Frisch und Frei, Stark und Treu!— Ein Hoch der Turnerei!

On the Occasion of the Donation of the New York Turner Archives to the Max Kade Center for German-American Studies

William Keel

When thousands of exiles from the failed revolutions in Germany began arriving in the United States in the early 1850s, few thought that the ideals they had struggled for in the German states would soon be put to the test in the American Republic: personal liberty, human rights, democracy and national unity. At the forefront of the reform movement in Germany were the Turners—athletic clubs founded during the French occupation of Germany under Napoleon, they trained to throw out the French occupiers and establish a national German government. Soon viewed as too radical by the reactionary government in Germany after 1815 and banned, the Turners went underground. Allowed to perform their exercises in public again after 1842, they became leaders in the revolutionary movement during the tumultuous days of 1848 and 1849.

In American exile, the Turners soon established their radical societies beginning as early as 1848 in Cincinnati and New York. Turnvereine sprang up throughout the Northeastern and Midwestern states, boasting hundreds of members during the decade of the 1850s. Among these early Turners was Franz Sigel, former officer in the army of Baden and war minister in the failed republic established there in 1849. Sigel landed in New York in 1852 and became an active member of the Turners there. By the end of the 1850s he was teaching in St. Louis. During the crisis of early 1861, prior to Lincoln’s inauguration on March 4, Turners in St. Louis led by Sigel formed companies to defend against the perceived threat by the southern states, many of which had already seceded from the Union.
When Lincoln called for 90-day volunteers to put down the Southern rebellion in April 1861, the governor of Missouri refused to provide any soldiers. In response, the Turners of St. Louis with the support of Francis Blair, brother of Lincoln’s Postmaster General Montgomery Blair, organized five regiments and five reserve regiments in St. Louis. The recruits were nearly 90 percent German immigrants, many of whom had fled Germany following 1849—including Friedrich Hecker, the leader of the revolution in Baden in 1848, and two recruits who would later become somewhat famous: Eberhard Anheuser and Adolphus Busch.

The five regular regiments were led by Francis Blair and four exiles of the revolution, including Franz Sigel, commander of the 3rd Missouri Volunteers. On their hats, the soldiers of the 3rd Missouri wore the cockade many had worn in 1848-49 with the colors of the hoped for German Republic: black, red and gold. During the summer of 1861, these German exiles and Turners prevented Missouri from joining the ranks of the Southern states and saved Missouri for the Union. When three-year Union regiments were formed later in 1861, two regiments bore the title “Turner.” The New York Turners established the 20th New York which became known as “The Turner Rifles” [Turner Schützenregiment] and in Missouri the 17th Missouri became known as “The Western Turner Regiment,” whose core was formed by the veterans of Sigel’s men from the 3rd Missouri.

The proud heritage of service to their adopted homeland was carried on after the Civil War by the American Turners by focusing attention on the need for physical education in our public schools. Kansas City Turners were among those who led the way when their own director of physical exercise was made director for physical education in the Kansas City public schools in 1885. In 1886, Carl Betz established the first permanent system of physical education in the United States in Kansas City schools. Though smaller in number today, Turner societies continue in our larger cities and promote the ideals of a “sound mind in a sound body.”

The Max Kade Center at KU received an early gift of books from a Turner society when it received the entire library of the Turnverein in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This valuable asset was augmented in the 1990s when Katja Rampelmann (now Katja Hartmann, Humboldt Foundation, Berlin), completing an MA thesis on the German community in Lawrence, Kansas, discovered the library of the Lawrence Turnverein in the home of local hardware store owner, Rod Ernst. Rod’s grandfather Phillip Ernst had been one of the last members of the local Turner group that was dissolved in 1937. His family still owns the Lawrence Turnhalle at 9th and Rhode Island, built in 1869.

We are now extremely pleased to add the archives of the New York Turners to our collection of Turner materials. These Turner collections reflecting the culture and society of the nineteenth-century exiles from German Europe complement our collection of books and other materials from the exiles of Nazi Germany in the twentieth century. Both of these groups were forced to leave their European homeland. But in doing so they brought their ideals and insights to the New World and have contributed significantly to the development of American culture and society. We extend our sincere appreciation to the members of the New York Turners for this important gesture of support and trust in our research endeavors.
The New York Turner Archives Find a Home in Kansas

On October 30, the Max Kade hosted a reception to welcome a delegation of the New York Turnverein. Representing one of the first gymnastic societies in the United States, the Turners of New York were here to deliver and entrust their valuable archives and books to the Max Kade Center. This major archival acquisition will augment the Lawrence and Milwaukee Turner collections at the Max Kade Center and enhance our reputation as a significant national research facility.

See the video of the reception at http://www2.ku.edu/~maxkade/keel.shtml

The New York Turner Archives and the Max Kade Center

Hans Sammer

Ferdinand Beinert, Frank Wedl and I, senior members of the NYTV (now known as the American Turners New York) have an aggregate affiliation with the Turners of over 215 years.

This long-term affiliation with an institution that was founded in 1850 brings us to the bittersweet moment today when we convey the archives of the NYTV to the care of the Max Kade Center for German American Studies at the University of Kansas, in Lawrence, Kansas.

These records include the original minute books of the founding of the Sozialistischer Turn Verein in 1850, written in neat German script, the incorporation of the Society in 1857 as the Turn Verein in the City of New York, and the merger, in 1983, with the Mt. Vernon Turners, to form the American Turners of New York.

The NYTV was the third oldest Turner organization in America promoting the gymnastic practices developed by Friedrich Jahn, in Germany, at the beginning of the 19th century. Turner organizations provided a social home for German immigrants, many who were escaping the consequences of participating in the failed revolution in their homeland in 1848. That democratic zeal was burnished in the United States where they participated in the antislavery movement and actively campaigned in 1860 for the nomination and subsequent election of Abraham Lincoln.

The New York Turners immediately responded, in April 1861, when Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 volunteers, following the attack on Ft. Sumter, by forming the 1,200 strong 20th New York Rifles Regiment.

A large engraved slate tablet, which is currently displayed in our Turner Hall, lists the Turners who died in the Civil War and is trimmed with the names of battles in which their regiment was engaged, including among others, Antietum, Oak Swamp, Fredericksburg and Hampton Roads.

The Turner Hall represented a social venue for its members. In living up to their slogan of “A sound mind in a sound body” classes were provided, until recent years, in the German language, fencing, drama, singing and dance, as well as gymnastics. The Society is proud to have had twelve of its members represented in the Olympics.

We traveled the 1,300 miles from New York City to Lawrence, Kansas, to demonstrate that the documents being transmitted, approximately 850 pounds of records, were meaningful to us and our fellow members. We wanted to be here to indicate we were entrusting these records to a group that had an equal interest in these archives as we have. We are pleased that Frank Baron pursued retrieving these archives from ATNY. We entrust them to you. We look forward to seeing the product of what might be buried in these records of historical significance and hope they are a resource that meet your expectations.
The New York Turner Archives and the Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area

Deanell Reece Tacha
Chair, Board of Trustees, Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area, Federal Judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals, 10th Circuit

The gift of valuable archives and books of the Turners of New York to the Max Kade Center will be an important addition to the Lawrence and Milwaukee Turner Collections. The role that the Turners played in the early history of Kansas and in the conflicts relating to the slavery question in this region are an important part of the story that will be told in Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area.

Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area was designated by Congress in 2006. The management plan has been completed and we are hopeful will be approved in the next few weeks by the National Park Service and the Secretary of the Interior. This heritage area will connect and tell the powerful stories of the nation-changing events that occurred in this region immediately prior to the beginning of the Civil War. The Turners figure prominently in that history. We are grateful for this acquisition and for the interest of the Turners of New York. Thank you for making this important acquisition possible.

The Radical Turners in New York and Their National Network

Frank Baron

Although the Turners have represented primarily a gymnastic society, governments in Germany from the beginning in the early 1800s suspected them of subversive activity, which they feared and tried to suppress. The Turners took part in the revolutions of 1848 and 1849, but they never succeeded in establishing a functioning national Turner society. What they failed to do in Germany and Austria, they succeeded in accomplishing in record time in the United States. The catalyst in this history was the Turner Society of New York. Prominent refugees of the failed revolutions arrived in New York and joined the Turners. They hoped to continue their struggles for freedom.

These Turners were radicals. They called their society socialist, and that word appeared provocative even then. The New York Turners were involved in the early stages of the American labor movement, but in 1854, when the attention shifted to the question of slavery, the Turners throughout the nation became fervent opponents of slavery. The Turners channeled their energies into promoting the cause of the newly formed Republican party. Their radicalism made itself felt through a network of Turner societies throughout the United States.

In 1859, as the preparations were being made for the nominating convention in Chicago, Abraham Lincoln, a lawyer of Springfield, Illinois, who had been defeated in his bid for a United States senate seat, purchased a German printing press and sold it secretly to a Turner, Dr. Theodor Canisius. The agreement stipulated only that the press would support the Republican cause. Lincoln’s political aims in doing this become clearer when we consider the letter he sent to Canisius. Germans all over the country had been greatly upset about restrictions of their voting rights. Lincoln wrote in his letter to Canisius that he opposed the Massachusetts amendment that would have prevented Germans from voting within two
years after obtaining their citizenship. Lincoln wrote:

. . . as I understood the Massachusetts provision, I am against its adoption in Illinois, or in any other place, where I have a right to oppose it. Understanding the spirit of our institutions to aim at the elevation of men, I am opposed to whatever tends to degrade them.

Canisius published this letter, which was then widely circulated and discussed in other newspapers. Lincoln’s position rejecting any restrictions of immigrants’ rights resonated among the Turners. In April of 1860, even before Lincoln could be considered a serious contender, the national Turner periodical, now published in Baltimore, proclaimed its support for Lincoln.

In 1857, in Leavenworth, the Turners organized an armed military company and later took on the task of making sure that the voting process was free of intimidation and fraud. The same Turners then surprised a proslavery contingent in a place north of Leavenworth, where they captured the cannon that had been used to attack and destroy the Free State Hotel in Lawrence two years before. The capture of the cannon in January of 1858, in combination with the success of the Free State Party in that election, in which the Free State Party was victorious, can be considered a significant turning point in the struggle to make Kansas a slave-free state.

The president of the Leavenworth Turners was John P. Hatterscheidt. The Republican Party selected him here in Lawrence to represent the state at the national convention in Chicago. He became one of the three Germans to serve in the party’s platform committee, and these Germans made sure that the platform of the party explicitly defended the voting rights of all naturalized immigrants. Carl Schurz, who served on that same committee, spoke to the entire convention and received much applause when he told the convention that the Germans would support the Republican candidate in the election with 600,000 votes. There is no way, unfortunately, to verify that the precise number of German votes Schurz promised were actually delivered. Although the contribution of the Turners would be difficult to calculate in terms of statistics, they certainly motivated a high turnout to vote for Lincoln and then fought to preserve the Union in the army of the North. We know that in Lawrence, forty-four out of forty-eight members of the local Turner Society also joined the Union army. A high rate of participation can also be ascertained for New York.

The archives that the Turners have brought from New York provide ample evidence that their society contributed substantially to a rebirth of equality on at least two frontiers of freedom, in New York, in Kansas, in the nation as a whole.
The 2010 conference will be held on Friday and Saturday, October 1st – 2nd, at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. We are soliciting papers that deal with aspects of performance as a staged event or as performative action in literary works and other media or various fields of inquiry pertaining to the exile period of 1933–1945. Presentation of papers should not exceed 20 minutes. If technical equipment is needed for a presentation, please indicate precisely what you will need. Please send abstracts of proposed papers and a short curriculum vitae to Prof. Marx by February 15, 2010: marx@ku.edu

The 2010 conference of the Graduate Association of German Students (GAGS) will take place on February 19-20. The focus will be: "Society, Friendship, and Love: The Depiction of Interpersonal Relationships in German Language and Literature." Dr. Rebecca Rovit, assistant professor in the Department of Theatre, will be the featured speaker. She will be presenting her research on the Jewish Kulturbund theatre and community within Nazi Berlin. Proposals for papers should be sent to Joe Cunningham at delmount@aol.com

The Max Kade Center has acquired a twenty-seven-volume set of Alexander von Humboldt’s American explorations. The purchase of these valuable volumes became possible as a result of grants from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Bonn, the Snyder-Breidenthal Foundation, and the research team of Professor Thomas Taylor and Dr. Michael Krings. This resource will support further development of the Humboldt digital library, which is a collaborative project with Professor Detlev Doherr, director of the Computer Center at the Hochschule Offenburg. The Humboldt digital library (www.avhumboldt.net) has registered more than a million hits.

Illustrations from Humboldt’s botanical works, based on his discovery in America of previously unknown plants. Nova genera plantarum.

For information on ways to make donations to the German Department or to the Max Kade Center please visit the KU Endowment Web site at:

or http://www.2.ku.edu/~maxkade/donations.htm
The Revival of the Renaissance in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries
A Symposium at the Max Kade Center for German-American Studies, with Support from the Thyssen Foundation, at the University of Kansas, March 26–28, 2010

Tentative Program

Friday, March 26, Spencer Art Museum

Opening of the exhibition “Albrecht Dürer and Thomas Mann’s Doktor Faustus”
Public lecture: Stephen Jaeger (Los Angeles), “Jacob Burckhardt and the Cult of Violence in the Renaissance and Beyond”
A reading from Thomas Mann’s Doktor Faustus (interpreting Beethoven’s last sonata)
Piano music with Jack Winerock: Beethoven, Opus 111 (second movement)

Saturday, March 27, Max Kade Center

Wulf Koepke (Boston), “Ist die Renaissance das Mass der Geschichte? Jacob Burckhardt über Mass und Masslosigkeit des Zeitalters”
Helmut Koopmann (Augsburg), “Renaissancismus um 1900: Grandiose Rückbesinnung oder ärgerlicher Schwindel?”
Andreas Tönnesmann (Zürich), “Renaissance in der Architektur. Der Vergleich der europäischen und amerikanischen Entwicklungen”
Winfried Nerdinger (Munich), “Neorenaissance in der Architektur”
August Stahl (Saarbrücken), “Rilkes Rezeption der Renaissance”
Walter Erhart (Bielefeld), “Die germanistische Renaissance am Beispiel Konrad Burdachs”
Irmela von der Luehe (Berlin), “Wahn und Wirklichkeit. Lion Feuchtwangers Der Teufel in Boston”
Hartmut Rudolph (Hannover), “Das Paracelsusbild in der Schule des Kirchenhistorikers Erich Seeberg”
Andrew Weeks (Normal, Illinois), “Nationalizing Paracelsus”

Sunday, March 28

Jan-Dirk Mueller (Munich), “Renaissance, Reformation und der deutsche ‘Sonderweg’ in Thomas Manns Doktor Faustus”
Gert Sautermeister (Bremen), “Die Luthergestalt in Werk Thomas Manns”
Maren Köster (Berlin), “Hanns Eislers Johann Faustus und die Faustus-Debatte in der DDR”
Anne Peterson, Julia Stock, Michael Gruenbaum, and John Paul Dove received awards from the Max Kade Foundation for the current academic year for the completion of their doctoral studies.

***

Next spring, our Max Kade Distinguished Visiting Professor, Dr. Jan-Dirk Müller from the University of Munich, Germany, will stay in the apartment of the Max Kade Center and teach two courses, one about the *Nibelungenlied* and another about satirical literature in the early modern period.

***

During the summer of 2009 there were twenty-eight students in our two summer institutes, 12 in Eutin and 16 in Holzkirchen. Despite the economic difficulties, we have been able to maintain both of these Study Abroad programs. Thanks to the generosity of Norman Fahrer, who attended the Holzkirchen program in 1965 and then the program in Eutin in 1966, we are now able to offer a full scholarship to a student from Kansas. Shanna Doering from Mulvane, Kansas, was awarded the Fahrer Scholarship to go to Holzkirchen last summer. The total number of students who have participated in the two summer programs since 1961 is over 1,500.

***

2009 marked the 20th anniversary of the sister-city relationship between Lawrence and Eutin, Germany. Our department has been instrumental in both establishing that partnership, based on our over forty years of KU summer institutes in that city, and maintaining the ongoing educational and cultural exchanges. Last summer Eutin experienced the visit of the Lawrence Guitar Quartet led by Dr. Marc Greenberg (KU) in June, a photographic exhibit of Kansas landscapes of Carolyn Young during the summer at the Eutin library, and an organ recital by Dr. Michael Bauer (KU) in late July, in addition to the formal visit of a delegation from Lawrence to celebrate this important anniversary. The two high schools of Lawrence also sent thirteen students to Eutin for six weeks in the summer. Eutin sent us their anniversary delegation and sixteen students, plus the nine-member Carl Maria von Weber Guitar Orchestra this fall. The Lawrence Guitar Quartet performed together with the Eutin orchestra in a joint concert at the Lawrence Arts Center. See our latest newsletter at http://www2.ku.edu/~germanic/Newsletter.pdf

***

Under the leadership of Hans-Wilhelm Hagen, president of the Volksbank in Eutin, a greater number of internships are now available in Eutin, our sister city in Germany, for students and residents of Lawrence. The new program has built on a long tradition of exchanges that began with the active participation of the Sparkasse, the Eutin savings bank. For the past ten years University of Kansas students have been interns in that bank. During his visit in Lawrence, as a member of the Eutin delegation for the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of sister-city partnership, Mr. Hagen proposed new internships in a variety of fields (journalism, business, administration and banking, architecture, electrical and civil engineering, public administration, and education). See http://www2.ku.edu/~germanic/internshipsex.shtml. One of these internships will have the focus on supporting our high school exchange with German instruction.
Dr. Vyatkina receives an award from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and the Modern Language Journal

The Paul Pimsleur Award for Research in Foreign Language Education was established to recognize his contributions to the profession as an outstanding teacher, researcher, and expert on test creation and interpretation. The award is evidence of the commitment of ACTFL and the MLJ to research in foreign and second language acquisition and to the application of its results to the classroom. The Pimsleur Award is presented once a year for the best publication selected from all top-tier Applied Linguistics journals.

Nina Vyatkina joined the department in 2007. She earned her Ph.D. in German with specialization in Applied Linguistics from the Pennsylvania State University. Her research interests include Second Language Acquisition, Interlanguage Pragmatics, and Learner Corpus Analysis. She has published on second language development of learners of German who participate in intercultural computer-mediated communication. She coordinates the German language proficiency sequence. Dr. Vyatkina published her featured article on “The Pedagogical Mediation of a Developmental Learner Corpus for Classroom-Based Language Instruction,” in: Language Learning and Technology (2008) in co-authorship with J. Belz.
The University of Kansas
Max Kade Center for German-American Studies
Sudler House
Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures
Lawrence, KS  66045-2127