

## **Dominik Hünninger: Power, Economics and the Seasons. Local Differences in the Perception of Cattle Plagues in 18th Century Schleswig and Holstein**

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### **1. Introduction**

“Diseases are ideas”<sup>1</sup> - this seemingly controversial phrase by Jacalyn Duffin will guide my presentation today. This is not to say that diseases do not take biological as well as historical reality. They most definitely do, but their biological „reality“ is embellished and interpreted by culture. Hence, the cultural and social factors influencing diagnoses, definitions and containment strategies are the main focus of my paper.<sup>2</sup>

In particular, I will focus on how historical containment policies concerning epidemics and epizootics were closely intertwined with questions of power, co-operation and conflicts. One always had to consider and interpret different interests in order to find appropriate and feasible containment policies. Additionally all endeavours to regulate the usually very severe consequences of epidemics could be contested by different historical actors. In this respect, current research on the contested nature of laws and ordinances in Early Modern Europe established the notion of state building processes from below through interaction.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, knowledge and experience were locally specific and the attempts of authorities to establish norms could be understood and implemented in very idiosyncratic ways.<sup>4</sup> Hence, implementation processes almost always triggered conflicts and misunderstandings. At the same time, authorities as well as subjects were interested in compromise and adjustments. Here, Stefan Brakensiek’s work is especially relevant for the interpretation of the events during a cattle plague outbreak in mid-18<sup>th</sup>-century Schleswig and Holstein: in particular his the-

<sup>1</sup> Duffin, *Lovers* (2005), p. 3. Comp. also e.g.: Rousseau, *Introduction* (2003) and Rosenberg, *Disease* (2003). See also Cooter, *Framing* (2004), Fissel, *Meaning* (2004) as well as Huisman and Warner, *Medical Histories* (2004) for the current state of the cultural and social history of medicine.

<sup>2</sup> This paper presents excerpts of some chapters of Hünninger, *Viehseuche* (2011).

<sup>3</sup> Meumann and Pröve, *Faszination* (2004), p. 45: “dynamisch-kommunikativer Prozess der Herrschaftsausübung”, Braddick, *State Formation* (2005) for Early Modern England and Hohenstein, *Introduction* (2009) for a survey of this literature. See also Hünninger, *Policing Epizootics* (2010) for a long-term perspective on cattle plague ordinances in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>4</sup> Ulbricht, *Einleitung* (2004), p. 41 for similar findings regarding Early Modern plague control.

sis that power was directed at acceptance and close cooperation between territorial and communal authorities was necessary and widespread.<sup>5</sup>

The paper is made up of three parts. The first will introduce you the economics and political structure of the region. The second will narrate the main events during one of the most severe outbreaks of cattle plague in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> In this part I will already highlight a few important points of early modern epizootics control that I will later analyze in more detail in part three. This last and main part of the paper constitutes a study of the communication of authorities and local actors concerning a possible export ban of animals.

## **2. Landscape, economics and administration in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Schleswig and Holstein**

Let me begin by first introducing the region about which I will be speaking today. I will look at the southern part of the "Cimbrian peninsula", the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein in today's Northern Germany and Southern Denmark.

This region is especially apt for a history of cattle plague in early modern Europe as husbandry and cattle trade played an important role in the local as well the transregional economy.<sup>7</sup> Certain areas used two thirds of their agrarian zones as meadows for transhumance.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the transregional ox trade was one of the most important economic endeavours not only for local farmers but also an important site of revenue for the authorities.

Each year, between 10 and 50 thousand oxen moved south on the so called ox roads.<sup>9</sup> This network of roads was spread from Viborg to Hamburg passing through Danish Jutland and the moraine of Schleswig and Holstein.<sup>10</sup> The sandy ground of the moraine was ideally suited for transport whereas the lush meadows of the polder and marsh lands on the coast next to the moraine offered perfect grazing grounds for cattle. Bred and raised on the Danish manors for about four or five years, these animals were moved south in March and April in several

<sup>5</sup> Brakensiek, Amtsträger (2005), p. 50: „akzeptanzorientierte Herrschaft“. For Schleswig-Holstein see: Rheinheimer, Dorfordnungen (1999).

<sup>6</sup> This disease has become synonymous with rinderpest, but because we do not know exactly what the disease was and retrospective diagnoses are historically suspect, this paper sticks to the contemporary language that described these epizootics as "horned cattle plague" (Hornvieh-Seuche). For the problems regarding retrospective diagnoses see: Wilkinson, Rinderpest (1984).

<sup>7</sup> Wiese and Bölts, Rinderhandel (1966), Gijsbers, Kapitale Ossen (1999) or Gijsbers and Koolmees, Food (2001).

<sup>8</sup> Riis, Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte (2009), Porskrog Rasmussen, Rentegods (2003), Prange, Anfänge (1971), Lange, Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins (2003).

<sup>9</sup> The number of exported oxen reached its peak around 1650 and was decreasing afterwards. Dairy farming on the other hand increased during the same period. See Arnim, Krisen (1957), p. 69 and p. 88ff.

<sup>10</sup> Hill and Zich, Von Wegen (2002) and Hill, Ochsenweg (2004).

drifts of about 40 to 50 animals each. On their way to the markets in Husum, Itzehoe and Hamburg, the cattle had to be fattened up again and again on the marsh meadows which were rented out to the cattle dealers by local farmers. Both made fine profits as oxen which were bought in Northern Jutland for about 30 or 40 Taler could be sold in Hamburg for at least twice as much.<sup>11</sup>

But not only the western parts of Schleswig and Holstein profited immensely from cattle, eastern Holstein specialised in dairy farming on large manorial estates. The production of cheese and butter became even more profitable during the 18th century when meat prices dropped. In addition to these large scale farming enterprises, every smallholder also owned at least one or two heads of cattle producing milk for consumption and manure for fertilizing the soil.<sup>12</sup>

The variety in agricultural practices was matched by a conglomerate of different administrative and political circumstances often determined by the economic conditions of the regions. Basically three large administrative districts existed in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: the royal districts belonging to the Danish crown, the ducal parts making up the humble relics of the once much larger duchy of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorf and the jointly governed districts.<sup>13</sup>

The German chancery in Copenhagen was the supreme authority for the royal districts and was supported by the "Rentekammer" (exchequer) in financial matters. The daily administrative work was conducted by the "Obergericht Gottorf" for the duchy of Schleswig and the "Regierungskanzlei Glückstadt" for royal Holstein. Both authorities had to report to the royal governor based in Itzehoe. Every communication with the central offices in Copenhagen had to be conducted via these administrative bodies. In ducal Holstein the „Regierungsconseil“ and the ducal exchequer controlled and managed the administrative affairs from Kiel.

Additionally, the regions did not only differ concerning their dominion but were marked by a varied legal and economic structure. Especially, the rural subjects had different legal status, social hierarchies and political influence. Oversimplifying, one can divide the rural inhabitants of the duchies in three different groups: In eastern Holstein most people were serfs and subjects of the large manors. The manors themselves were directly governed by the central administration. The farmers on the central moraine were personally free and could participate to

<sup>11</sup> Riis, *Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte* (2009), p. 359. See: Arnim, *Krisen* (1957), p. 112 for an overview on average prices in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. See also: Wiese and Böls, *Rinderhandel* (1966), p. 85 who highlight that the prices of oxen could vary considerably.

<sup>12</sup> Riis, *Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte* (2009), p. 350f.

<sup>13</sup> Krüger, *Schleswig-Holstein* (1983), Klose and Degn, *Herzogtümer* (1960) and Lange, *Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins* (2003).

an extent in legal and administrative matters.<sup>14</sup> The wealthy farmers on the coast of the North Sea - organized in communities - did have the greatest autonomy and most political independence.<sup>15</sup>

Concerning physical geography geest and marsh are two completely different landscapes.<sup>16</sup> Hence, regarding settlement geography these types of landscapes are characterized by three dissimilar styles of farm and village arrangements as well as agricultural conditions: wealthy single hamlets and farms are predominant in the fertile marshes. Whereas the less affluent small farms on the geest shared property and rights to certain commons. Of course, in both settlement forms of further social stratification can be found and played an important part especially in times of crisis.<sup>17</sup>

This is the background to the story of the cattle plague outbreak and the corresponding containment policies in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **3. The cattle plague outbreak 1744 to 1752**

When news of dying cattle reached the alderman of Tønder in the northern part of the duchy of Schleswig at the very end of the year 1744, he immediately ordered their culling and burial as well as the shutting off of the infected villages. The alderman also reported his actions to the central administration - the Obergericht Gottorf on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1744. In general, the Obergericht was very content with the alderman's containment policies but stressed that animals may only be culled in cases of highest emergency. Culling was to be abandoned entirely when more than two or three stables had been infected. In this case separation of sick and healthy animals was ordered.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, the Obergericht reported the case to the German Chancery in Copenhagen and asked for further guidance. The highest authorities to the duchies respected the measures of both the alderman and the Obergericht but were reluctant to issue a general decree concerning the disease as its epidemic nature was not yet certain. Additionally, the chancery claimed that „conflicting circumstances often require a fast change in policies and decrees.“<sup>19</sup> Hence,

<sup>14</sup> Ast-Reimers, Landgemeinde (1965).

<sup>15</sup> Jessen-Klingenberg, Eiderstedt (1967), Krüger, Verfassung (1984), Kuschert, Landgemeinde (1988) and Kuschert, Nordfriesland (2007).

<sup>16</sup> See also: Lorenzen-Schmidt, Aspekte (2004).

<sup>17</sup> Jakubowski-Tiessen, Leben (2005), Knottnerus, Economy (1992) and Knottnerus, Yeomen (2004).

<sup>18</sup> LAS Abt. 65.2, Nr. 917 [3a].

<sup>19</sup> LAS Abt. 13A, Nr. 335 [129] and LAS Abt. 65.2, Nr. 917 [2]: „concurrerende Umstände oftmals eine schläunige Veränderung in den gemachten Anordnungen erfordern können.“

further actions were entirely left to the local authorities who just had to report on every step and development.

During January 1745 further accounts of sick animals reached the authorities from Tønder county,<sup>20</sup> and also from the neighbouring county Flensburg<sup>21</sup> and district Bredstedt<sup>22</sup> - both south of Tønder county. Now, the authorities could no longer leave containment policies to the local administration but had to issue a decree for the entire duchy. This decree was published on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1745.<sup>23</sup> The complete cancellation of cattle markets was just one of 20 paragraphs of the first general ordinance of 1745. However, the cattle trade was not banned entirely but could continue with all the necessary precautions, such as health certificates and avoiding roads that ran through infected places. Additionally, the ordinance regulated quarantine and a special treatment of all animal products.

Meanwhile the epizootic spread over further parts of south-eastern and south-western Schleswig<sup>24</sup> and also the eastern parts of the Duchy of Holstein.<sup>25</sup> Obviously, the decree could not stop the further spread of the disease. Reports on outbreaks in the already mentioned districts but also in neighbouring regions reached the authorities during March. At the end of March 1745 most parts of northern and western Schleswig as well as the Baltic coast of Holstein were infected by the cattle plague.

All infected villages and towns had to be shut off as a preventive measure and direct communication with affected inhabitants was forbidden severely. Nonetheless the epidemic continued to play havoc among the cattle. In April, and especially in May, reports on the local developments became more and more dramatic.<sup>26</sup> In an account to the royal government written by the Copenhagen exchequer on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1745 the devastating spread of the cattle plague is only too apparent: In Tønder county, where the first incidences of the disease broke out, the cattle was severely ill both on the meadows of the marshes as well as on the geest. The plague was rather getting more severe and did not abate.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>20</sup> LAS Abt. 65.2, Nr. 917 [8 and 9].

<sup>21</sup> LAS Abt. 65.2, Nr. 917 [9].

<sup>22</sup> LAS Abt. 65.2, Nr. 917 [10].

<sup>23</sup> LB Kiel, Verordnungssammlung, decree of 5th February 1745.

<sup>24</sup> The manor Bienebek on the river Schlei was infected since 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1745 and the villages of Warmhörn and Kating on the Eiderstedt peninsula had reported disease outbreaks on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> February 1745 respectively (see LAS Abt. 65.2, Nr. 917 [17] and KANF A2 Ksp. Poppenbüll 110 [5]).

<sup>25</sup> The coastal town of Neustadt on the Baltic sea was infected since 12<sup>th</sup> February 1745 (see LAS Abt. 107, Nr. 283 [6.2]).

<sup>26</sup> LAS Abt. 66, Nr. 7849.1 [2].

<sup>27</sup> „daß die Erkrankung des Horn-Viehes auf der Weyde in den Marsch-Districten nicht nach-liebe sondern sich zimlich vermehre, auf der Geest auch die Seuche mehr zu, als abnehme“ (see: LAS Abt. 66, Nr. 7849.1 [2] also for the quotations that follow.)

The county Apenrade reported that the disease was still continuing in the already mentioned infected villages.<sup>28</sup> The county Lügumkloster had to report the same and in the county Husum „even cattle that grazed on the common meadows in separated drifts had been infected.“<sup>29</sup> Not surprisingly, the situation seemed similar elsewhere and people tried to explain what they had to record: Farmers on the Eiderstedt peninsula were not very concerned that the disease would not abate especially on the lush meadows, which affected their economics severely. They also thought the disease must have been already present in the animals earlier.<sup>30</sup>

Almost every district had been affected and only the county Sonderborg remained almost plague free. Only one case had been reported and the letter evokes a quick prayer to the Almighty<sup>31</sup> to save the county from further harm.

Luckily, in the duchy of Holstein authorities could also boast of an almost plague free territory at the end of May 1745. Alas, one month later, a second report from 30th of June 1745 had to record disease outbreaks in the counties Rendsburg, Steinburg as well as in Southern Dithmarsia.<sup>32</sup>

Facing an almost ubiquitous epizootic, the authorities were now forced to cancel certain measures and allowed several quarantined districts to abandon the shutting off of villages. This of course was only achieved after a large number of supplications had convinced the authorities that this measure was no longer helpful and effective.<sup>33</sup>

The death of thousand of animals also caused a widespread debate about additional measures, mainly concerned with the regeneration of livestock numbers after the epizootic. Hence, an ordinance banning the sale of breeding cattle was issued in April 1745.<sup>34</sup> This debate will be the subject of the second part of my paper.

The Copenhagen exchequer had to review the incoming reports on local developments again at the beginning of July 1745. Regardless of the fact, that the earlier report was so very devastating, this time the picture was even drearier. In the counties of Tønder, Apenrade, Lügumkloster, Husum, Gottorf, Flensburg and Schwabstedt as well as Eiderstedt peninsula

<sup>28</sup> „die Vieh-Seuche in denen vorhin inficirten Dörfern noch immer weiter um sich greife.“

<sup>29</sup> „so gar bey dem Vieh, welches auf den gemeinen Weyden, in separirten Driften, gräBete“

<sup>30</sup> „daß auch da selbst ein bisher freygewesener Ort [...] angegriffen und bey solchen critischen Zeiten dieses noch das übelste sey, daß auch auf dem Marsch-Grase die Krankheit sich nicht legen wolle; wiewohl die Haus-Wirte in den Gedanken stunden, daß die Seuche schon vor dem Ausschlagen, bey dem Vieh müße verborgen gewesen seyn.“

<sup>31</sup> „allem Ansehen nach, [...] wohl dabey beruhen würde, weil sonst im gantzen Amte bis dato, dem allerhöchsten sey dank, nicht das mindeste von einer ansteckenden Krankheit oder Vieh-Seuche verspüret worden.“

<sup>32</sup> LAS Abt. 13A, Nr. 335 [64]

<sup>33</sup> „von keinem weiteren effect“ LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 705 [Jun 54, Jun 63, 67, 68 and 70].

<sup>34</sup> Vgl. LB Kiel, Verordnungsammlung, decree from 17th April 1745. The decree for the commonly governed districts was issued on 30th April 1745.

and Bredstedt, the epizootic „spread widely and increased weekly“<sup>35</sup> Only the islands of Sylt and Föhr were lucky as they did not have to suffer further infections since June. Nowhere else hope towards an end to the disease could be found.<sup>36</sup> The same was true for the royal parts of the duchy of Holstein. Although, the disease was not as devastating as in Schleswig, the counties of Rendsburg reported four infected villages, Steinburg two, and Southern Dithmarsia four. Only the earldom of Rantzau was plague free.

In general, the disease lasted in most places until the end of 1745. Some districts could report fewer infections already earlier but this was almost always connected to a report of total loss of livestock. Other areas still had to report outbreaks well into the following year.

The devastating effects of the epizootic and the containment policies can only too clearly be fathomed in the large number of supplications that reached the authorities in late 1745 and early 1746.

The complaints were manifold: the scarcity of animal products, the loss of manure and the general difficulties in pursuing everyday agricultural as well as artisan work during quarantine. A supplication from Eiderstedt describes this very drastically. On 13<sup>th</sup> January 1746, the farmers listed a long catalogue of complaints. They ended their lament by simply stating that further animal and resource loss would only end in the destruction of their entire agricultural system.<sup>37</sup> Facing such drastic descriptions and being aware of the manifold losses, the Danish government was forced to find ways of helping their subjects to their feet. Hence, for five years (1747 to 1751), husbandmen had only to pay a smaller part of their yearly taxes.<sup>38</sup> Apparently, livestock numbers had again increased in 1752; therefore the trade ban of 17<sup>th</sup> April 1745 could be lifted.<sup>39</sup> Free trade was permitted to further commerce and economic thrive. However, health certificates were still prescribed and had been in use still.

Alas, the people's and authorities' joy in seeing cattle regenerate and the disease recede, did not last for very long. Already in 1754 another trade ban was issued, when new reports on disease outbreaks reached the authorities from several districts. Therefore, a general decree was published, in order to "manage this devastating plague with God's grace."<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup> „leider! das Viehsterben immer und wöchentlich zunehme“, see LAS Abt. 66, Nr. 7849.1 [1] also for the following quotes).

<sup>36</sup> „bis dato keine Hoffnung zur Nachlaßung der Vieh-Seuche vorhanden.“

<sup>37</sup> „unser gantzes Systema zerrüttet werden müsse.“ KANF A2 Landschaft, Nr. 314 [56].

<sup>38</sup> Vgl. LB Kiel, Verordnungssammlung.

<sup>39</sup> LB Kiel, Verordnungssammlung, decree of 6th May 1752.

<sup>40</sup> „damit dieser Land-verderblichen Plage, unter göttlichem Beystand, in hiesigen Unseren Landen möglichster massen gesteuert werden möge.“ Schleswig-Holsteinische Anzeigen, decree of 9th December 1754.

Small local outbreaks were recorded in the years between 1754 and 1755 and between 1762 and 1764, without having the same impact as the severe epizootic of 1745/46. This severity was only reached again in an outbreak in 1775 to 1779.<sup>41</sup>

#### **4. The debate on a trade ban as an example of local difference in the perception of diseases and containment policies**

In this last part of my paper, I am going to explain problems of ordinance implementation as well as power and communication in general by using the debate on a trade ban that kept authorities and local actors busy for most of the year 1745 since March.

In addition, to the general interim character of ordinances, specific adjustments of regulations were necessary due to a variety of local circumstances and fast changing events on the ground. In general early modern disease containment could be viewed as a complicated interactive process of continuous crisis management.

A possible export ban on cattle and animal products<sup>42</sup> triggered an interesting discussion between both Regierungskanzleien in Glückstadt and Kiel as well as the Obergericht Gottorf and the territorial authorities as well as the local districts, regions and towns.

The discussion was sparked by separate drafts of ordinances in the different parts of Holstein.<sup>43</sup> The governor of Schleswig and Holstein did not want a general export ban and was very conscious of the fact that infringements on the trade could have severe consequences.<sup>44</sup> Hence, he asked every district and town to send in reports in order to see, „if and how far such a ban would be agreeable with the public.“<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, the authorities tried to find out if a general ban was necessary, or if the ban should only be restricted to breeding cattle. Apparently, one expected different local view-points and interests concerning this question. The Regierungskanzlei, of course, stressed its interest in the „public good“ and asked the aldermen of Steinburg, Rendsburg, Segeberg and Süderdithmarschen as well as the city magistrates of Glückstadt, Krempe, Itzehoe, Wilster, Rendsburg, Segeberg, Lütjenburg, Oldesloe

<sup>41</sup> The agrarian reforms of the later 18th century seemed to have been influenced by the devastating consequences of the cattle plague, as well. This is apparent in the 1746 essay by Graf Adam Gottlob von Moltke: „Unmassgebliche Gedanken und Plan, nach welchen ich allerunterthänigst wünsche, dass Ew. K. M. Dero Reiche und Lander regieren und Dero Unterthanen zeitliches und ewiges Wohl zu befördern beständig angewandt sein mögen.“ See: Hille, Moltkes Plan (1873-74). See also: Prange, Anfänge (1971), p. 82f., Cord, Strukturwandel (1997), p. 44 and Ast-Reimers, Landgemeinde (1965), p. 162-181.

<sup>42</sup> For the debate on dairy products, especially butter, see: Hünninger, Konsumverzicht (2010).

<sup>43</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 706 [24b], LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [2-5].

<sup>44</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [6].

<sup>45</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [6]: „ob und in wie weit es dem publico verträglich seyn mögte, dergleichen inhibitiones emaniren zu laßen.“ It was general practice to seek local guidance and reports before issuing decrees in Early Modern Europe, see: Braken-siek, Akzeptanzorientierte Herrschaft (2009), p. 403.

und Heiligenhafen to send in their reports.<sup>46</sup> These reports not only highlight the general economic circumstances of each region and town but also the argumentative strategies toward the territorial authorities and the general relationship of the localities to the territorial powers. Additionally, these reports also reflect the local importance of, cattle trade, animal husbandry and the distribution of animal products. All reporting localities stressed these circumstances right at the beginning of their reports in order to establish their arguments concerning the trade ban.<sup>47</sup> Hence, these reports show how authorities as well as local actors tried to counter-balance two important issues: one was plague control and the other the promotion of economic stability and wealth. These two issues had to be negotiated between different parties time and time again.

Already the first report reaching the authorities on 29th March 1745 from the city of Oldesloe stressed this very blatantly. The magistrate argued that such a ban would be devastation for the town according to its geographical position as well as the general situation. A ban would be „as burdensome as the plague itself.“<sup>48</sup>

Altogether a slight minority of localities argued vehemently against an export ban. Their reasons overlap but also add additional information and concerns. The town magistrate of Rendsburg related the seasonal practices of the ox-trade and argued that now, in March, when more than 10.000 oxen from the manors and other parts of the duchies were sold to the Netherlands; a general ban would indeed be most devastating. Those who already fattened a large number of cattle would surely be ruined, when they had to sell their fattened cattle to the local butcher and would receive only a very low price.<sup>49</sup> Thus, Rendsburg wanted the ban restricted to breeding cattle.<sup>50</sup>

The same was true for the town of Wilster on the river Elbe. They argued that the epizootic had not reached the district and the export of cattle to Hamburg was not greater than usual. The inhabitants of Wilster and its surroundings primarily were cattle traders or leased their meadows to cattle traders, hence profited immensely from the transcontinental ox trade. An export ban for fattened animals would have been ruinous. On the other hand, the Wilster

<sup>46</sup> LAS 11, Nr. 708 [7].

<sup>47</sup> See also Dinges, *Pest und Politik* (2005), p. 292 for the perception of trade interests during plague outbreaks in Early Modern Europe.

<sup>48</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [20]: „ein dergleichen generales oder restringiertes Verboth diesem Orth, nach seiner Lage und Situation zum größten Nachtheil gereichen und eben so sehr drücken würde, als die Seuche selber thun könnte.“

<sup>49</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [10]: „durch ein generelles Verboht einen unerträglichen Schaden erleiden, ja wohl etliche ihren gänzlichen ruin dadurch finden.“

<sup>50</sup> This was also what town and district of Segeberg wanted. Although they were not particularly interested in the debate as animal husbandry and cattle trade were not a prominent part of their economics, they still stressed the importance of having a general ordinance for all parts of Holstein in order to manage the loss and gain equally. LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [12] and LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [14]. The town of Heiligenhafen argued similarly, comp. LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [22].

magistrate argued strongly for an export ban on breeding animals and mentioned rumours that healthy cattle was so scarce in some districts of the Duchy of Schleswig that it had almost become extinct in some stables or even whole villages. Therefore these districts could be supplied with healthy animals from Wilster once the epizootic had abated.<sup>51</sup> Here, future profits were already in view at a time, when the scale and damages of the epizootic could not yet be fathomed at all.

Finally, as the whole economy of southern Dithmarsia was based almost entirely on cattle trade, it is not a surprise, that the report from this district was the lengthiest and most elaborate of all. In twelve pages the district explained its objections to an export ban. Like in all other reports, the local economy and circumstances were explained and the main arguments were tax related. Interestingly, the district had asked "the most respected and grandest yeomen as well as intelligent householders"<sup>52</sup> to answer the following questions. First, should there be a ban at all? Second, if a ban was considered necessary, should it entail all animals or only breeding animals? And third, was there anything else that had to be considered? The reports from local yeomen were collected and a district assembly was called. On this assembly it became apparent that every parish and the district itself strongly opposed an export ban. The district explained this position in a long letter containing sixteen different issues very elaborately. At first, they stated, that an abundance of cattle only meant for export could be found in the district. These animals could not stay in the district as the resources for their upkeep - meadows and fodder could not be provided. Especially, brewers and distillers, but also other stock farmers had already sold their cattle but the buyers, especially from Hamburg, had not yet picked up this stock. Local consumers would not buy these animals and could not afford their special value. Additionally, export was considered the safest alternative for a not yet infected district in view of neighbouring disease outbreaks. The whole economy of Dithmarsia depended on trade and constituted the whole income of the district. Hence, it was their basis of wealth and accordingly the basis for their taxes. Here, a long lament on the district's enormous burdens concerning taxes and fees was inserted. Certainly in order to effectively support the arguments. A general ban would be especially disastrous for the owners of large farms as they were also most highly taxed. An export ban would only benefit town dwellers and, so they argued, why not grant the rural inhabitants a chance to sell their cattle

<sup>51</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [11].

<sup>52</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [18]: „vornehmsten und größten Kirchspiels Interessenten benehst ein und andern vernünftigen Hauswirthen.“

at a somewhat higher price in the current situation? Certainly, the authorities should be more interested in the well being of rural areas than in urban areas, should they not? The income from the cattle trade was also necessary to buy grain and the grain export ban of last summer had already been disastrous to some farmers. Some of them were not even able to pay their day labourers!

In addition to these fiscal and economical arguments, the district also tried to downplay the possible risks. One need not to worry about the possible export of young and breeding animals as no one would sell them on account of their own needs of restocking possible losses. Also butter was only consumed within the district and was not an export commodity. Besides, reasonable householders would take good care to hold back sufficient resources and not weaken themselves by looking for an ostensible gain, especially in these times.<sup>53</sup>

Finally, the number of inhabitants who do not make their living from the cattle trade was very low and "would it not be better if a small minority was suffering a little and not a whole country was burdened with calamity?"<sup>54</sup>

As could be seen here, the district used strong rhetoric and certainly effective fiscal arguments. This was indeed necessary, because at the end of their letter the district deputies had to admit that some points had caused discord and further suggestions had been made, that were not supported by all parishes. Some had suggested to buy-up large quantities of butter in order to build up reservoirs. But, this was considered too costly and logistically difficult by the deputies. Again, the argument that no one would sell anything that he would later need was mentioned.

The deputies closed their report hoping the king would consider all opinions collected here and not ask for further arguments against a ban. In summary the district was confident, that also the authorities considered a general ban as highly damaging and ruinous as well as contrary to the King's interest in the well-being of the country.<sup>55</sup>

This well-being of the country could of course be interpreted totally different, when being differently affected by the epizootic and the cattle economics. A small majority of localities thus argued for a general ban and their arguments basically used the same line of arguments only with a different outcome.

<sup>53</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [18]: „ein vernünftiger Hausmann dahin seine Sorge richtete, daß er hinlänglichen Beschlag und Victualien behielte und sich in diesen Stunden nicht so leicht durch einen anscheinenden Gewinn schwächte.“

<sup>54</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [18]: „als daß ein gantzes Land die Last des Elends empfände.“

<sup>55</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [18]: dass ein generelles Ausfuhrverbot „für das Land nicht allein höchstschädlich und ruinös“ sei, sondern auch „dem allerhöchsten Königl. Interesse welches mit dem Wohlstand des Landes ebenso genau verbunden, ebenso nachtheilig sey.“

The town of Itzehoe complained that only small numbers of livestock could be bought and prices had risen dramatically. Therefore, an export ban was necessary. The only exceptions that could be made was the permission for the neighbouring marsh districts to buy new breeding cattle from Itzehoe.<sup>56</sup> Again, personal interests trumped the public good - the exception was only demanded for the reporting locality.

The alderman of Pinneberg argued accordingly for an all-encompassing trade ban, too. He gave two reasons: first, only by banning export, the shortage of animal products could be prevented. Second, the inflicted districts could regenerate their livestock by getting it from the not inflicted districts.<sup>57</sup>

Krempe was strongly involved in the cattle trade. In contrast to its neighbour Wilster, mentioned above, Krempe argued for a general export ban. The main reason was buying-up of fattened cattle, butter and other dairy products. "Not a single head of fattened cattle"<sup>58</sup> could be found in the town but had been brought to Hamburg. The magistrate was afraid of massive buy-ups of animals and the accompanying price increases. Hence, Krempe's magistrate was very strongly in favour of an export ban that not only included cattle itself but also animal products.

Glückstadt further west on the shores of the river Elbe argued mainly in favour of an export ban for breeding cattle that would be binding to all localities and regions.<sup>59</sup> In general, Glückstadt thought in forward looking terms: one did not see an increase in prices yet but this could very well be the case more sooner than later. The magistrate was chiefly concerned for animal products and "timely precautions"<sup>60</sup> were indeed necessary to prevent this increase. Rumour had it that the neighbouring district Stade, south of the Elbe, belonging to the Electorate of Hanover, had already issued an export ban.

The city of Altona also mentioned the Hanoverian export ban and reported that some thousand animals had already been bought by Dutch cattle traders in the duchies. The magistrate suspected that Altona's inhabitants would only be too willing to sell their animals in view of the recent developments and for fear that everything would be lost otherwise.<sup>61</sup> As a consequence product and animal shortage was likely and therefore an export ban would be most

<sup>56</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [9].

<sup>57</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [13].

<sup>58</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [15]: „kein einziges Stück fettes Vieh“

<sup>59</sup> As Glückstadt was located at the borders of the duchies and between different districts, this was their main concern. The same arguments were used by the town of Oldesloe. Comp. LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [20].

<sup>60</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [16]: „zeitige Vorsicht“. The district of Rendsburg and the town of Lütjenburg argued similarly, see: LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [19] and LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [21].

<sup>61</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 708 [17]: „weil Sie befürchten bey einem weiter um sich greiffenden Übel, gar nichts zu behalten.“

welcome. This ban should of course be valid for every part of the duchies and should also be extended to Jutland. The centrepiece of the report from Altona was a lengthy description of what was to be done in respect to its big neighbour Hamburg. The main concern was that all cattle could be transported to the free city and the best meat and cattle could end up there. Altona insinuated possible problems with the provision of this large independent city. The permanent competition between the rival cities is present in almost every line of the report. Altona went so far as to suggest, Hamburg may be forced to only buy cattle or meat in Altona. This would have some major advantages: first, one could then discover how much of these commodities Hamburg actually consumed. Second, one would also find out if the increased purchase of cattle was due to actual need or only for reasons of buy-up and speculation. This argumentation is clearly indicative of a vested self-interested. Altona wanted to secure a competitive advantage by using the situation of crisis in their favour.<sup>62</sup>

To summarize: the arguments and attitudes toward the export ban can be clearly connected to different involvement in the ox-trade as well as different situations on the ground. A general ban was generally seen as counter-productive. Everyone stressed that certain measures were indeed necessary, always using their special situation as justification. Most importantly, economic well being was as important as plague control. Sometimes even more important in short sight.

The same debate as in the duchy of Schleswig was also conducted in the duchy of Schleswig. Here, as in Holstein some districts had even asked for a general export ban.<sup>63</sup> This was refused by the authorities as this general ban would certainly lead to a "crash of the economy of the most important native products."<sup>64</sup> As no shortage and price rises had occurred yet, a general ban was not considered necessary. However, an export ban on breeding cattle to be able to restock after the epizootic had abated was strongly favoured.<sup>65</sup> Consequently, a general decree was issued on 17<sup>th</sup> April for the duchy of Schleswig. This ordinance outlawed the export of cows and female calves for reasons of large losses and the need to restock the herds.<sup>66</sup> This ban was only restricted to the sale out of the country and the farmers were strongly encouraged to sell dispensable animals to their fellow countrymen. All exchanges

<sup>62</sup> The economic competition between Hamburg and Altona also influenced containment policies during a plague epidemic in 1712-1714. See: Boyens, Krise (2004).

<sup>63</sup> The Obergericht Gottorf also mentions reports from the districts of the duchy of Schleswig but these have unfortunately not survived in the archives.

<sup>64</sup> LAS Abt. 13A, Nr. 335 [117: „commercium der importantesten Landes-Producte.“

<sup>65</sup> LAS Abt. 65.2, Nr. 917 [48, 71 and 72], LAS Abt. 13A, Nr. 334 [11] and LAS Abt. 13A, Nr. 335 [117].

<sup>66</sup> LB Kiel, Verordnungssammlung, decree of 17th April 1745. The German chancery ratified the draft from Gottorf on 26th April 1745 (LAS Abt. 13A, Nr. 335 [108a]).

had of course to obtain the general practice of health certificates. Any infringements were to be fined by the confiscations of animals and 200 Talers penalty payment or hard labour.

The according decree for Holstein took a little bit longer to see its print because all governing bodies had to be consulted and a compromise was necessary. This was finally gained at the end of April and the ordinance for royal Holstein was published on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1745.<sup>67</sup> Another 11 days later, also ducal Holstein published the same ordinance on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1745.<sup>68</sup>

The preparations for this ordinance had almost taken two months and at the time of the publication the situation on the ground had already been changed for most localities as the cattle plague spread over the duchies.

Therefore and also because of the earlier dissent on the ban, it is no surprise that almost immediately after the publication of the ordinance, further supplications on exemptions from the ban or demands for further action reached the authorities in May and June 1745.

And the whole process of local information and demands and central reactions and policy making started all over again. Early modern disease containment policies was indeed a complicated interactive process of continuous crisis management.

<sup>67</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 706 [Ap 44 und 45] and LB Kiel: 30th April 1745.

<sup>68</sup> LAS Abt. 11, Nr. 705 [Mai 16].