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Torsten Friis. *Slavekrigen i Jylland 1848: historien om Danmarks mærkeligste krig.* Kerteminde: Landbohistorisk selskab, 1998. 224 pp. ISBN 978-87-7526-180-2.

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Published on H-Skand (May, 1998)

On the 18th of March 1848 demonstrations took place at Rendsborg (on the border to Holstein). The vociferous Slesvig-Holstein party demanded i.a. the incorporation of the Danish duchy of Slesvig into the German confederation, though the revolt started only on March 24th on the pretext, that the new Danish king, Frederic VII, was no longer free– having appointed a non-absolutist cabinet. These news of the 18th of March-events arrived at Haderslev (northern Slesvig) on the 19th of March.

The following day a local newspaper wrote, that the insurgents prepared an open revolt, and that "we expect further stronger and loyal troops be sent to Slesvig" to cool down the tempers of the hot heads, and "to resist the invasion of Freikorpses of (German) craftsmen and other poor people." It might have been this piece of information, that sparked off the terror panicus in Jutland: it was widely believed, that hordes of prisoners released from the Zuchthaus (goal) of Rendsborg and other scoundrels, rascals and tramps were approaching, plundering, murdering and raping.

Logically, the minister of war ordered troops from Funen and northern Jutland to be drawn to the border of Slesvig, but common people in Jutland armed themselves with whatever weapons or tools they had, posted guards and established a system of alarm. The rumors, however, proved false, but the fear faded away only in the course of April.

Mr. Friis has described this wave of fear vividly and exhaustively, but in spite of a brief retrospect at the end of the book, his main concern has been the factual events. So far, so good; two of the three things are, however, missing: a closer inspection of the rise of the rumors, of the reaction of a society, still having no telegraph, and first of all a closer analysis of the metality of collective fear in Jutland.

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Citation: E. Ladewig Petersen. Review of Friis, Torsten, *Slavekrigen i Jylland 1848: historien om Danmarks mærkeligste krig.* H-Skand, H-Net Reviews. May, 1998.
URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=2029

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