role is difficult.

As a social being, a person is influenced by his environment. Objectively, he cannot be alone with his thoughts, but he communicates with relatives, friends, associates, and political opponents¹. This large circle of individuals can be considered groups of actors with different statuses who can directly or indirectly influence the shaping of a statesman's political career. Thus, Otto von Bismarck's rise to power paints the most complete picture of the aforementioned factors.

The literature on Bismarck's childhood and adolescence is scarce, which limits understanding his future. Generally, great men in their early youth should be somehow different from ordinary people. As noted by some biographers of Bismarck, the famous German Empire chancellor of 30 years was considered an ordinary man, and his future possession of political power was unexpected. He differed from others of his milieu only in that all his traits, negative ones at that, were especially strong in him [1]. But is it so?

This paper presents and analyzes those layers and levels of the living environment that, aside from hereditary genes, contributed to the nurturing of the country's first public official. The fate of a single individual, in our case

Bismarck's fate, is the result of a game of objective and subjective factors. The role of otherworldly forces, called the game of chance, is not excluded either. Thus, this paper attempts to draw a conclusion about the correlation of the mentioned factors during Bismarck's political life. In addition to the boundless literature on Bismarck, this paper draws from his letters, parliamentary and other political speeches, and the documents that "accompanied" his life.

Contrary to the tabula rasa, the human being is not born on a blank slate at all. He bears not only the stamp of parental genetics, but also the mark of his distant ancestors. Born on April 1, 1815, at Schönhausen on the Elbe in Saxony, Bismarck was the second son of Captain Karl Ferdinand von Bismarck (1771–1845), a captain in the cavalry, and his wife Louise Wilhemina, née von Mencken (1789–1839). His father's side was of an old aristocratic family that possessed three estates in the Lower Pomeranian County of Naugard from the beginning of the 18th century. His mother belonged to an educated bourgeoisie. Her father served as a secretary in the secret cabinet of the Prussian elector, Friedrich the Great. The Mencken family granted Germany scholars and employees of the highest rank.

Thus, Bismarck, as a future politician, did not begin his life with a clean slate. He stood on a foundation built by his ancestors, known in modern parlance as the background. In the 19th century, this was considered an important condition of success in political and administrative career. Generally, the ancestors' role in shaping the personality of the young Bismarck deserves a separate discussion — he who honors his ancestors, elevates his honor. We can only speculate about how they (the ancestors), standing behind Bismarck's back, helped him build his political career. Almost all the politician's ancestors fought against France, his father and three of his brothers fought with France during the Republic; his grandfather took part in the seven-year war against France; his great-grandfather fought against Louis XIV, and his father also fought against Louis XIV in the wars on the Rhine². Bismarck continued the line of opposition to France by participating in the political preparations for the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, which ultimately allowed for the unification of Germany.

The different societal backgrounds of his parents were reflected in Bismarck's personality. From his father, he inherited his pride in his aristocratic roots, his mother gifted him with a sharp mind, the ability to act rationally, and a sense of language. She taught him to enjoy an

² Sementkovsky R.I. Otto Bismarck. His life and statesmanship // ARHEVE. URL: <https://arheve.com/read/bismarck-o/otto-bismarck-ego-jizn-i-gosudarstvennaya-deyatelnost-mentkovskiy-r-i/1> (accessed on 10.07.2021).

¹ 100 of great married couples. Otto Bismarck and Johanna Puttkamer. URL: (accessed on 30.06.2021).

education, which was not so much for landowners as for the offspring of the bourgeoisie [2]. She expected her son to leave the usual Junker circle, dreaming of making public officials out of her sons. Concurrently, his mother's goal-oriented upbringing made Bismarck's home environment somewhat unbearable. This explains his reserved attitude toward his mother, compelling him to devote his love for her toward his father [3, pp. 27–30]. Bismarck's epistolary legacy confirms our conjectures, lengthy letters to his father, mostly on agricultural issues, and almost nothing to his mother [4]. However, his mother's influence must not be underestimated. Her mother essentially imparted to her son, at a genetic level, the qualities necessary for a public official. Eventually, he arrived at his mother's goal for him, to grow into the most famous public official. The unfathomable phenomenon is "moving away from his mother, he came to her".

Louise Wilhemina died in 1839 at the age of 50, when her son was just at the beginning of his career. His wife, Johanna von Puttkamer, eventually became Bismarck's closest companion in life and politics. He met her at the house of his Blankenburg friends. Although photographs reveal that Johanna did not possess the typical standard of beauty, Moritz Blankenburg described her as "extremely intelligent, very musical, nice, and has a deep, pious heart". As Robert von Keidel, an employee of Bismarck, recalled: "Nature did not bestow Johanna with regular facial features, but it, framed by black hair, was wonderfully enlivened by talking eyes" [5, p. 4]. Thus, why did Bismarck choose her, and how did his wife influence his political outlook?

Given our extant knowledge on Bismarck's entire life journey, it can be reasoned that his marriage to Johanna provided him with a foundation for existence and support during the critical moments of his life, which his political activities had prepared in full measure for him. Did Bismarck act as a pragmatist? Or was he won over by his bride? Bismarck's famous letter to his future father-in-law reinforced the sincerity of the 31-year-old man, who earnestly disowned his wayward past and expressed his resolution to take responsibility for Johanna von Puttkammer [2, pp. 1–4]. However, there was also a rational eye in the matter. Looking ahead to his own political future (Germany was breathing a revolution which was opening new vacancies in the power system), Bismarck realized that he would not be accepted by the Prussian ruling elite as "free" from family duties as a "crazy Junker."

If, as Bismarck argued, husband and wife have one soul and one flesh, the politician's wife objectively became his closest associate. History reveals many such cases. For instance, Clementine, the wife of W. Churchill, had considerable influence over her husband. Another is the actual assistant to American President F.D. Roosevelt

was his wife, Eleanor. Meanwhile, Bismarck's wife was not interested in politics, and he did not engage her in the details of the political struggle. Despite the long periods Bismarck was away from home, he compensated by sending frequent and lengthy letters to his wife, a prodigal habit by today's standards, and one wonders how he found the time. Women are confident in their ability to determine the appearance and behavior of men close to them. However, was Johanna capable of it? By her own admission, she had no other will than that of her husband.

The Puttkamers were devout pietists and were supporters of the religious movement widespread at that time called "Pietism." Its adherents did not recognize the existence of God in the image of man but regarded God as the creator of all things on earth, including the state creator. However, literature review did not emphasize the younger Bismarck's search for God. Nonetheless, it was perhaps his acquaintance with the Puttkammers that caused Bismarck to explore the relation between state and religion. On January 15, 1847 (six months before his marriage) he made a speech in the United Landtag of Prussia on Prussia as a Christian state [6, pp. 9–10]. Was he in a hurry to please his bride's family, or had he turned into a sincere pietist? In any case, Bismarck's social policy might have been born out of this situation. If the latter is true, one can assume that Johanna Puttkammer contributed to Bismarck's awareness of the Christian state nature in Prussia. How else would have conceived of the Christian state idea?

In January 1847 the question of the Jews' emancipation was discussed in the Prussian Landtag. Bismarck then declared that he had nothing against Jews and was prepared to grant them all rights in a Christian state, except the ability to occupy the highest state posts. In a polemic with the deputies, the young politician argued that a Christian state is not a fiction or the concoction of philosophers. Any state with a hope of lasting existence must be built on a firm religious foundation. If the state is Christian, it must implement the doctrine of Christ. According to Bismarck, Prussia had not always succeeded in striking a right balance between the truths of evangelicalism and the law. Any attempt to deprive the state of its religious basis turns it into an accidental aggregate of rights and freedoms, whose duty is only to prevent a war of all people against all people. If the law ceases to draw its vitality from the original source of eternal truth, it will represent a set of vague humanity notions in the minds of those who stand at the pinnacle of power [6, p. 10].

Considerably, a politician inherited from his ancestors and closest relatives a considerable pedigree, a psychological and educational potential that allowed him to claim the highest position in the state. However, this was not enough. Prussia was a militarized state, and its Prussian

army was given special attention. This has been a distinctive feature of the country since the time of the Great Elector, Friedrich Wilhelm. Only members of the army were eligible for high-ranking positions. Among the Prussian aristocracy, it was customary to ask, "Wohaben Sie gedient?" (Where did you serve, in which regiment?). Bismarck did not serve in the army, except for a few months of military training in the local Landwehr. Moreover, he attempted to dodge a year's military service as a reservist, citing "muscle weakness resulting from a cutting blow with a sword under his right arm" [1, p. 39]. This underlines that obedience to superiors was not in his character.

Therefore, Bismarck was forced to seek other approaches to the career ladder. He preferred to stick to a rational calculation, distributing his efforts in many directions: a) to demonstrate a high level of educational preparation for high positions; b) to establish himself in the eyes of the higher ruling class as a faithful defender of the Prussian throne; c) to find people close to the Prussian king and try to enlist their support; d) and not to miss a lucky break.

The first direction, the high level of Bismarck's scientific and educational training, is confirmed by the acts of the Prussian city of Aachen (1836), which reflect in detail the procedure of passing the examinations for the right to take the lowest position of a referent in the city government by 21-year-old Bismarck [7, pp. 3–30]. These documents significantly correct history's perception that Bismarck was a negligent student. The topic of his written examination was beyond the capabilities of the poorly educated student. He was obliged, without outside help, to write an essay on two questions: 1) the nature and admissibility of the oath in general, as well as in its various forms, from the position of law philosophy and the Christian doctrine of virtue; 2) on the economy of the state budget, its essence and the successes of the economy with historical examples [7, p. 7]. The examination committee evaluated Bismarck's written work as "very good."

Bismarck was then subjected to an oral examination. The range of topics proposed for discussion was extremely wide: Greek, Latin, philosophy, and history; problems of property administration, state law, many aspects of political economy, and finance, particularly questions about the Prussian tax system. Finally, various matters of Prussian and French civil law, general German lien law, and solutions to practical questions. Essentially, Bismarck was extremely persuasive, a quick thinker, and articulate. The examiners unanimously assessed his knowledge as very good [7, p. 14].

Bismarck studied the works of Hegel, Kant, Spinoza, David Friedrich Strauss, and Feuerbach and read English literature to educate himself. The tests that Bismarck

endured demonstrate that, intellectually, he was by far superior to all the landed gentry around him. He also participated in the local government and was a district councilor, a deputy landlord, and a member of the Landtag of Pomerania. He expanded his knowledge by traveling to England, France, Italy, and Switzerland³. Further evidence of Bismarck's educational credentials would seem superfluous to us.

In the second direction, to prove his loyalty to the throne and his ability to defend it, Bismarck proved himself to the full in the revolutionary days of March 1848. Moreover, he was tremendously assertive and aggressive that he even scared King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, who suggested using Bismarck only when the cannons begin to talk. This mishap has been exhaustively reconstructed by historians, which can be dismissed. The political-legal basis of Bismarck's ideological commitment to the monarchy was substantiated in his speech in the United Prussian Landtag in June 1847. [6, c. 6–8].

Seven years earlier, Frederick William III, who had promised a constitution for his people, had died. His son, Frederick William IV, who had just ascended the throne, issued a patent (decree) on February 3, 1847, rejecting his father's promises and claimed he would never let a piece of paper (the constitution) stand between him and his people. This caused general disappointment and indignation [8, pp. 99–105]. Having witness it, F. Engels, wrote, the barren Don Quixote of the Sans Souci, after much agony, was allowed to unburden himself with a constitution, which, in his mind, was supposed to ensure the lasting victory of absolutist-bureaucratic reaction. However, the bourgeoisie in Prussia had already gained enough strength to turn this constitution into a weapon against the king. The question as to who should prevail in Prussia, an alliance of the nobility, the bureaucrats headed by the king or the bourgeoisie, was constructed so that it would inevitably be resolved in favor of one or the other. There was still room for agreement between the two sides in the United Landtag, but that has now disappeared," Engels summed up [9, pp. 30–38].

Bismarck had thrown his arguments on the scales of the king, who had delegated extremely few powers to the United Landtag: the right to discuss bills, but not pass them, and to meet the representatives of the Prussian provinces once every four years in Berlin to discuss finances for government projects. "Half of the assembly (deputies)," said Bismarck, "may not like the King's statement, but that is the fate of any declaration." Thus, the question pertaining to who has the right to provide an authentic interpretation of what is said persists.

³ Samsonov A. "Iron Chancellor Otto von Bismarck [Electronic resource] // Military Review. URL: <https://topwar.ru/72090-zheleznyy-kancler-otto-fon-bismark.html> (accessed on 12.07.2021).

“Only the king, and this is embedded in the legal consciousness of the Prussian people” [6, pp. 7–8]. “For the original Prussian popular opinion,” Bismarck continued, “the king’s word means more than this or that interpretation of the legal regulations. The king has made it clear that he does not wish to be constrained in his powers.” Petitions also removed the king out of the equation with a responsible attitude toward his duty. Bismarck therefore suggested that the king’s intention to hear appeals from the people’s representatives every four years should be taken with confidence.

The self-proclaimed politician was only 32 years old and had already managed to establish himself successfully from various angles. However, Germany was under a revolution. The country needed a leader with an iron will. Although Bismarck was admired by the Prussian political elite, granting him consent on the basis of his career was difficult for King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. In Leo Tolstoy’s story “Father Sergius”, the protagonist, Prince Kasatsky, “saw that those circles in which he was accepted were lower circles, and that there were higher circles, and that in these high court circles, though he was accepted, he was a stranger; he was courteously treated, but all treatment showed thahe was like an alien among those people. And Kasatsky wanted to be his own man there” [10]. Bismarck found himself in a similar situation.

This led him to launch the third option, to reach out to people who could provide protection before the king. This could be the Gerlach brothers (Gebrüder von Gerlach). The four brothers were recognized in Prussia in the mid-19th century. During their student days, they were well regarded in table parties and among artists and scientists. Their father was the Oberbürgermeister of Berlin. Of the four brothers, we take particular interest in two of them, Ernst Ludwig (1795–1877) and his older brother Leopold (1790–1861). Ernst Ludwig was intellectually regarded as the most outstanding personality among them. In 1835, he was deputy chief justice at the higher provincial court in Frankfurt/Oder. Seven years later, he was appointed privy councilor. Eventually, he became a member of the Council of State and the legislative commission under Friedrich Carl von Savigny. Bismarck was already the president of the Magdeburg High Court of Appeal when he initiated a lively correspondence with Ludwig.

His older brother, Leopold, was an absolute military man, an infantry general, and a conservative politician. He participated in the wars against Napoleon and in the War of Independence in Germany. After the Peace of Tilsit, he studied law in Göttingen and Heidelberg. In 1812, he was appointed legal secretary to the government of Potsdam. In October 1815 he, with the rank of captain, was transferred to the Prussian general staff. In March 1821, he was a major in the General Staff of the III Army Corps. In 1826, he was

appointed Adjutant to the Prince Wilhelm of Prussia (later the emperor of Germany) and was thus closely associated with the crown prince of Prussia (the future King Friedrich Wilhelm IV), who shared the same Pietist and conservative views. In 1849, he was promoted to lieutenant general and appointed adjutant general to King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. Ludwig and Leopold later actively participated in the creation of the Conservative Party [10]. Essentially, the brothers were representatives of the highest aristocratic elite in Prussia. Interestingly, their identical ideological and religious views brought Bismarck and the brother together.

Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach most consistently developed the idea of the state’s Christian basis. He defined it as “the kingdom of God’s law on earth”. In doing so, Gerlach used the divine beginning in the state against the social contract idea and against the purely “power approach” of L. Gallagher, as the state is more than “the sin product, created not only to appease the flesh so that men do not destroy each other, it is from the very beginning, in its essence, a sacred creation of God.”

The Gerlach brothers’ influence on the king introduced Otto von Bismarck, whom the elder brother Leopold regarded as his “creature”, into “big politics”. However, when Bismarck’s true aims and methods were revealed, the brothers realized that they had granted power to their opponent. In the late 60s, Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach became an open enemy of Bismarck. In 1874, the Reich Chancellor dismissed his former patron from the Prussian supreme court.

Indicating how far Bismarck projected his future when contemplating how the Gerlachs might contribute to his career is challenging. Nevertheless, he had chosen the right goal, albeit difficult to achieve. The right to speak to Ludwig von Gerlach, who had passed at the age of 50 and held the high office of president of the Court of Arbitration, had to be earned. However, Bismarck was still a very young man, with only few achievements. Nonetheless, time became in favor of Bismarck in that the “spring of Europe” was nearing. The Prussian ruling circles sensed the subterranean rumble of the coming revolutionary eruption. At the end of 1846, the Prussian Minister of Justice issued a directive ordering proposal to reform the traditional system of patrimonial justice in which the landed gentry themselves adjudicated by serving as judges and juries.

Against this background, Bismarck wrote a letter to Ludwig Gerlach on February 24, 1847, presenting his version of the reform of the estates’ courts. Among other things, he proposed to eradicate the hereditary judges. “Of course, it would be good to have judges who do not depend on salaries, or who do not demand salaries at all, but in today’s life this is no longer possible. Considering that the patrimonial court is a living part of our life, it is still desirable to give it the status of a royal court” [7, p. 35].

Bismarck's proposal was to establish district patrimonial courts with a president and at least two judges and to have them reside in the villages permanently. On March 8, he had "a long talk of a few hours with Ludwig von Gerlach, who delighted him with his talents" [1, p. 40].

On March 26, 1847, Bismarck sent Ludwig von Gerlach his own plan for reforming the estate justice, proposing to replace individual landlord courts with circuit courts, so that landowners would elect a circuit judge identical to how provincial assemblies elect a Landrat or their representative [7, p. 34]. Gerlach wrote in the margin: "Eventually feasible, depending on the degree of unanimity, for now unilateral. Most estate judges and most influential defenders of patrimonial justice will perceive the plan as a proposal to abolish the existing system" [1, s 41]. Nevertheless, Bismarck proved himself in the eyes of the Gerlachs to be a productive thinker and politician, capable of taking responsibility for state tasks in a crucial moment. This responsible moment came in the early 1860s, which related to the constitutional conflict in Prussia.

Albrecht von Rohn as a happy accident. The constitutional conflict has been exhaustively described by historians as well as lawyers. The former attributed the event to an apathetic speech by Bismarck, who declared that the great events of the time were not decided by votes in parliament, but by "iron and blood." Jurists highlighted the case of the "gap in the law" (the constitution). The Prussian constitution did not specify a solution for the crisis if the three subjects of the constitutional process (the Chamber of Deputies, the House of Lords, and the King) did not agree to approve the budget. Thus, we aim to demonstrate the gravity of the constitutional-legal and political crisis that developed in Prussia and brought the Prussian state close to the brink of civil war, but which brought Bismarck to the crest of the political wave.

The 1848–1849 revolution succeeded in dividing the Prussian society as well as the liberal bourgeoisie. The clash between the military and civilian sections of the population did not lead to the political dominance of the military sector. The scales of the civilian and military subjects had been equalized. Fearful of a coup d'état, King Friedrich Wilhelm IV had promised the "dear Berliners" to abolish the constitution, which the Prussians obtained 1850. He thereby prevented the Prussian generals from obstructing the uprising, for which they were prepared. The king, who came to power in 1847, was suffering from a mental illness that forced him to abdicate in 1857. The illness is thought to have been a disincentive to be politically decisive. This is a prime example of how illness has interfered with and changed the course of Germany's history.

In the early 1860s, Prussian military circles raised the question of reforming the army, which involved

doubling its size. The reform was supported by the new, King William I, but rejected in the Prussian Landtag by most of the liberal parties. Historians failed to unveil a true answer regarding why the military elite placed the issue before the Landtag during that time. Thus, this may have been the framing of a plan for Prussia to take on the role of unifying Germany. The reform led to a political confrontation that gave rise to a new, no less profound crisis

However, he was also affected by external forces, such as the role and importance of the army in Prussia and the new king's caution (he had witnessed the events of 1848) and the will and determination of O. von Bismarck. In addition, the second half of the 19th century was a tense period for Germany [12]. This circumstance may be the result of an over-concentration of the nation's subconscious efforts to create a new centralized state. Although it cannot be ascertained whether tension directly contributed to the exacerbation of the crisis, its indirect influence can be considered possible.

Constitutional and legal reality dictated to the Prussian ruling elite the need to find a compromise in its relations with the Parliament. However, the generals firmly refused any agreement and, dissolving Parliament, were preparing to establish military rule. The alarming tension in the situation is vividly conveyed in letters of Prussian Minister of War Albrecht von Rohn to Bismarck; Rohn believed that only Bismarck could rectify the situation [7, pp. 229–257]. However, the cautious Wilhelm I, who came to the throne in 1861, was apprehensive of handing over power to him. He was restrained by his predecessor's word of honor to respect the opinion of the inhabitants of the capital.

The clash between the war helmets and the bourgeois Parliament had, as far as we are concerned, profound reasons. Prussia's army was more than a military institution. As the French collaborator Benoit-Meschen writes, the history of Germany was embodied in the history of its army. The German army was a kind of "mythical body," a kind of projection of the nation's spirit. The Prussian army, as she believed it, had "made the state" recall its humiliation in 1848 and demanded its increased strength [13, p. 133]. King William also remembered the historical events of 1848. He could not break the oath of his crowned predecessor given to the Berliners. This reveals that Prussian militarists knew how to keep their word.

Bismarck met Lieutenant Albrecht von Rohn, a brilliant military officer and graduate of the prestigious (Prussian) Military Academy, in the summer of 1834. Lieutenant von Rohn was surveying the fields and forests of Pomerania. He asked his nephew Moritz von Blankenburg (who incidentally later introduced Bismarck to his future wife) to help him and engage a friend. Moritz brought his best friend,

19-year-old Otto von Bismarck. Young Bismarck obviously made an impression on the officer, who was 12 years older. As expected in Junker Prussia, family ties and “service” in the army brought them together.

The Minister of the Interior, Manteifel, and a group of extremists among Prussian high officials hoped that the “bad heads” of the revolutionaries would give them an excuse for restoring an absolute monarchy, annulling the constitution, stifling electoral activity, and creating a military dictatorship. However, this turn of events was not desired by either the king or the Minister of War A. von Rohn. In April 1862, under pressure from von Rohn (a friend of Wilhelm I), the king decided to summon Bismarck from St. Petersburg to Berlin for consultations, but he made no decision on the personnel issue. By the summer of 1862, the public nervousness had peaked, compelling the king to accede to the war minister’s urgent requests and appoint Bismarck as minister-president. Thus, without A. von Rohn, nothing would have happened in Prussia, and Bismarck would not have acquired his political stature. Thanks to Rohn, Bismarck was able to achieve his goal. Previously, he had depended on others, now everything depended on him. Nevertheless, the 47-year-old politician had already been fully prepared for his new role by the preceding course of events.

The following conclusions can be drawn from our research. The proposed article, despite its historical and legal nature, is of direct relevance to the present day. It answers two basic questions. First, what is the role of individuals in history. Second, how are these individuals shaped. This is not simply a question of how political careers are built, but the careers of prominent individuals who form the course of history. However, the role of even the greatest historical figures appears more modest. A statesman can succeed only to the extent that his plans correspond to the general mood of his time, that is, the ideas that occupy the minds of his fellow citizens [14, p. 166]. However, this mood must be caught.

Engels argued that if Bonaparte had been killed at the battle of Toulon, someone else would have taken his place. For a man is always found as soon as the need⁴. However, how would the situation in Germany in the second half of the 19th century have developed in Bismarck’s absence? The development of the Universe after the Big Bang, according to scientists, is most striking in how sensitive the laws of nature are to changes. For instance, the speed of light is 300,000 km/s, but what would be different if it were 299,000 km/s? If we imagine the slightest change in any of these quantities, we postulate a universe where nothing of the sort can occur [15, pp. 218–219]. Let

us project the Darwinian position on society. What could have happened in Germany if Bismarck had not appeared on the political stage? Would the unification have transpired as acknowledged by history? Charles Darwin, the creator of natural selection theory, regarded all existing things as a result of the action of the laws predetermined (by Mother Nature). Thus, can the unification of Germany be attributed to their influence while the details (unification options) are left to chance [15, p. 87]?

Given the complex interaction between the private (the individual) and the whole (society) is complex, a single article cannot disclose it completely. Such circumstance is why we have chosen the main reference points (factors) to be able to draw a picture of Bismarck’s political development.

Ultimately, the idea that an outstanding leader must come from wealth is rejected. Bismarck could not boast of wealth, but he had every reason to be proud of his ancestors, who had served the country and the king; such a background is a necessary condition for the ascent to power. The memory of his ancestors dictated the direction of his life. Meanwhile, his maternal upbringing set him a specific goal, to become the first official in the state.

Despite that biographers only provided a superficial picture of his schooling and college years, emphasizing his less than diligent attitude toward education, Germany became a centralized power and heights in science and technology under Bismarck. Fundamentally, his extensive knowledge in many branches, not only in history and politics but also in economics, must be recognized.

Politics entails a continuous clash of different interests. To avoid getting lost in their intricacies, firm basis for the movement is crucial. Bismarck stated that he did not belong to any party, but always served the state and the king as the divine embodiment of the state. Equal distance from the parties untied his hands for effective representation of the state’s interests. When Bismarck realized the importance of separating the “spheres of influence” of the state and church and unleashed the “Kulturkampf”, he immediately turned into an opponent of his former protégés, the Gerlach brothers, who allowed him into the Olympus of power. Conclusively, fame remains with the person who is altruistic and considers the fate of everyone else, excluding himself.

The best qualities of politicians are tested during a crisis. Subsequently, the 1848 revolution tremendously challenged Bismarck’s willingness to defend the throne and the monarchical state. However, the constitutional crisis of the early 1860s became extremely violent that he intended to sign a decree of abdication. This period demanded a man with a strong will, as General A. von Rohn indicated. Ultimately, this man was Count O. von Bismarck, who surpassed the Darwinian natural selection and invalidated the mutations necessary for politics.

⁴ Marx K. and Engels F. Letter to Starkenburg, Jan. 25, 1894. Correspondence 1846–1895. London: M. Lawrence, Ltd., 1934. P. 518. URL: https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1894/letters/94_01_25.htm (accessed on 25.07.2021).

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