

Austria's influence in Germany was constant for some centuries during the existence of the Holy Roman Empire and its leadership which it had maintained in the newly founded German Confederation in 1815. Transformation had come about in the 1860s when would Prussia through an aggressive policy increase the hegemonic proportions by abolishing the Austrian-led Confederation and Berlin would come to realize their ambitions for expansion and annexing all of the German states. The Austro-Prussian crisis of 1866 arose from the disputed fate of the Elbe Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein.

The first chapter consists of the German Confederation evolution founded in 1815 upon the ruins of the old Holy Roman Empire. In the second consequential chapter main attention was paid to economic development in Germany and its unification in the Customs Union. The third chapter describes the clashes between Prussia and Austria in the beginning of the 1860s. The fourth chapter comprised a short history of the Elbe Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein and a war in the year 1864. The most important chapter is the last which comprised the period of 1865-1866 and reaction of public opinion to these events.

The basis of this work is a trend of the Austro-Prussian contentions in the German Confederation on the eve of war in 1866 and its acceptance in Austria's press and in the memoirs. The main aim of this analysis was the attempt to find out if the increasing tension between Vienna and Berlin came to light in the newspapers or not. And how this information was interpreted in the press.