



2021

## Reams, Radicals and Revolutionaries: The 'Illinois Staats-Zeitung' and the German-American Milieu in Chicago, 1847-1877

Sebastian Peter Wuepper

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_diss](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss)



Part of the [History Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Wuepper, Sebastian Peter, "Reams, Radicals and Revolutionaries: The 'Illinois Staats-Zeitung' and the German-American Milieu in Chicago, 1847-1877" (2021). *Dissertations*. 3908.

[https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_diss/3908](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/3908)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact [ecommons@luc.edu](mailto:ecommons@luc.edu).



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](#).  
Copyright © 2021 Sebastian Peter Wuepper

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

REAMS, RADICALS, AND REVOLUTIONARIES  
THE “ILLINOIS STAATS-ZEITUNG” AND THE GERMAN-AMERICAN  
MILLIEU IN CHICAGO, 1847-1877

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN HISTORY

BY

SEBASTIAN P. WUEPPER

CHICAGO, IL

AUGUST 2021

Copyright by Sebastian Peter Wuepper, 2021  
All rights reserved.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing a dissertation during a global pandemic is not an easy task. An endeavor like this generates indebtedness to other people in the best of times. I am deeply grateful for the support I received from so many around the History Department at Loyola University Chicago. I could not have taken this work to completion without the ongoing encouragement, patience, and flexibility of my Chair Dr. Timothy Gilfoyle. Many, many thanks also to the rest of my committee, Dr. Elliott Gorn, Dr. Theodore Karamanski and Dr. Edin Hajdarpasic. I would also like to thank Dr. Kim Searcey and Dr. Benjamin Johnson for their moral backing, guidance, and camaraderie during these unprecedented times. I am also tremendously grateful to Dr. Robert Bucholz, and the material support I received through working for him.

I would also like to thank all the people who made this work possible, the staff and volunteers at the Newberry Library and the Chicago History Museum Archives for their services and assistance, both before, during and after the lockdown. Many thanks also to Dr. John Jentz, who provided me with an unpublished manuscript that proved invaluable for writing the last chapters. I also wish to thank the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation for awarding me a dissertation completion fellowship for my final year.

My biggest thanks are due to my mother, who contributed to this project vitally by providing me with her knowledge and skill in deciphering old German handwriting. It was her who transcribed countless handwritten letters from various archival collections that I sent her. Without her, my work would be lacking a lot of insight into

the lives of the nineteenth-century German-Americans. But without her and the keen curiosity she raised me with and the ongoing support in all things I would not be here. In the same way I also need to express my deep gratitude to my girlfriend Chloe. Her impeccable editing provided my writing with a polish that I could never have achieved by myself. Also, she was—and is—my rock in these trying times. Here is to many more happy years together.

To my friends and colleagues, within the Loyola History Graduate Program and without, who endured my sometimes-daily pronouncements of new pages written. To Sophie, to Matthew, June, Nathan and Jenny. To Patrick and Kendra, to Peter and Jenny in Berlin.

And lastly, to the four-legged companions, my cat Nina and the other creatures that made my life richer and writing this dissertation in quarantine more bearable.

This is for all of you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
Methodology	11
Historiography	19
CHAPTER 1: OUT OF MANY – NONE—THE FAILED REVOLUTION OF 1848 AND THE PEOPLE IT PRODUCED	26
The Revolutions in Germany	28
The Baden Revolution	44
The Revolutionaries in Exile	54
CHAPTER 2: NEW WORLD, NEW LIVES, NEW PROBLEMS—THE REVOLUTIONARIES CONFRONT AMERICAN NATIVISM AND SLAVERY	69
Grey & Green: Generational differences in politics and political alignments	70
The Lager Beer Riot of 1855	81
Anton C. Hesing, German-American Chicago, and the Republican Party	89
CHAPTER 3: THE REVOLUTIONARIES GO TO WAR—THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, 1861-1863	98
The German-Americans at Chancellorsville	119
The <i>Chicago Times</i> and the Burnside Order, June 1863	131
CHAPTER 4: THE GERMAN ELEMENT AND PRESIDENT LINCOLN IN LIFE AND DEATH—THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, 1864-65	140
The 1864 Presidential Campaign	141
The German-Americans and President Lincoln’s Assassination	168
CHAPTER 5: A FLURRY OF PATRIOTISMS—THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR AND GERMAN UNIFICATION, 1870-1871	178
The Franco-Prussian War	179
A United Germany	210
CHAPTER 6: FIRE AT HOME—THE CONFLAGRATION OF 1871 AND ITS AFTERMATH	255
The City Aflame: The Chicago Fire, October 8-9, 1871	257
Embers in the Ashes – Rebuilding the Community, the Newspaper, and the political fallout	269
The Mayoral Election of 1871 and the Union Fireproof Ticket	280
Re-tempered Temperance – An Interlude	286

Burning Bridges – The Fire Ordinance Controversy	289
Two Immigration Experiences Clash – The Hesing-Collyer Exchange	303
CHAPTER 7: THE PEOPLE’S PARTY OF CHICAGO – THE <i>STAATS-ZEITUNG</i> AS PART OF A POLITICAL MACHINE	317
The City, Labor, and Immigrants after the Great Fire	319
Temperance Resurging – The Committee of Seventy	332
Immigrants Allied	348
The Chicago Mayoral Election of 1873	363
CHAPTER 8: NEW IMMIGRANTS, CORRUPTION, AND LABOR UNREST – THE WHISKY RING SCANDAL, AND THE GREAT RAILROAD STRIKE OF 1877	375
Anton C. Hesing and the Whisky Ring	376
The New Radicals	390
The Great Railroad Strike of 1877	393
CONCLUSION: LEBENSABEND UND VERMÄCHTNIS – THE GOLDEN YEARS AND LEGACIES	
	436
Epilog – Death of a Newspaper	463
Bibliography	468
Vita	492

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Photography of Anton Helsing as he appeared in the prime of life, approximately 1870.	33
Figure 2. Map of the Grand Duchy of Baden, 1819-1945, ( <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bf/Map_of_Baden_(1819-1945).png">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bf/Map_of_Baden_(1819-1945).png</a> accessed April 2, 2021.)	43
Figure 3. Ludwig Wagner - Lithographic Portrait Painting of Lorenz Brentano (1848)	45
Figure 4. A photographic portrait of editor Wilhelm Rapp (photographer unknown, ca. 1890-1900)	50
Figure 5. Hugo von Hofsten: Herrman Raster, ca. 1880	52
Figure 6. Map of Duchy of Anhalt, 1863-1918 (From: Andrees Handatlas IV Stiellers Handatlas 1891)	53
Figure 7. Plaques from Turner Associations around the world at the Jahndenkmal in Hasenheide Park in Berlin – Photo by Von Malud, CC BY-SA 3.0, <a href="https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6962726">https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6962726</a>	444
Figure 8. Grave site of Hermann Raster and his family at Graceland Cemetery, Chicago (Photograph by author, 2020)	450
Figure 9. Gravesite of Lorenz Brentano and Family at Graceland Cemetery, Chicago (Photograph by author, 2020)	452
Figure 10. Gravesite of Anton C. Helsing's Family at St. Boniface Catholic Cemetery, Chicago (photograph by author, 2020)	456
Figure 11. Gravesite of Wilhelm Rapp and family at Graceland Cemetery, Chicago (photograph by author, 2020).	459



## INTRODUCTION

Reminiscing about the time news of Franco-Prussian War reached Chicago's German community in July 1870, German-American journalist and historian of German Chicago Emil Dietzsch described events taking place in Chicago's Northside Turner Hall:

Old, German veteran soldiers who were citizens of the United States for decades dug up their old medals and military honors from their shrines and wore them proudly to support the much-embattled home country. Here a grey haired and grey mustachioed former German warrior wore an old Prussian military hat, there a stout tavern keeper of the Bavarian settlement waved one made of blue cloth, cursing out the French. That's how they turned up, all in high spirits, to shake hands as Germans and members of the same tribe, to wish each other hope and a shining victory of the German arms.<sup>1</sup>

The conflict in far-away Europe served as the catalyst that birthed the united German Empire, the first time in centuries that the German-speaking states of central Europe were united as one political entity. The war also served as a spark of German-American nationalism, a moment that brought the immigrant community in the United States together. Over the course of the war, the German diaspora reconnected with the former homeland. Fomenting this connection were the numerous German-language newspapers that tied German-America together. In Chicago, this was the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*—a newspaper that, from its inception until 1907, was run by a group of men

---

<sup>1</sup> Emil Dietzsch, Max Stern, and Fred Kressmann, *Chicago's Deutsche Männer: Erinnerungs-Blätter an Chicago's Fünfzigjähriges Jubiläum Geschichte der Stadt Chicago* (Chicago: M. Stern & Co., 1885), 66.

who in their youth partook in the failed revolutions of 1848, trying to force a unification of Germany.

From what sort of environment did these newspapermen come? In 1848, the German-speaking countries of Europe that later formed the nation state of Germany were in turmoil. Political radicals revolted against the governing nobility. They overthrew the ruling powers with the goal of creating a unified, democratically-governed nation—a German republic. The revolutionaries wanted to do away with the *Kleinstaaterei*—the small states governed by greedy noblemen that made up the German Confederation, such as the Grand Duchy of Baden, the Duchy of Anhalt-Dessau or the Electorate of Hesse-Kassel. This political organization stunted progress and commerce by subjecting the common people to obtuse and unfair laws and censorship, enforced by the petty aristocrats ruling their fiefdoms.

The rebellious fervor, however, did not sustain itself for long. Like the German countries formed at the Congress of Vienna, the uprisings were comprised of too many disparate voices and diverging opinions. The governing body instituted by the insurgents in the Frankfurt Parliament quickly lost its ability to govern. The nobility of Prussia and Bavaria in particular used this moment of weakness and struck without scrutiny, ending the upheaval just as quickly as it began. In the aftermath of the revolutions' failure, the nobility prosecuted the former insurrectionists to the fullest extent. Many were jailed, executed or exiled. Some insurrectionists simply fled the country in dismay, frustrated by the failure of their endeavors and the overwhelming power of the reactionary forces. Most went to the United States. This country's governmental organization as a federal republic served as the role model for the unified

German republic that the revolutionaries had intended to build. These sympathetic ideals subsequently lured them to American shores.

These men were the “forty-eighters,” named after the year of the revolution. They were quite peculiar immigrants. Their revolution was carried out by a large group of mostly working-class people, but the uprising’s intellectual impetus and political thought originated with a relatively small group of academics, lawyers, and politicians. The makeup of German immigration to the United States after 1848 reflected this. The bulk of German migrants after the revolution were workers and artisans, not intellectuals. However, the people behind the *Staats-Zeitung*, and other German-American newspapers in the mid-nineteenth century, originated from a relatively homogenous, tight-knit, intellectual milieu: scholars, lawyers, men of letters, with political ambitions to boot. Wilhelm Rapp, long-time editor of the *Staats-Zeitung*, was a political ringleader in the university town of Tübingen. Lorenz Brentano, who co-owned the paper from 1862 on and shared editorship with Rapp, worked as a lawyer in the Grand Duchy of Baden and was elected mayor of Mannheim twice—but was not allowed to serve by the Badensian government due to his political leanings. They were joined in 1867 by Hermann Raster, a former journalist and politician from Saxony who made a name for himself as a newspaper editor in New York.<sup>2</sup>

These immigrants held allegiance to a nation-state that did not even exist. This set them apart from most other contemporary immigrant groups. Through the process of immigration and gradual assimilation, the German revolutionaries became members

---

<sup>2</sup> Bruce C. Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 7.

of a German-American establishment. In their later years they found themselves at odds with the new immigrant radicals from Germany. The revolutionaries shaped the German-American community, and rose to leadership positions within German-American organizations and institutions. They also became influential in American politics well beyond their own ethnic community. At times, the forty-eighters used their positions within the German diaspora to guide their community in ways that impacted local, state and even federal politics. Through their work at the newspaper, they shaped German-speaking America, tying it closer together as a whole. But they also connected German America to the German homeland in Europe—through newspaper work, but also through personal and professional correspondence, travel, and hosting family and friends from Germany as guests in Chicago. Through these processes and actions, the forty-eighter newspapermen tied German-America back into a transnational ethnic and cultural sphere of which German Chicago was one discreet node.

The ringleaders of the 1848 revolutions proved influential in several ways. Most prominent of all was the creation and proliferation of the American National Turner Society, the *Turnverein*, an association of political social clubs that practiced gymnastics and other forms of physical fitness regiments as well as political agitation and organization. Through the *Turnverein*, the German-Americans contributed to American society at large, as it was this association that brought the idea of physical education as a part of the school curriculum to the United States. Others founded breweries and beer halls, bringing specifically German forms of sociability and culture to America—along with German brewing traditions—much to the chagrin of the emergent temperance movement in the United States. They also founded singers' associations, carnival clubs,

and other benevolent societies for their fellow German-speaking immigrants. Some of them went into politics, in order to take direct action in shaping their new home country. Others returned to Germany, where they too became involved in politics again. Many forty-eighters had a role in shaping the nascent Republican Party and took part in the American Civil War. These activities and events were reflected upon in the numerous German language newspapers the former revolutionaries either founded or were hired at after arriving in the United States.

Exiled revolutionaries brought with them their political ideas. These ideas were expressed through writing, as many forty-eighters entered the un-censored, constitutionally-guaranteed free press of the United States as publishers, editors and journalists for both established and newly-minted German-American newspapers. Some of them had attempted publishing radical newspapers in the old countries, where they ran afoul of rampant government censorship. They rose to become the thought leaders of the German-American community, with the German-American press quickly becoming the largest non-English language media in the US for much of the nineteenth century. This was especially true in big cities with large German speaking populations. New York City, for example, had as many German language newspapers as did Berlin at in the 1850s.<sup>3</sup> St. Louis and Chicago competed for the title of being home to the German-American newspaper with the largest circulation in the Midwest, between the *Anzeiger des Westens* from the Gateway to the West and the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* in the Windy City.

---

<sup>3</sup> Carl Frederick Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), 72.

This dissertation centers on two sets of subjects: first, the men who established and ran the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, their path from Germany to the United States, and the careers they pursued in their new home country, as well as the national identities they cultivated. Second is the analysis of the role *Staats-Zeitung* played for Chicago's German-American community as well as for the German diaspora in the United States as a whole, and how this German-language newspaper reflected the German-American milieu of the city at the time. This newspaper had one of the largest circulations of German language newspapers in the nineteenth-century Midwest, with a readership reaching across the country and even in Germany. The publication represented the patterns of perception of its German-American audience, as those publications existed in a reciprocal relationship with their readership. Newspapers were also capitalistic endeavors, that require a readership for their financial survival. Therefore, newspapers as institutions often reflected the lived reality of their readership, lest the subscribers voted with their wallets and instead bought other publications that catered to their perceptions, tastes, world views and political persuasions.<sup>4</sup>

The focus of this study is on the time between the newspaper's establishment in 1848 and the role the publication fulfilled during the Great Railroad Strike in 1877. Five key events that heavily impacted the German-American community in Chicago and beyond make up the broad structure: the first chapters briefly sketch out the revolutionary activities in Germany, the subsequent immigration experience, and the nativist backlash the forty-eighters faced in the United States. Chronologically, this part

---

<sup>4</sup> For an example of this methodology, see Daniel Nagel, *Von republikanischen Deutschen zu deutsch-amerikanischen Republikanern: ein Beitrag zum Identitätswandel der deutschen Achtundvierziger in den Vereinigten Staaten 1850-1861* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2012), 27.

covers the years from 1848 into the early 1850s. The first chapter introduces the men who later in their life become involved with the *Staats-Zeitung* and follows them through the revolutions and into exile in the United States, detailing the situation they found on the ground after leaving Germany behind, and how they settled within German America. The second chapter begins with the *Staats-Zeitung* editors rallying against Know-Nothingism and the opposition the immigrant community faced from American nativists. The key event is the 1855 “Lager Beer Riot” and the impact the German element had on the local elections in the following years. At this time the “forty-eighters” also became involved with both the abolitionist movement and the nascent of the Republican Party.

The third and fourth chapters cover the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*’s role in the American Civil War, and how participation in the conflict changed German-American identity, national loyalty and self-identification among the immigrants. The *Staats-Zeitung* editorship rallied their community behind Republican presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln, aiding his election efforts. The third chapter covers the first years of the war. After the war broke out, the newspaper played a vital role in the recruitment of German immigrants for the Union Army. Over the course of the war, the *Staats-Zeitung* reported continuously and meticulously on the German-American regiments fighting for the Union, engaging in a rigorous defense of German soldiers after the Anglo-American press pinned the outcome of the disastrous Battle of Chancellorsville on the German units fighting on the Union side. The fourth chapter centers on the 1864 presidential election campaign and the rift in the forty-eighter circles, that saw some of the former revolutionaries champion John C. Frémont as Republican Party candidate over Lincoln.

During this campaign, the Chicago editors once again championed Lincoln—against opposition from some of their own former brothers in arms and colleagues. Finally, the *Staats-Zeitung* and the Chicago German-Americans mourned Lincoln alongside the rest of the country after his assassination a mere week after the end of the Civil War.

Chapter five revolves around the Franco-Prussian War and the unification of Germany into the German Empire in 1870 and 1871. The *Staats-Zeitung* reported on the Franco-Prussian war in Europe and the events leading to a unified Germany as well as to a sharp increase in German-American nationalism. Both events greatly impacted the editorship of the *Staats-Zeitung* as well as the Midwestern German-American community. German-Americans engaged with the war and with unification in various ways, from organizing parades and meetings to collecting charitable donations which they sent back to Europe. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors took up crucial roles during the war, keeping their readership abreast of the latest developments, delivering political analysis and commentary, and coordinating the material and immaterial community responses to the far-away conflict.

The final chapters cover the tumultuous events of the 1870s in Chicago. A few months after German unification caused raucous peace parades in German Chicago, a large part of the city burned down in the Great Chicago Fire on October 9, 1871. Chapter six details the events of the fire and follows the editors through their efforts to keep their newspaper in business and how the publication served the fire-stricken German-American community. This calamity that struck the city bore another moment of transnational unity. The editors and journalists used their private and institutional



connections to the German homeland to rally charitable support for Chicago's German-American community, and spread the word of friends and family of Germans in need.

Chapter seven examines the rise of the People's Party of Chicago. This local political organization was formed by the publisher and owner of the *Staats-Zeitung* Anton C. Hesing—ostensibly to counter a resurgence in nativism and a rising temperance movement. Hesing was not a forty-eighter himself, but he ran a newspaper operation that was staffed with prominent former revolutionaries who were well-known in the German-American community of Chicago and beyond. Hesing used his newspaper and his considerable political clout with the German-American community to elect a mayor of Chicago. The final chapter then details the rise of labor radicalism in the Gilded Age and its culmination in the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, as well as the ways in which the *Staats-Zeitung* editors attempted to influence events. At this time, the once revolutionary *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* editorship found itself aged, having become a part of the establishment. New, radical, German language papers had entered the Chicago scene, whose politics were now at odds with those of the former revolutionaries. The older *Staats-Zeitung* had become an organ of the German-American establishment, while the new radical papers spoke to the woes and worries of immigrant workers, spreading socialist ideologies.

Many studies on the forty-eighters and their role in the German-American community of the nineteenth century exist, as do works on the German-American press—both on these ethnic newspapers in general, as well as on individual, local

publications.<sup>5</sup> No historian, however, has focused on the history of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, and the impact of Chicago's German-American press over a longer stretch of time. Also, no exhaustive works exist on the newspaper's role for the German speaking community of both Chicago and the Midwest in general. This dissertation fills this gap.

A work like this is by nature—like its subjects—strongly transnational. The German immigrants to the U.S. arrived as Germans—they then gradually became German-Americans, who maintained close connections to their homeland. The newspapers themselves were also transnational creations, since especially the larger papers like the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* maintained a sizable corps of foreign correspondents who reported on events and political developments in Europe.

This dissertation is also firmly rooted in the urban history of Chicago. Only a significant city with sizable ethnic communities like Chicago could bring about the

---

<sup>5</sup> Mischa Honeck, *We Are the Revolutionists : German-Speaking Immigrants & American Abolitionists after 1848*, Race in the Atlantic World, 1700-1900 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011); Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*; Carl Friedrich Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution; the German Forty-Eighters in America*, (Westport, Conn, Greenwood Press, 1970); Adolf Eduard Zucker, *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967); Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James Philip Danky, *The German-American Radical Press: The Shaping of a Left Political Culture, 1850-1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Lynne Tatlock and Matt Erlin, *German Culture in Nineteenth-Century America: Reception, Adaptation, Transformation*, Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture (Unnumbered) (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005); Joseph Wandel, *The German Dimension of American History* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1979); Nagel, *Von republikanischen Deutschen zu deutsch-amerikanischen Republikanern*; Alison Clark Efford, *German Immigrants, Race, and Citizenship in the Civil War Era*, Publications of the German Historical Institute (Washington, DC: German Historical Insititute ; Cambridge, 2013); Sabine Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker: Two Lives for Liberty* (St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006); Susan L Piepke, *Mathilde Franziska Anneke (1817-1884): The Works and Life of a German-American Activist Including English Translations of "Woman in Conflict with Society" and "Broken Chains"* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006); Ripple, La Vern J., *The German-Americans, The Immigrant Heritage of America* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976); Heléna Tóth, *An Exiled Generation: German and Hungarian Refugees of Revolution, 1848-1871*, 2014; Dann Woellert, *Cincinnati Turner Societies.: The Cradle of an American Movement* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012); Henry Geitz and Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies (University of Wisconsin--Madison), *The German-American Press* (Madison, Wis.: Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1992); William Huntzicker, *The Popular Press, 1833-1865* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999).

success of a large German-language publication like the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. As an analysis of a newspaper, this dissertation also incorporates elements of media history and newspaper history, bringing together several different approaches to illustrate the way a small group of failed revolutionaries rose to positions of thought leaders in their immigrant community and to prominence in their newly adopted home country.

### **Methodology**

At the center of this analysis are the core concepts of nationality and national identity and the question of how the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* reproduced and reflected both issues for the community that it served. To interrogate how German-American nationalism emerged as a distinct identity, this study employs a framework that is heavily informed by historian Benedict Anderson's work *Imagined Communities* (1982), as well as by other, later scholarship that was in turn a reflection on Anderson's work. Anderson's concept of nationalism revolves around newspapers, and the role of print media and the normative effect such publications have on a wider audience. The original *Imagined Communities* framework features several preconditions and aspects that the emergence of any specific nationalism requires.<sup>6</sup>

During the 1850s, German nationalism was a relatively new phenomenon. Germany as a united, political nation state did not exist, and thus German national unity as such did not either. The forty-eighters had tried and failed to foment a united Germany, since they followed in the footsteps of early German nationalism that arose in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars at the beginning of the nineteenth century, about

---

<sup>6</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 2006).

thirty-five years before the revolutions. The German nationalists felt their fealty belonged to the German people (those of German birth and language, as the term nation implies). Their fealty did not belong to the various kings, grand dukes and barons who ruled the lands that made up the German Confederacy.

Anderson suggests that three preconditions must exist for nationalism to arise, all of which were present both in German-speaking Europe after Napoleon as well as in the United States. First, membership in a specific religious denomination no longer provided a sense of group belonging. After the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution, the church – both of Catholic and Lutheran Protestant variety – had lost significant influence on the lives of people in Germany in terms of being the sole proprietor of and keeper of a universal truth. The second condition is a general decline of broadly accepted, divinely pre-ordained societal hierarchies and the divine legitimacy of noble rulers. This, too, was true among those people in Germany that joined the ranks of the early nationalists. Both the French Revolution and the fight against Napoleonic rule contributed to this dynamic. Lastly, Anderson posits that a decoupling of history and cosmology needs to take place in a society that turns towards nationalism, since people need to imagine themselves as outside of an eternal, divinely ordained order. All three conditions were fulfilled in post-Napoleonic German-speaking Europe.

Anderson further suggests that nationalism and a national identity thrive with the emergence of print capitalism. This is where the German Confederacy was less conducive than the United States, since the state employed more stringent censorship laws, which often cracked down on nascent nationalist publications. Newspapers, especially in the more modern sense of large circulation publications with a relatively

wide audience, were a new phenomenon. While newspapers predated the nineteenth century, the older publications lacked reach and readership. With the advent of the industrial revolution and, in its wake, industrial capitalism, rising literacy rates and cheaper, larger production scales, more modern news publications emerged. Anderson refers to this as print capitalism, since owning and operating a newspaper at this scale required capital to acquire and run printing presses, but also to employ a relatively large staff of writers, journalists, reporters and editors.

Newspapers then built the “imagined communities.” They tied together disparate people across spatial distances who found connection in reading the same publications which wrote about the same issues using the same language. This process allowed for the emergence of a nation, people united by some common lineage, language, culture and custom, as “an imagined, political community, imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign,” as Anderson puts it.<sup>7</sup> The nation as a community is imagined insofar, as that no single individual member of this community can possibly personally know more than a relatively small contingent of the community as a whole. No individual member of a national community can be personally connected to all other members of the community. The connectedness with other members of one’s nation, one’s countrymen and women, can only ever be an imagined one.

Language plays a crucial part in the formation of any national identity. German-American newspapers preserved the German language in a country that was majority English-speaking. But more than that, the German-language newspapers also

---

<sup>7</sup> Anderson, 6.

formalized the German language by erasing regional (German) dialect. In the case of some of the newspapermen behind the individual publications, the editorships also made efforts to erase influences of the English-speaking environment on the German print language by avoiding anglicisms in loan words and grammatical constructions. In many ways, German-American newspapers formalized a specifically German-American variant of print-German that in this form only existed on the pages of German-American newspapers during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The analytical framework central to this study's exploration of the transnational aspects of the German-American community is a concept formulated by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai. In *Modernity at Large* (1996) he articulates the idea of "ethnoscapes" to describe and analyze dispersed communities of immigrants and their ongoing connection to their home countries. Appadurai posits that migrants sharing the same ethnicity or home country tend to stay in contact with people in said home country, as well as with people living in other nodes of their migrant community abroad. Through means of movement of people and goods across natural and national boundaries, the movement of ideas through mass media and personal communications these members of a specific ethnic group establish a transnational, non-state entity that has the propensity to influence nation-state politics. Newspapers, letters, and telegrams functioned in similar—albeit slower—ways to modern mass communication and media. Innovations in transportation such as steamships which made Atlantic crossings affordable for larger amounts of people and the railroads stand in for modern forms of mass transportation across global distance.

The establishment of a global ethnoscape arose through mass media, and through shared experiences that allow the imagination of another life. German transnational migrations happened at large scales when people could imagine different—and ostensibly better—lives from the ones they inhabit at any given moment. This imagination was fueled, according to Appadurai, by “the mass media, which present a rich, ever changing store of possible lives, some of which enter the lived imaginations of ordinary people more successfully than others.”<sup>8</sup> Instead of instant telecommunications the nineteenth-century migrants used letters and telegrams, instead of the internet there were newspapers. Many European countries knew the concept of “letters from America”—written to the home country by immigrants in the United States. As German-American newspaperman Hermann Raster wrote in a letter to his brother in 1855, “people generally tend to treat letters from America as some sort of common good, and tell everyone about every little detail. Some friends of mine have gotten into quite some trouble because of this.”<sup>9</sup> But these letters from far away did more than just provide news on the well-being of a friend or family member or neighbor who emigrated; they did what Appadurai calls spread stories of possible lives.

These primordial forms of mass media and communication achieved was not dissimilar from the effects that Appadurai describes for the present moment, especially in regard to locality. German-Americans in their understanding as Germans and their sense of belonging to the larger German-speaking world, developed this understanding

---

<sup>8</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Public Worlds ; v. 1 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 53.

<sup>9</sup> Hermann Raster, “Raster Letter to Askan Raster,” April 30, 1855, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

through similar means that Appadurai saw in contemporary formations of ethnic identities, especially regarding the role of news flows across national borders.<sup>10</sup> Media—in the case of this study, newspapers—served to create a somewhat coherent community across vast distances. The German-American newspapers allowed the members of the German diaspora in the United States to retain a feeling of belonging to the larger German-speaking world.

Sociologists Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper suggest that the analytical concept of “identity” especially in the context of nationalism in the way that Anderson described it, needed reconsideration.<sup>11</sup> They recommend an understanding of “identity” not just as a passive category, but as the result of a deliberate action. The German-Americans of the mid-nineteenth century classified themselves as Germans and as Americans, with both categories melting together over time to arrive at the hyphenated characteristic of German-American. Anglo-Americans mostly identified these immigrants as Germans. This outside classification then also underwent significant changes over time. Identity is not just a passive category of analysis, but often one that is practiced. The German-Americans practiced their overlapping and increasingly hybridized identities with growing intensity over time.<sup>12</sup> Historians Jan Assmann and Swiss cultural scholar Jürgen Straub defined collective identity in similar ways, namely that collective identities, as in the identities of relatively closed groups of people, are

---

<sup>10</sup> Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 64.

<sup>11</sup> Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, “Beyond ‘Identity,’” *Theory and Society* 29, no. 1 (2000): 1–47, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1007068714468>.

<sup>12</sup> Brubaker and Cooper, 19.



always constructs describing commonalities among individual members. These commonalities are usually ways in which the individuals making up the group refer and relate to the world at large as well as to one another. Assmann stressed that the strength of a group identity is defined by how much or little the individual members of the group are motivated to act by the collective shared identity.<sup>13</sup> Out of this definition of collective identity would follow that a group such as the German-American forty-eighters were indeed representing a collective identity. The forty-eighters frequently referred to themselves as such, engaged in activities that reinforced the memory of the revolutions, and their revolutionary experience explicitly informed their thoughts and actions into their old age.

This larger, German-speaking ethnoscape was the German “Kulturkreis” or cultural sphere. This entity was complex, non-localized and constituted through the movement of people who shared characteristics that Assmann, Straub, Brubaker and Cooper make out as markers of collective and national identities. German-Americans referred to themselves as Germans—and were referred to by Anglo-Americans as such as well. They shared certain socio-economic backgrounds, traditions, experiences, ways of acting and ways of life, and largely maintained these characteristics even when they moved away from their home country. Movement of people, goods, and ideas by means of steamship, newspaper, letter and telegram then served to maintain these characteristics, while simultaneously tying the disparate nodes of the German cultural sphere together across vast distances.

---

<sup>13</sup> Jürgen Straub, “Personale und kollektive Identität. Zur Analyse eines theoretischen Begriffs,” in *Identitäten*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Heidrun Friese (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999), 103.

The bulk of this study consists of a discursive analysis of events as they were presented on the pages of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*.<sup>14</sup> These reports, editorials and articles are then juxtaposed—where possible—with how other newspapers reported on the same events and complemented with other primary source materials, especially private and professional correspondence. Through these close readings of events, a dense, local history of the German-American community in Chicago and the people who drove many of the important decisions emerges. This study retraces how German immigrants in the nineteenth century perceived the world they inhabited, how that world was both presented to and reflected by them. I also seek to pinpoint how the national identities—especially the hyphenated immigrant identity of German-American—emerged, and how both this identity changed over time. I also strive to further an understanding of immigrant communities not as isolated, confined entities, but as nodes in a much larger network. The Germans of Chicago were not limited to their immediate surroundings in terms of their perception, interaction and impact, but were connected to those who shared their language and culture—across the United States and the world.

### **Historiography**

The phenomenon of the German forty-eighters in the United States has been explored in depth and detail both in the United States and in Germany. A standard volume on the forty-eighters in the United States is Bruce Levine's *The Spirit of 1848*

---

<sup>14</sup> Proper accreditation of most individual newspaper articles, whether they were published in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* or the *Chicago Tribune* or in newspapers published in Germany is not possible in most cases. Newspapers of the nineteenth century generally did not feature bylines for individual articles. Therefore, the bulk of the primary sources that I found in the newspapers have no credited authors in my citations, even in cases where I can be fairly certain but not absolutely sure who the original author was.

(1992).<sup>15</sup> Levine focuses on the labor aspects of the forty-eighter movement. His work analyzes in great detail the differences in wages and fates that different trades could expect in the U.S. compared to the immigrants' home countries. Levine counters a prevalent assumption in the historiography of the forty-eighter generation—namely that all forty-eighters were upper-class academics. In reality, the revolutions were largely carried out by regular working-class people, who also made up the bulk of those emigrating from Germany to the United States in the period following the upheavals. Levine argues that the cultural values and traditions the immigrants brought with them formed and informed their interactions with American institutions and thus their hyphenated identity. Levine examines a broad swath of the German-American immigrant population, providing a solid base that informs and undergirds my work. However, his study ends with the Civil War.

Daniel Nagel's *Von republikanischen Deutschen zu deutsch-amerikanischen Republikanern* (2012), details the origins of German republican ideas and how those were eventually transplanted to the US.<sup>16</sup> Nagel argues that entering American politics was a decisive moment in the formation of a German-American identity and was also a step into the direction of Americanization. Nagel analyzes the integration of forty-eighters into American politics, the confrontation the German immigrants faced from nativists, and how the forty-eighter republicans joined the Republican Party against the southern slavocracy. Unlike Levine, Nagel's work is more centered on the Civil War experience and how the forty-eighters entered the world of American politics. Nagel

---

<sup>15</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*.

<sup>16</sup> Nagel, *Von republikanischen Deutschen zu deutsch-amerikanischen Republikanern*.

provides much needed historical background for my work, detailing the geographic and political origins of the forty-eighters. However, the time frame he takes under consideration and his approach to the identity formation and political integration of the forty-eighters is focuses on the decade of the 1850s, ending with the Civil War.

Sabine Freitag's biography of forty-eighter hero Friedrich Hecker delivers a very deep portrayal of the veteran of the Baden revolution who fought prominently in the American Civil War.<sup>17</sup> Freitag's work is based on an exhaustive source base, and allows very revealing insights into the forty-eighter mindset through the lens of one singular career. She details where Hecker acquired his political ideology, his identification as a German, a forty-eighter and a German-American. Due to the connectedness of the forty-eighter circles in the United States, her work also reveals many useful details about Hecker's connections to the *Staats-Zeitung*.

The historiography on nineteenth-century media, particularly newspapers, is sizable. These include works written on the German-American press. The most important is Carl Wittke's *The German Language Press in America* (1957).<sup>18</sup> He covers a long-time span, beginning with the very first German language newspaper printed in Pennsylvania in 1732 and concluding with the collapse of the German newspaper landscape in the wake of America's entry into World War I. Historians have written books on German-American media since, but in most cases these works focus, like Wittke, on larger scale analysis. Studies like Eliot Shore's *The German-American Radical Press* focus on particular aspects of the German-American newspaper

---

<sup>17</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*.

<sup>18</sup> Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America*.

landscape, they do not center on an individual publication. George Douglas' *The Golden Age of Newspaper* (1999) provides an overview of the nineteenth-century American press environment.<sup>19</sup> This study essentially traces the rise of newspapers as the prime medium of information, from the infancy in the early Republic to the Great Depression and the ascendancy of radio.

A large volume of literature from both shores of the Atlantic exists that analyses various aspects of the 1848 revolutions themselves, without concentrating on the subsequent exile and immigration to the U.S. Niklas Lenhard-Schramm analyses the way academics, and professors of history especially, played into the conception of German nationality and the idea of German nationhood in the revolutionary context with his *Konstrukteure der Nation* (2014).<sup>20</sup> Lenhard-Schramm follows the question of how German scholars of history developed a concept of nationality, and how they then projected this supposedly timeless concept backwards in time. Brian E. Vick's *Defining Germany* (2002) focuses on the conception of German national identity leading up to the 1848 revolution, and how the revolutionaries defined nationality.<sup>21</sup> Through this, Vick analyses the concept of nation and state, following the question of what idea of nationhood and nationality the Frankfurt parliamentarians held, how these concepts evolved prior to 1848, and the defining moments for the generation of intellectuals who are the subject of my work. Justine Davis Randers-Pehrson's *Germans and the*

---

<sup>19</sup> George H Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999).

<sup>20</sup> Niklas Lenhard-Schramm, *Konstrukteure der Nation Geschichtswissenschaftler als politische Akteure in Vormärz und Revolution 1848/49* (Münster, Westf: Waxmann, 2014).

<sup>21</sup> Brian E. Vick, *Defining Germany : The 1848 Frankfurt Parliamentarians and National Identity*, Harvard Historical Studies ; v. 143 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002).

*Revolution of 1848-49* (1999) delivers a broad overview of the revolutions in the German speaking countries of Europe.<sup>22</sup>

Another important aspect of the developing German sense of national identity were associations of the Turner and the singing societies. Dieter Düding sheds light on both in *Organisierter Gesellschaftlicher Widerstand* (1984),<sup>23</sup> detailing how the two institutions sprang into existence in the later years of Napoleonic occupation and the early years of the Congress of Vienna. He interrogates how these associations' were organized, communicated and socially structured and how they became catalysts of nationalist fervor between 1808 and the failure of the revolutions in 1849. Since the individuals my intended work analyzes were either themselves members of societies like these or at least influenced by the ideology and politics that these societies stood for, Düding provides vital background information.

The existing scholarship on Chicago during the mid to late nineteenth century focuses on specific aspects of the city's history and either does not center on the German-Americans or emphasizes different facets of German-American life than me. Historian John Jentz examines the immigration and labor issues of the Gilded Age.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Justine Davis Randers-Pehrson, *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849*, New German-American Studies ; Vol. 18 (New York: PLang, 1999).

<sup>23</sup> Dieter Düding, *Organisierter gesellschaftlicher Nationalismus in Deutschland (1808-1847): Bedeutung und Funktion der Turner- und Sängervereine für die deutsche Nationalbewegung* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1984).

<sup>24</sup> Jentz co-authored the seminal *Chicago in the Age of Capital* (2012) with Mark Schneirov. Jentz also published *German Workers in Chicago* (1988), a collection of translated primary source texts, with Hartmut Keil. John B. Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (University of Illinois Press, 2012) Hartmut Keil, John B. Jentz, and Chicago Project, *German Workers in Chicago : A Documentary History of Working-Class Culture from 1850 to World War I*, *The Working Class in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

Karen Sawislak closely covers the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 as well as the fallout of the conflagration up until the mid-1870s, analyzing the impact of the fire on the city's multinational social fabric.<sup>25</sup> Carl Smith delivers in minute detail a thick breakdown of the events of the fire, and chronicles meticulously the aftereffects the fire had on various aspects of Chicagoans' lives in the years after.<sup>26</sup> James Green continues where the works of Sawislak and Smith leave off, delivering an in-depth analysis of the labor unrest in Chicago following the Panic of 1873, detailing the role that the various immigrant elements played in the city and how immigrant workers contributed and were swept up in the labor unrest.<sup>27</sup> Rudolf Hofmeister's *Germans of Chicago* (1976) provides a good overview on the German-American history of the city in the nineteenth century.<sup>28</sup> Lastly, Stanley Nadel's *Little Germany* (1990) delivers an in-depth analysis of the German-American community of New York City between 1845 and 1880. While analyzing an altogether different node of German America, Nadel's work nonetheless provides an excellent breakdown of the social and demographic composition of German immigration to the United States, as well as a succinct summary of the situation in German-speaking Europe that led to the wave of emigration from Germany in the 1840s and 50s.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Karen Sawislak, *Smoldering City: Chicagoans and the Great Fire, 1871-1874* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

<sup>26</sup> Carl Smith, *Chicago's Great Fire: The Destruction and Resurrection of an Iconic American City* (Newburyport, UNITED STATES: Grove Atlantic, 2020), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=6184525>.

<sup>27</sup> James R Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement, and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006).

<sup>28</sup> Rudolf Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago* (Champaign, Ill.: Stipes Pub. Co., 1976).

<sup>29</sup> Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany : Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845-80* (Urbana : University of Illinois Press, 1990), <http://archive.org/details/littlegermanyethooonade>.

None of these historians center on the German-American journalistic community of Chicago, or a history of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*.<sup>30</sup> This study examines a generation of German immigrants and the mark they left on their community, the struggles they faced and the changes both they themselves but also the community from which they came and served during the roughly thirty years between their arrival and the Great Railroad Strike.

---

<sup>30</sup> The Staats-Zeitung institutional archives appear to be lost, so writing a history of the newspaper as such is not easily possible, and this dissertation is not claiming to be one.



## CHAPTER 1

### OUT OF MANY—NONE

#### **The Failed Revolution of 1848 in Germany and the People it Produced**

“I am employed here with a German daily newspaper, and have already become so thoroughly Americanized, that I have only half-shriveled sympathies left for the soil I was born on. Especially European politics bore me to death, and I am gripped by dread when a steamship arrives from Liverpool, meaning I have to write a political overview on the developments in the old country.”<sup>1</sup> This was what German-American newspaperman Hermann Raster wrote to his former mentor Dr. Carl Elze, briefly after Raster began his work for the *New York Abendzeitung* (New York Evening Newspaper) in 1852. Raster—who later in his life worked as editor-in-chief for the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* in Chicago—arrived in the United States in 1851. He was forced to flee his native Duchy of Anhalt-Dessau, a small statelet in the Northern German Confederation after taking part in the 1848 democratic, nationalist revolutions. He was a forty-eighter, a refugee of the failed revolutions in Germany. Throughout his life as a German-American he wrote for various German-language newspapers in America, but also as a foreign correspondent for newspapers in Germany. He was a thoroughly transnational

---

<sup>1</sup> Hermann Raster, “Raster Letter to Elze, New York,” July 2, 1852, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

character, and his life's work connected the German-speaking, transnational cultural sphere between the United States and Europe.

This chapter lays out what conditions in early to mid-nineteenth century Germany led to the revolutions of 1848 that Hermann Raster and his brothers in arms partook. At the center of the chapter are the biographies of a number of individuals who fled from Germany to the United States. These men rose over time to leading positions in the German-American community in Chicago and to editorship and ownership positions at the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. Four men, all of whom became American citizens eventually, played key roles in the success of the Chicago newspaper: Anton Caspar Hesing, Lorenz Brentano, Wilhelm Rapp and Hermann Raster. Through the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, these men influenced the immigrant community that constituted the newspaper's readership. They shaped the way their readers perceived events in the United States and abroad, they organized their countrymen to further political agendas, and they provided a vital connection between the German diaspora of Chicago and the German homeland. They represent the protagonists of this study.

The 1848 revolutions represented the formation of a transnational, nationality-based, German ethnoscape. The ring leaders of the revolutions attempted an organization of their country as a nation-state of the people, of the nation, along lines of nationality and ethnicity that were negotiated and explored in the process of the uprisings. They rejected a country defined along lines of ancient regime politics and state borders negotiated—and exploited—by noblemen. The years of 1848 and 1849 in Germany were as chaotic as the country itself was disparate and divided within. These circumstances make the uprisings difficult to understand in detail, since many of these

revolutionary activities happened simultaneously, across several individual political entities, all of which were reacting to a plethora of popular and political grievances that shared similar characteristics but differed in terms of peculiarities. The revolutions were crucially important for the lives of all the German-American leaders of German Chicago. These four men claimed the banner of “forty-eighter,” and eventually came to Chicago, some for their own reasons, some because they were directly called by the owners and publishers to work at the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. They became thought leaders of the local German-American community and the German-speaking ethnoscape at large.

### **The Revolutions in Germany**

The events of March 1848 and the months that followed in the various statelets that made up the German Confederation did not appear out of thin air. The revolutionary uprisings were the result of decades of reactionary governance by a calcified system of aristocracy that desperately clung to power and rejected any changes that threatened a diminishing of aristocratic standing and influence. The result was a country divided into a hodge-podge of statelets, customs entities, principalities and free cities, without much of a central government keeping them together, save for the strongest kingdoms in the Confederation: the Habsburgian Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Prussia with its landed *Junker* aristocracy. Those two powers dominated the German Confederacy—but they did not rule all the lands directly. The Confederacy was a loose assemblage of statelets, not a centrally-governed nation state. This arrangement resulted in the German statelets’ comparatively backwards condition in terms of progress and industrialization—especially compared to their European neighbors to the West like France and the United Kingdom. The aristocracy demanded a

substantial share of everything produced on their lands, be it monetary or material. Numerous customs borders impeded trade across the confederacy as well as the exchange of ideas. These circumstances contributed to Germany's late arrival to industrialization. But although the political organization of the German statelets shut out their population from industrialization, the German rulers could not shield the people on the ground from its global effects.<sup>2</sup>

Industrialization occurred across different parts of Europe at different times, in a staggered process across the continent. Modern industries first emerged in Britain and then roughly moved eastward. Commodities producing manufacturing sectors made up by small manufacturers working in their own shops changed into commodities producing industries dominated by larger scale facilities. With that came social upheaval in different parts of the continent, since the new larger scale facilities had little to no need for the small manufacturers and artisans they replaced. But these effects were felt further afield than just at any producing locale. Cheaply-produced industrial goods rivaled the traditionally manufactured ones, even in places that had not yet industrialized themselves. The combination of local aristocracy's demand for high taxes and tributes from their citizenry on the one hand and a steep decline in incomes due to the market saturation with industrially-produced goods on the other resulted in an increasingly impoverished and also increasingly restive populace. These dynamics led to popular uprisings, like that of the Silesian weavers in 1844. But they also contributed to a steep rise in unemployment, especially in German urban centers. Then, two years of

---

<sup>2</sup> Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany : Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845-80* (Urbana : University of Illinois Press, 1990), 17, <http://archive.org/details/littlegermanyetho00nade>.

poor harvests in 1846 and 1847 befell Europe, which sharply increased the price of food, which in turn lowered the money people had available for any other goods, leading to the depression of 1847.<sup>3</sup>

German agriculture in general dramatically improved in the preceding decades as a general result of global innovations in fertilization and the wide-spread adoption of the potato as a staple crop in the early nineteenth century. This, in combination with improvements in general hygiene resulted in a population boom, as more children survived into adulthood without dying of diseases brought on by poor hygienic conditions or malnutrition. These changes, in turn, had an overall negative effect on agricultural producers. The population boom impacted how lucrative agricultural production was, due to the antiquated inheritance practices, which saw a division of land owned by a father among all sons. In that part of Germany this resulted in the distribution of ever shrinking parcels of land among heirs, which could no longer sustain the landowners.

Not all parts of the German confederation had the same inheritance traditions however. But even those regions that differed from the above outlined practices suffered. Some areas of the country practiced primogeniture inheritance, where the eldest son inherited all the lands of his father. Primogeniture, however, led to social issues as well. The boom in population resulted in a large number of landless young men who due to declining economic opportunities found it increasingly difficult to support themselves and their families. The compartmentalization of land and an incessantly

---

<sup>3</sup> Justine Davis Randers-Pehrson, *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849* (New York: PLang, 1999), 185.

shrinking amount of opportunities for many contributed to a wave of emigration from Germany to the Americas in the 1830s and early 1840s. In some instances, as in the case of the German settlement of Texas, these emigration movements were directly guided and initialized by German nobility.<sup>4</sup>

But to emigrate out of Germany before the revolutions was by no means an easy feat. The German states had numerous laws and regulations in place that sought to curb, not aid, emigration. These policies originated from the age of mercantilism, when it was generally assumed that any person leaving the country would be a material detriment, and should be strictly limited, if not outlawed. In the nineteenth century German emigration regulation generally eased, however. The conditions that a male German emigrant had to fulfill were mostly that he had completed his military service duties, that he was not leaving behind any minor children, that he was not involved in any legal processes, and lastly that he had paid a ten percent tax on all the assets leaving the country. When Germans emigrated, they relinquished all entitlements of the German state towards them. And since Germany at the time was still a fully patriarchal society where women lacked many rights, these laws pertained mostly to men. If women wanted to emigrate, they had to do so as parts of their spouse's household. While this was the general shape of emigration legislation the laws of the individual German states nevertheless differed from one another slightly. Various groups of people formed

---

<sup>4</sup> Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov, *German Seed in Texas Soil; Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth-Century Texas* (University of Texas Press, 1966), 38.

emigration, immigration, and colonization societies to ameliorate the shortcomings of the German Confederation's lacking emigration policies.<sup>5</sup>

Much more common, however, were individuals and their families emigrating on their own impulse. One such case was Anton Caspar Hesing, who rose to prominence in Chicago's German-American community in the late 1850s, became Sheriff of Cook County in the early 1860s and subsequently the sole owner and publisher of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. He was one of Chicago's most important German-born political leaders. Hesing was not an intellectual, and he was not a part of the forty-eighter cohort of emigrés, nor did he take part in the revolutions, as he left his home country at the age of just sixteen in the year 1839. The son of a brewer, he learned the baker's trade. As an apprentice, he fell out with his master. After his father's death young Hesing relinquished his inheritance to his siblings and decided to immigrate to the United States. Since he was young and left the country without any noteworthy assets, he did not have to pay any substantial taxes, did not leave any minor children, nor was he involved in legal processes.<sup>6</sup> Hesing first settled in Cincinnati, Ohio where he worked as a store clerk at a grocer's before entering the world of American politics with the Whig Party. He became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1847.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Günter Moltmann, *Deutsche Amerikaauswanderung im 19. Jahrhundert: sozialgeschichtl. Beiträge* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1976), 106.

<sup>6</sup> "Die Collyer-Hesing'sche Correspondenz," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 23, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>7</sup> Edmund Deuss, "Anton Caspar Hesing - Ein Charakterbild aus der Sturm- und Drangzeit der Deutschen in Amerika," in *Deutsch-amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, by Deutsche-amerikanische historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, vol. XI (Deutsch-Amerikanische Historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, 1911), 242, <http://archive.org/details/deutschamerikani11deut>.

Due to his earlier arrival in America and his work experience in several trades, and in American politics, Hesing had a better understanding of the social and political environment of the United States than did his later colleagues and subordinates at the



Figure 1. Anton Hesing as he appeared in the prime of life, approximately 1870. *Staats-Zeitung*. He was in some ways a personality that straddled two generations of German-American immigrants. His involvement with the Whig Party from the early 1840s on also made him stand out, since most immigrants who developed an interest in American politics at this time allied with the Democratic Party, which catered to immigrant interests much stronger than the Whigs. Also, he was no revolutionary. He had no consequences to fear when returning to Germany, which he did, briefly, in 1847. On this journey he met the woman who would become his wife, Louisa, whom he took back with him to Cincinnati. Hesing illustrated the transnational character of German



migration, and how the German-speaking ethnoscape took shape. He personified the movement of people back and forth across national—and natural—borders.

Meanwhile, the dire situation in the German countryside led to a growth of urban populations by about fifty percent between 1830 and 1840. Most of these new urban dwellers had no access to trades in the established estate system or to guild-protected positions. Up until the later nineteenth century Germany was one of the last regions in Europe where these vestiges of medieval social structures thrived. With the more lucrative trades barred for them, all that was left for this growing part of the urban population was unskilled labor. However, this did not result in a boom in factory work or industrial output. By the middle of the nineteenth century more than five times the number of Germans found employment in small scale production facilities and workshops than in larger scale industrial production facilities. This, too, was an expression of the stunted state of affairs in the German Confederacy. As historian Bruce Levine demonstrates, the traditional crafts and modes of production were essentially failing to compete with goods produced in more industrialized countries. But the political strength of the estates and the general unwillingness of the ruling strata to allow for changes prevented a faster pace of industrialization across the various statelets and kingdoms. These socio-political circumstances essentially trapped large parts of the working population in elevated poverty.<sup>8</sup>

Since Germany was a fragmented landscape of disparate statelets—a collection of states with little in terms of national cohesion beyond a shared language—nationalism

---

<sup>8</sup> Bruce C. Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 31.

as such emerged relatively late in the country when compared with other European nation-states. One series of events that served as an early catalyst for German nationalism were the Napoleonic Wars and subsequent subversion of Germany under French rule between 1802 and 1815. Under Napoleon, the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation came to an end. The French rulers engaged in a process of consolidation. In 1789 at the beginning of the French Revolution, more than three hundred German statelets existed. Only about forty survived, however, by the Congress of Vienna in 1814.<sup>9</sup> But more than a consolidating factor, Napoleonic rule also provided Germans with a collective enemy and a unifying experience. Veterans of the German War of Liberation of 1813 were among the first, new, progressive nationalists, who felt their fealty belonged not to the aristocratic, noble rulers of their land, but to the people, to the nation. One of those veterans was Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, who, among Germans even today is known as *Turnvater Jahn*—Jahn, father of gymnastics”—the founder of the *Turnverein*.<sup>10</sup>

The *Turnverein* was an organization that united political zeal with bodily exercise. The early “Turners” were all veterans of the Napoleonic Wars, practicing gymnastics to strengthen their bodies while also discussing national politics at their gatherings. Their motto was *mens sano, corpore sana* or “sound mind, sound body,” inspired by classical Roman poet Juvenal, emphasizing the late enlightenment prominence of classical traditions among German scholars and academics. Jahn and his disciples formalized gymnastic practices and met for collective training exercises and

---

<sup>9</sup> Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Nationalismus: Geschichte, Formen, Folgen* (Munich: C.H. Beck Verlag, 2019), 63.

<sup>10</sup> Randers-Pehrson, *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849*, 76.

political discussions, beginning in 1811 in the *Hasenheide* field, then just outside the gates of the Prussian capital city of Berlin. Jahn was the only one of the early nationalists who managed to put his nationalist ideals into practice. German historian Dieter Düring commented that while the Prussian state banned the *Turnverein* as an organization that intended to change the kingdom's constitution, Prussia was still a better place for the gymnasts' association—and for organized, societal nationalism—to flourish in comparison with other German statelets. The Turner movement prospered and eventually became the one nationalist organization with the highest membership count—rivalled only by the collective of nationalist singing societies.<sup>11</sup>

The Turners were also socially diverse. Although the movement was founded by an intellectual, the *Turnverein* did not discriminate based on social background or occupation. Membership was however initially limited to men only. The *Turnverein* was only one of many young men's associations that arose from the wake of the Napoleonic Wars and the subsequent re-entrenchment of the aristocracy following the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The groups founded later included the *Burschenschaften*—fraternities of university students—and other organizations that recruited their membership out of the politically-charged academic milieu as well as nationalist *Gesangsvereine* or singing societies.<sup>12</sup>

All of the various social and economic problems that plagued the German-speaking states were exacerbated by the bad harvests in 1846 and 1847. Combined with

---

<sup>11</sup> Dieter Düring, *Organisierter gesellschaftlicher Nationalismus in Deutschland (1808-1847): Bedeutung und Funktion der Turner- und Sängervereine für die deutsche Nationalbewegung* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1984), 41.

<sup>12</sup> Randers-Pehrson, *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849*, 76.

a financial crisis, social unrest ran rampant. Then the French monarchy collapsed in the February Revolution of 1848 after the government outlawed all attempts to introduce universal suffrage. The revolution in France was an uprising of the working strata of society, violently opposed to the bourgeoisie that supported the reign of Louis Phillippe I. The uprisings in France terrified the German nobility across the Confederacy. The rulers of the middling states, the statelets situated between Prussia in the north and Bavaria and Austria in the south, sought to ameliorate the revolutionary rumblings by appointing liberal opposition politicians to their governments.<sup>13</sup>

Meanwhile, King Leopold of Belgium expelled a young radical agitator by the name of Karl Marx. He was active in the liberal circles of Brussels, and Leopold sent him back to Prussia. There Marx settled in Cologne, where he regrouped with others from his Brussels circle. The Marxists went straight to work, publishing the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (New Rhenish Newspaper), on the pages of which they called for a unified, democratic Germany and war with Russia. Cologne was a part of Prussia, and Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV was suddenly beset on all sides, as other aristocrats across the country looked to him for relief.<sup>14</sup> Prussia was, after all, one of the biggest and militarily strongest members of the confederation, and the aristocratic rulers were frightened by the sudden revolutionary agitation spreading among their people. On March 18, 1848 riots and eventually pitched barricade street battles broke out on the streets of Berlin. Masses of unemployed workers and disgruntled citizens unleashed their anger at the monarchy that had up to this point ignored petitions for social and

---

<sup>13</sup> Randers-Pehrson, 221.

<sup>14</sup> Randers-Pehrson, 218.

economic reform. The Prussian king fled Berlin for a few days, and upon his return conceded to the formation of a national constituent assembly. This assembly was supposed to transition the Kingdom of Prussia into a constitutional monarchy that was to become a part of a greater Germany. “From here on, Prussia shall dissolve into Germany!” the king wrote in a leaflet spread throughout the city.<sup>15</sup> The king adopted the German national of colors, black, red and gold, and promised sweeping reforms and concessions towards the revolution.<sup>16</sup>

These colors of the new Germany were previously adopted by the revolutionary assemblies in Frankfurt am Main, which declared that the flag of the revolutionary German Federation would be black, red and gold. These were the colors that Friedrich Jahn, the Turner and the *Burschenschaften* used to rally support for a German nationalist cause. In various other states of the German Confederation revolutionary uprisings toppled aristocratic rule, setting up democratically-elected assemblies. The Frankfurt assembly was supposed to act as a coordinating political body, which some revolutionaries intended to eventually turn into a fully-fledged revolutionary government for the whole of Germany. The revolution had arrived in the heart of Germany.<sup>17</sup>

After revolutionary victories in Berlin and Vienna, the assembly in Frankfurt am Main prepared to set up a provisional government for the whole area of the German

---

<sup>15</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm von Hohenzollern, *Flugschriften 1848 / An Mein Volk Und an Die Deutsche Nation* (Berlin: Decker, 1848), <https://sammlungen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/1848/content/titleinfo/2231883>.

<sup>16</sup> Manfred Görtemaker, *Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert: Entwicklungslinien* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1996), 81.

<sup>17</sup> Randers-Pehrson, *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849*, 241.

Confederation. The assembly leaders demanded the abolition of hereditary titles and rulers, calling for the creation of a parliamentary system based on the federalist example of the United States of America.<sup>18</sup> The United States served as their role model—a federal, democratic republic with no hereditary titles or nobility and no influence of any official, organized religion or church upon the state. The role the U.S. played in the political ideology of the revolutionaries was the primary reason they emigrated there after the revolutions' collapse. But ultimately, the leaders' petitions were ignored, as the demands struck the majority of parliamentarians as too radical, too easily inviting open revolution and violence instead of the preferred slower, more moderate process of compromise.<sup>19</sup>

The majority, and especially the more conservative members, aimed for a constitutional monarchy instead of a federal republic. After all, the reign of terror that followed the French Revolution of 1789, in which tens of thousands were killed in political and social upheavals, was still too present in the minds of most people at the time. Few serious politicians had any interest in fomenting similar circumstances on German soil. The parliamentarians decided to create an assembly that included representatives from all the states currently present, but also of states whose membership in the German Confederacy was tentative—Schleswig, Eastern and Western Prussia. Unlike the French revolution of 1848, which was initiated and carried out by working people, the so-called fourth estate, the German revolution was instigated by

---

<sup>18</sup> Gustav von Struve, "Antrag Gustav von Struve an Das Frankfurter Nationalparlament," March 31, 1848, [http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage\\_id=434](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage_id=434).

<sup>19</sup> Carl J. Friedrich, "The European Background," in *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 11.

members of the bourgeoisie. The assemblymen were academics, lawyers and public officials, merchants and landowners—entirely lacking in any representation of the common people. German historian Manfred Görtemaker observes that the composition was one of the primary reasons that the assembly in general had a distaste for outright revolution and instead opted for compromise.<sup>20</sup>

The national assembly that followed this *Vorparlament* (pre-parliament, indicating that this governing body was not yet fully formed) became known as the *Paulskirchenparlament*—the parliament of St. Paul’s Church—which proceeded to engage in long-winded discussions and negotiations of how to effectively create the German nation-state. Who was supposed to be included? Who was German? Who was not? How exactly was this new state to be governed? Many of the disparate revolutionists of Frankfurt looked to the United States as inspiration, seeking to model Germany on the federal system that formed out of many, one. But ultimately, no working resolution emerged out of St. Paul’s Church, and weeks of debate turned into months of dragging stalemate.<sup>21</sup>

The delegates in Frankfurt discussed many different aspects of this new idea of Germany. What did being German mean in the first place? Should the new country’s internal borders and boundaries be based on the existing ones? Should natural boundaries like rivers and mountains serve as political borders? Should they be redrawn, akin to the state boundaries in the United States? Another issue was that different groups within the assembly held on to differing convictions in terms of what to

---

<sup>20</sup> Görtemaker, *Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert*, 100.

<sup>21</sup> Friedrich, “The European Background,” 6.

base German-ness on in the first place, in what historian Brian Vick called “competing visions of a German golden age.”<sup>22</sup> Should the new political entity be a callback to the conditions found in Tacitus’ *Germania*? Or should the point of reference be the peak years of the Holy Roman Empire? Who should be the new national symbol? Perhaps Arminius, or “Herman the German” as the English-speaking world calls the man who led the Germans’ to victory over the Roman legions in the Teutoburg Forest? Or maybe legendary medieval emperor Frederick Barbarossa?

In many ways the deliberations at St. Paul’s Church in Frankfurt, while dysfunctional for the purpose of creating a new political state, were still highly informative on the self-identification of the assemblymen and their milieu. The debate on the nature of what kind of German nation state should be birthed provided insight into the formation of a national identity that went beyond place of birth and primary language. The delegates expanded these discussions into discourses on citizenship rights as well, intending to grant those rights independent of culture or language, allowing the inclusion into the body politic of non-Germanic Germans as well.<sup>23</sup> These discussions established a stronger concept of nationality that went beyond an allegiance to a ruling figure and an arbitrarily drawn line on the map. These deliberations on the nature of the German nation would stay with the revolutionaries for the rest of their lives, informing how they saw themselves, and how they saw both their countrymen and their people, and their nation.

---

<sup>22</sup> Brian E. Vick, *Defining Germany : The 1848 Frankfurt Parliamentarians and National Identity* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), 52.

<sup>23</sup> Vick, 112.



The negotiations over what it meant to be German established a German ethnoscape before a German nation-state as such existed. The forty-eighter revolutionaries felt a fealty that was towards the people, towards their cultural circle, their ethnicity, more so than to any of the existing political entities that organized said people, and thus their loyalty was less to the concrete German Confederation and more to the German ethnoscape as an expression of ethnic identity that transcended existing nation-state borders to begin with. The 1848 revolution represented a political expression of the ethnoscape, since here people attempted an organization of the people, of the nation, along new lines of nationality and ethnicity rather than along lines of ancient regime politics and state borders negotiated by noblemen.

The national assembly's task of creating a constitution for all of Germany and transform the nation was difficult. The situation was exacerbated by several internal and external factors. The most important immediate issue for the national assembly to solve was whether Austria or Prussia should become the predominant force in the newly created German nation state. Austria came with the complications that only parts of the Habsburg empire belonged to the German Confederacy. Long debates ensued, at the end of which in March 1849 the so-called "small-German solution" prevailed that denied Austria inclusion to the new nation-state while giving the position of predominant power within the new Germany to Prussia and the Hohenzollern king. This alienated Austria from the rest of the German Confederation—and laid the foundations for the enmities that would two decades later result in the Austro-Prussian war. The national assembly subsequently elected Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm IV to the position of

*Kaiser*, the emperor of all Germans, the constitution turning Germany into a constitutional monarchy.<sup>24</sup>

But Friedrich Wilhelm rejected the national assembly's crown. This refusal of Prussia to join the new political entity the national assembly sought to create signaled the ultimate failure of the revolution. Without either Prussia nor Austria, the rest of the German statelets could hardly hope to form a cohesive German country. Prussia recalled its representatives from the national assembly on May 14, 1849. The national assembly fell apart in the subsequent months, while smaller, localized revolutionary efforts like



Figure 2. Map of the Grand Duchy of Baden, 1819-1945, ([https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bf/Map of Baden \(1819-1945\).png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bf/Map_of_Baden_(1819-1945).png) accessed April 2, 2021).

<sup>24</sup> “DocumentArchiv.de - Verfassung Des Deutschen Reiches [’Frankfurter Reichsverfassung’] (28.03.1849),” accessed July 2, 2020, <http://www.documentarchiv.de/nzjh/verfdr1848.htm>.

those in Saxony and Baden were crushed by the military might of the reactionary forces, led by Prussia.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Baden Revolution**

The revolutionary activities that unfolded in the Grand Duchy of Baden were closely connected to those in Frankfurt. This connection was both due to the Grand Duchy's—relatively—close proximity to the Frankfurt and due to many influential Baden revolutionaries, like von Struve, who made their debut on the national stage at the Paulskirche. Baden's geographic location, bordering on Switzerland to the south and France to the west, made it a refuge of revolutionary political thought. The Grand Duchy was one of the more liberal German states to begin with, and it long since fostered a politically radical fringe that came to the fore in the years of the revolutions.<sup>26</sup> In the year before the revolution, Baden had seen a rise in extra-parliamentary agitation with the passing of the Thirteen Articles of Offenburg, a political declaration of liberal opposition towards the government. The Thirteen Articles were championed by Friedrich Hecker, a Mannheim lawyer and speaker of the liberal and democratic opposition in the second chamber of the Baden government in Karlsruhe.

Another Mannheim lawyer and member of the Baden parliament was Lorenz Brentano. Like Hecker, Brentano played an important role in the subsequent Baden uprising, and had a hand in formulating and furthering the Offenburg Articles and the demands towards the Baden government and nobility that followed from them. The Offenburg Articles were central to the ongoing democratic opposition across the country

---

<sup>25</sup> Randers-Pehrson, *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849*, 458.

<sup>26</sup> Randers-Pehrson, 292.

and were sometimes collectively referred to as the “March Program”: freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, members of the military swearing their oath towards the



Figure 3. Ludwig Wagner - Lithographic Portrait Painting of Lorenz Brentano (1848). constitution instead of a noble sovereign, jury courts and equal access to education for all.<sup>27</sup> Hecker became one of the central figures in the Baden revolution. As a representative of the Baden government, he joined the *Vorparlament* in Frankfurt.

The revolutionaries that made up the parliaments were by no means homogenous. These were men of widely differing affiliations who split into political factions. Even within the left wing of the parliament little cohesion or unity existed. This was especially frustrating to the radicals like Gustav von Struve, Hecker and their ilk, who wanted to unite Germany as a federal republic with universal male suffrage. But Hecker, like his political mentor von Struve, did not consider how realistic these

---

<sup>27</sup> Sabine Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker: Biographie eines Republikaners* (Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998), 89.

demands were at that particular time. Hecker called for a unified German republic on the second day of the assembly in an impassionate speech. To his chagrin the assembly members overwhelmingly voted for a resolution brought forth by the speaker following Hecker, Heinrich Freiherr von Gagern—a long time, moderate liberal opponent of Hecker’s radical left positions. Von Gagern argued that the best course of action for the parliament would indeed not be to attempt the creation of a republic and a break with the status quo, but rather a careful reform process, turning Germany into a constitutional monarchy. In the following negotiations, von Gagern also prevented Hecker’s attempt at turning the *Vorparlament* into a proper provisional, revolutionary government. Frustrated, Hecker, along with a contingent of republican leftists, took this failure as a sign that the revolution was faltering. He demonstratively walked out of St. Paul’s Church. Hecker and von Struve subsequently left town: “Nothing can be done Frankfurt. We have to strike in Baden.”<sup>28</sup>

On April 12, Hecker proclaimed the Baden Republic in the city of Constance, and began a march of armed volunteers towards Karlsruhe, the residence of the Grand Duke Leopold of Baden. This became known as the *Heckerzug* (Hecker’s trek), a march of revolutionary volunteers across the Black Forest mountains, during which he commanded his volunteers to refrain from any looting and demanded of every man to bring provisions for the march along himself. Along the way he planned to recruit more volunteers and turn the march into a mass movement. But while most of the peasants encountered along the way were broadly sympathetic to the cause, they would not

---

<sup>28</sup> Randers-Pehrson, *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849*, 310.

abandon their farms and fields. Individual local militias joined, and the volunteer army grew slowly as they marched towards the seat of the Baden government to topple it, but not as fast as Hecker and the other leaders hoped. Both Hecker himself and the leader of the reactionary forces were convinced that no actual military action was necessary. But when Hecker's men encountered the federal troops near Kandern, a rogue shot felled the federal commander, General Friedrich von Gagern, a brother of Heinrich, only briefly after he and Hecker had engaged in negotiations. Hecker's volunteers were quickly subdued in the ensuing battle. Hecker, defeated, fled into Swiss exile.<sup>29</sup>

Hecker's defeat laid the groundwork for the subsequent revolutionary actions in Baden. His close friend Lorenz Brentano, who was at the time a deputy in the Baden chamber and representative in the national assembly, defended Hecker's actions towards the newly formed assembly, in an attempt to receive amnesty for Hecker. As a military leader, he had only asked for amnesty for the men who had followed him, but not for himself. But all calls for remission failed. After Hecker had been nominally voted into the national assembly, the assembly leadership refused to acknowledge this vote on the basis of the violence that had ensued and the possibility that he could end up being sued for treason by the reactionaries. Again frustrated by the revolution's leaders, Hecker resigned. He would not return to Germany from his Swiss exile, but leave the European continent all together and emigrate to the United States.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> Sabine Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker: Two Lives for Liberty* (St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 106.

<sup>30</sup> Freitag, 115.

Lorenz Brentano meanwhile became more important both as a deputy to the Frankfurt national assembly and for revolutionary Baden. Hecker's friend spent most of the remainder of 1848 as a public defender of the participants of the *Heckerzug* and other revolutionaries in the trials of republican revolutionaries before the courts in Freiburg and other places. During that year, he was also twice elected mayor of Mannheim, but the city government refused to accept his appointment, due to his revolutionary, republican convictions and involvement in the Frankfurt parliament. Brentano came from a family of Italian Jews who immigrated to Germany from Lombardy in northern Italy at the end of the eighteenth century. The son of a tobacco factory owner out of Mannheim, Lorenz studied law at the universities of Freiburg and Heidelberg, where he joined the nationalist fraternity Corps Germania.<sup>31</sup> Brentano's early life was illustrative of the careers of many of the forty-eighter revolutionary ringleaders, whose university life introduced them to the ideas of German nationalism and republican ideology, igniting in the young men a desire for a more egalitarian, more democratic and unified Germany.

In the following year, the Baden revolution entered a new phase. Revolutionary—but by no means undivided—crowds had gathered in Rastatt, where a *Landesausschuss*—a local political committee—gathered to discuss how to convince the Baden government to implement the new German constitution. Brentano led the moderate wing of the committee, with the intention of keeping revolutionary uprisings and mayhem at a minimum. In Brentano's absence, his radical counterpart pushed

---

<sup>31</sup> Caroline Aberle Brentano et al., eds., *Brentano Family Papers* (Chicago: Chicago History Museum (my translation), n.d.

through that the Baden government must not just accept the Frankfurt constitution, but also support the execution of this constitution in the other German states that had not accepted it yet, with force of arms if necessary.<sup>32</sup> On May 14 Grand Duke Leopold of Baden fled his duchy over the Rhine and into Alsace, paving the way for the national committee to assume governmental control. Lorenz Brentano was appointed head of the provisional government, and declared the Baden Republic in Karlsruhe, earning him the nickname “dictator of Baden.” Brentano insisted that this republic was, however, provisional, and publicly voiced regret over the flight of the Grand Duke. Although equipped with dictatorial powers, his first priority as head of the Baden Republic was to maintain order while implementing the Frankfurt constitution. Brentano himself pursued a careful policy that put an emphasis on negotiation and shied away from armed conflict, expressed in his reluctance to implement a general arming of the people to prepare for an armed defense against the reactionary forces. Meanwhile, news of the Baden Republic reached Friedrich Hecker in his American exile, who immediately set out to return to Germany.

Before Hecker could return however, the revolutionary republic was quashed by the forces of the reaction. Grand Duke Leopold appealed to Prussia for assistance, and the Baden republic was swiftly overrun by a coalition of Prussian, Württembergian and Hessian armies. The Baden troops under command of minister of war Franz Sigel were no match. Hecker returned to the United States without having set foot into Germany again.<sup>33</sup> Lorenz Brentano fled from the approaching Prussian armies into Switzerland.

---

<sup>32</sup> Randers-Pehrson, *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849*, 509.

<sup>33</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 2006, 131.



While in his Swiss exile, he was found guilty of treason, and condemned to life in prison *in absentia* by a reactionary court in 1850. After this, and the realization that there would be no safe return to his home country, Brentano followed his fellow revolutionaries Hecker and Sigel, booking passage to the United States.<sup>34</sup>

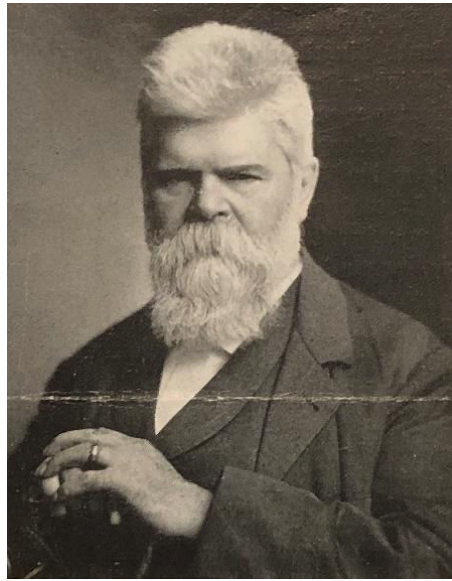


Figure 4. A photographic portrait of editor Wilhelm Rapp (ca. 1890-1900).

While he never met Lorenz Brentano in person during this time, Wilhelm Rapp, who later in his life became the long-time editor of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and various other German-American newspapers, also earned his revolutionary stripes during the Baden uprising of 1849. Son of Lutheran minister and poet Georg Rapp, he was set to become a minister himself. He took up the study of theology in the seminary of Blaubeuren and at the University of Tübingen. During his time at the university, Rapp joined the fraternity Normannia Tübingen in 1845. There he was thus introduced to nationalist republican ideology which he developed great enthusiasm for. Rapp's career

---

<sup>34</sup> Brentano et al., *Brentano Family Papers*.

was similar to that of the slightly older Brentano, and many other of the forty-eight revolutionaries, who came of age and had their political awakening in the radical German republican nationalist circles that had developed among German academics ever since the end of the Napoleonic Wars. He also became the president of the Tübinger People's Association in 1848 and attended a gathering of revolutionary republican associations in Reutlingen in May of 1849. When Brentano proclaimed the Baden Republic, Rapp organized a group of fifty men, mostly university students and laborers, to lend support, and crossed from Württemberg into Baden on June 19, 1849. When the Badensian military was defeated less than a month later, Rapp fled to Switzerland. After a brief stint as a teacher at a private school there, he returned to Swabia, a region on the Kingdom Bavaria's Western border, to visit his parents—and was arrested and charged with high treason. After seven months of incarceration in the Fortress Hohenasberg, Rapp was tried and subsequently acquitted. Disappointed and frustrated by the state of affairs in his home country, he decided to join his fellow revolutionaries and emigrated to the United States in 1852.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> Hans Günter Hockerts, *Neue deutsche Biographie* 21, 21, (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2003).

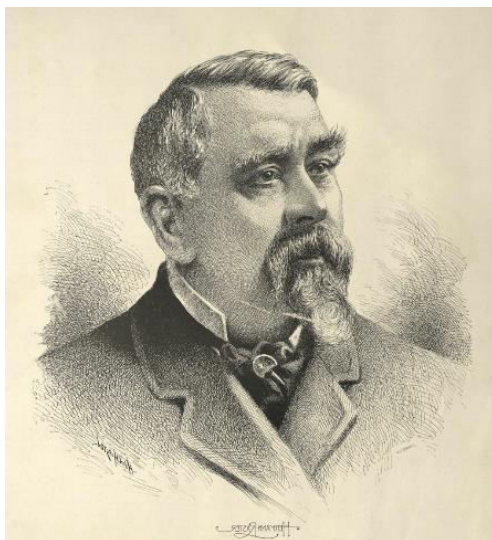


Figure 5. Hugo von Hofsten: Herrman Raster, ca. 1880.

When the revolution of 1848 arrived in the German Duchy of Anhalt-Dessau, Herrmann Raster was twenty-one years old. He had just returned from attending the University of Berlin, where he roamed the circles around famed German romantic writer and social activist Bettina von Arnim. He imbibed a spirit of social justice and pan-German unity. He came from an aristocratic family, his father Christian was an administrative official of the Duke of Anhalt. His father's position enabled Hermann to receive an excellent education—he learned the English language during an extended stay in England—and equipped the young man with plentiful political and cultural personal connections and a thoroughly cosmopolitan outlook on life. In the twelfth grade, he earned his first money by providing a professional translation of a French play for the renowned Reclam Publishing Company.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Hermann Raster, *Reisebriefe von Hermann Raster. Mit Einer Biographie Und Einem Bildniss Des Verfassers* (Berlin: Buchdruck Gutenberg, 1891), 10.

His time at the University of Berlin injected Raster with revolutionary fervor. He decided two things: first, he would become a journalist; second, he would dedicate his energy towards a more just and unified Germany. When the revolutions broke out, Duke Leopold IV Friedrich of Anhalt Dessau was forced by the revolutionaries to turn the duchy into a constitutional state, with a newly elected state diet. Raster returned to the capital of the Duchy of Anhalt, Dessau, where he joined the *Freiheitspartei* (“Freedom Party”), working first as a stenographer, and rising quickly to the position of secretary of the state diet by late 1848. He also worked as a pamphleteer for the revolutionary state diet, penning among other things short, satirical farces in which he mocked political opportunists who used the revolutions “to betray [their] fatherland, as long as the neighboring state guarantees a good post for [them].”<sup>37</sup>



Figure 6. Map of Duchy of Anhalt, 1863-1918 (From: Andrees Handatlas IV Stieler's Handatlas 1891).

<sup>37</sup> Hermann Raster, *Wie man Ministerpräsident wird* (Leipzig: E. D. Weller, 1849).

Raster was then asked to join the Union Parliament of Erfurt, a legislative body that was intended to create a counter-constitution to the Frankfurt Assembly, because of his outstanding abilities as a stenographer. But the Union Parliament failed to pass any meaningful resolutions and was quickly dissolved in April 1850. The revolution had now essentially failed in Anhalt as well. In November, Prussian troops re-instated the Duke of Anhalt with his full pre-revolutionary powers. As German nobility re-asserted their control over the German Confederation, Raster was forced to decide to either flee into exile—or face trial and imprisonment both for his involvement with the state assembly and especially for the publication of an article critical of the church. He chose the former. A popular man in Dessau, Raster was given a farewell parade, with, “elaborate displays of flags and sounds of carillons.”<sup>38</sup>

### **The Revolutionaries in Exile**

As a democratic, federal republic, the United States had long been the model for German revolutionaries. Most “forty-eighters” were intimately acquainted with the texts of the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, unlike exiled revolutionaries from other European countries like Italy or France, who mostly ended up in London or other cities in the United Kingdom, the German forty-eighters eventually made their way to the nation-state on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean that had inspired much of their political aspirations. What helped in that decision, too,

---

<sup>38</sup> Raster, *Reisebriefe von Hermann Raster. Mit Einer Biographie Und Einem Bildniss Des Verfassers*, 12.

<sup>39</sup> Hildegard Binder-Johnson, “Adjustment to the United States,” in *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 44.

was the existence of a sizable German diaspora, parts of which dated back to colonial Jamestown as early as 1607. Many forty-eighters ended up working as journalists in their new home country, contributing to a flourishing German-language newspaper landscape that in some locales like New York City rivalled that of similarly populated municipalities in the German homelands. German-American newspapers operated faster and with a much higher degree of liberty than the newspapers published in Germany, since the German statelets and kingdoms had a much harsher, stricter and generally unforgiving policy of press censorship. Many of the publications at which the forty-eighters worked in Germany before and during the revolutions ended up being banned from publication altogether. In the United States the men found a political environment that strongly embraced the freedom of the press, which was constitutionally guaranteed. The German states experimented with degrees of press freedom over time, with concessions given and subsequently taken away. A truly free German press only emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century, in the Federal Republic of Germany after World War II.

In the mid-nineteenth century, one of the states with a large, well established German population was Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania's German diaspora began in the eighteenth century, and by the time of the American Revolution the Germans were estimated to make up one third of the state's total population. As historian of American journalism George Douglas found, Germantown and Philadelphia were among the earliest centers of German-American newspaper journalism. There, German immigrants

regularly published German-language newspapers as early as 1732.<sup>40</sup> This made the state a prime destination for German revolutionary exiles by the mid-nineteenth century. Unlike most of his comrades, Lorenz came to the United States with his wife Caroline, working as publisher and journalist for the local newspaper *Der Leuchtturm* (The Lighthouse). His journalistic activities made him unpopular with the local German population, however, indicating the broad cultural and political differences between the newly immigrated revolutionaries and the existing German-American population.

The Germans of rural Pennsylvania in the mid-nineteenth century were loyal to the Democratic Party, like most immigrant populations in the United States at the time. Professing to an abolitionist sentiment and the publication of multiple anti-slavery editorials and articles in his newspaper, Brentano drew their ire. The situation in Pennsylvania became unsafe for the young immigrant family. Eventually Lorenz and Caroline sought yet another new beginning—this time in the vicinity of Kalamazoo, Michigan, where Lorenz bought a farm. For most of the 1850s, the Brentanos lived a farmer's life, and in 1854 Caroline gave birth to their only child, Theodore.<sup>41</sup> Enticed by the political turmoil caused by the Kansas-Nebraska debacle, Brentano joined the Republican Party and followed the call by then owner of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, fellow forty-eighter George Schneider, to come to Chicago and work as editor-in-chief at the newspaper. Brentano was called back into action not just by Schneider, but also by his old friend and brother in arms from the Baden revolution Friedrich Hecker, who had

---

<sup>40</sup> George H Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999), 211.

<sup>41</sup> Eugen Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt* (Chicago: The George Gregory Printing Company, 1892), 431.

also taken up the life of a farmer in rural Illinois.<sup>42</sup> Brentano moved his family to Chicago in 1859 and became not just editor-in-chief of the newspaper, but also joined Schneider and Anton Hesing as part-owner.<sup>43</sup>

In Chicago the former “dictator of Baden” re-entered public political life. He rose to prominence not just through his activities at the *Staats-Zeitung*—which had soared to the position of one of the most significant German-language newspapers of the Midwest—but also by his entering American politics. Through the newspaper he championed the presidential candidacy of Abraham Lincoln. Brentano himself first took the bar exam and resumed activities as a lawyer in 1859, before being elected member of the Illinois House of Representatives in 1862. He also served on the Chicago Board of Education and was elected president of this board in 1865. In this position he fulfilled a vitally important role for the German-American community, by proposing the adoption of German language lessons in Chicago’s public schools. After the war, when Germany extended amnesty to the exiled revolutionists, Brentano returned to the old country, serving as American consul to Dresden.<sup>44</sup>

The exiled revolutionaries brought more with them than political fervor and ideology. While the first *Turnverein* on American soil was indeed not founded by forty-eighters, the political nationalist gymnastics association was massively boosted and popularized by their influx. When Friedrich Hecker visited the Cincinnati in 1848, his presence made such an impact on the German-American community there, that a

---

<sup>42</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 2006, 131.

<sup>43</sup> Brentano et al., *Brentano Family Papers*.

<sup>44</sup> Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*, 432.



couple of men who were inspired by Hecker's presence, founded the first American *Turnverein* in October of 1848. Two years later the Associated Gymnastics Union of North America was founded in New York City, which in 1851 changed its name to Socialist Gymnastics Union, demonstrating the strong leftist political leaning of the association.<sup>45</sup> By 1852 the National Turner Association officially counted approximately 2,000 members across 30 individual local chapters.<sup>46</sup>

This was when Wilhelm Rapp arrived in the United States. He initially settled in Philadelphia, working odd jobs and giving English lessons to fellow German immigrants. Philadelphia was a stronghold of the *Turnverein*. The association itself quickly turned into an important pillar of the German-American community at large. Associations and clubs fulfilled many important functions for the immigrants. And while such organizations were important in German social life in the old country, in the new country they became vital for survival. They provided a sense of community, but also a safe haven and a source of information on and the chance to exchange experiences with the new country for new arrivals. Rapp joined the *Turnerverein* in 1853 and was offered the editorship of the *Nationale Turnzeitung*—the National Turner Newspaper. When the newspaper's operations moved to Cincinnati in 1855, so did Rapp. He relocated to Baltimore, Maryland in 1857, where he took over editorship of the *Baltimore Wecker* (Baltimore Alarm) and joined the nascent Republican Party.<sup>47</sup> His activities to boost the

---

<sup>45</sup> William Frederic Kamman, *Socialism in German American Literature* (Americana Germanica Press, 1917), 59, <http://archive.org/details/socialismingerm01kammgoog>.

<sup>46</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 91.

<sup>47</sup> Emil Mannhardt, "Wilhelm Rapp. Geb. 14. Juli 1828, gest. 1. März 1907," in *Deutsch-amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, by Deutsche-amerikanische historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, vol. VII (Deutsch-

election of Abraham Lincoln as well as his writing in the city's only German-Republican, abolitionist newspaper eventually attracted the scorn of the local proslavery population. His life in mortal peril, Rapp fled Baltimore overnight, disguised as an itinerant preacher. Refusing a lucrative position within the United States Post Office Department, he accepted the call to join the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and moved to Chicago in 1862.

The most prolific member of the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship, Hermann Raster, joined the Chicago newspaper only after the Civil War ended in 1867. After leaving Germany via a sailing ship out of Bremen, Raster arrived in New York City, where he spent his first months on foreign shores. He told of his experience as a “green” –an inexperienced new arrival—to his brother Askan, writing that “there is a saying here that the last European penny must be spent before the first American cent can be earned” – meaning that after his arrival he was at times taken advantage of and spent more money than he should have. He also stated that this was the fate of most newly arrived immigrants, and that he regarded these expenses as an investment in his future—and a valuable lesson for life in America. Regardless, the advice he gave his brother was that “bring as little money as possible, it will be spent, regardless of how much it was.” According to Raster’s advice, the most important thing an immigrant should bring to America was not money, but knowledge of the English language.<sup>48</sup>

Raster spent five weeks looking for steady employment in New York and Philadelphia. Unsuccessful, he ventured inland. Thanks to an acquaintance he made in

---

Amerikanische Historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, 1907), 60,  
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.319510007281008&view=1up&seq=2>.

<sup>48</sup> Raster, *Reisebriefe von Hermann Raster. Mit Einer Biographie Und Einem Bildniss Des Verfassers*, 13.

New York he was hired by an Anglo-American as a farmhand in the town of Tioga, Pennsylvania. While working on the farm, he befriended an Anglo-American attorney who instructed him in the details and specifics of American politics. After his stint on the Pennsylvania farm, he moved to Buffalo, New York where a publisher hired him directly to work and began to work at the *Buffalo Demokrat*, a German-American newspaper. There he became a jack-of-all-trades, “the sole editor within a couple of days, foreman in the printing room and a couple of other things,” in his own words<sup>49</sup> Under his editorship the *Demokrat* gained in renown—as well as circulation and readership. Raster did not spend a lot of time in Buffalo, however. In February of 1853 he relocated again, this time back to New York City. The German-American community of New York was one of the biggest in the country, and along with the sizable population of German speakers came the country’s biggest concentration of German language newspapers, rivalling even the biggest German newspaper market, the Prussian capital of Berlin, in the sheer number of publications.<sup>50</sup>

Raster’s time in New York was one of meteoric ascent. He was called to the city by the publishers of the *New York Abendpost (Evening Post)*, a leading German-language newspaper. His editor’s salary allowed for a decent living, so much so that he sent for his wife Emilia and her mother to join him in the United States. The *Abendpost* frequently reprinted recent articles from German papers but was otherwise entirely written by Raster and one other editor. Though a highly political person, Raster managed to avoid

---

<sup>49</sup> Raster, 21.

<sup>50</sup> Carl Frederick Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), 63.

turning the newspaper into a glorified soapbox. Under his editorship, he raised the *Abendpost* to one of New York's leading German publications championing the nascent Republican Party. Raster himself joined the party in 1855.<sup>51</sup> He developed a close relationship with the first Republican presidential candidate John C. Fremont, "so that [he] was seen as the official go-between between him [Fremont] and the German Republicans," according to Raster himself.<sup>52</sup> In the presidential election of 1856 he was also the first German-born to serve as presidential elector out of the state of New York.

Raster settled in in New York and enjoyed the fruits of his labor through writing and integrating himself into the German-American community there. In 1855 his first daughter Mathilde was born. With a steadily improving income through work for the *Abendpost*, other German-American and Anglo-American newspapers, as well as a plethora of odd journalistic and literary jobs on the side, he bought a house in the city. But his private life was struck by tragedy when his wife Emilia died of tuberculosis in 1861, a year after his eldest brother, with whom Raster frequently exchanged letters, had perished of the same disease back in Germany. He remarried in 1864 "especially in regards to my daughter's education" since he did not want his daughter to be raised by a single, overworked father.<sup>53</sup> In addition to his work for various newspapers in New York and Germany he also took up the office of wagon master at the New York customs house, which he held until his departure for Chicago in 1867.

---

<sup>51</sup> Raster, *Reisebriefe von Hermann Raster. Mit Einer Biographie Und Einem Bildniss Des Verfassers*, 21.

<sup>52</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," August 1, 1857, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library, (my translation).

<sup>53</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," August 19, 1864, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library, (my translation).

While Raster maintained close contact with the German homeland both in private and in business affairs, his activities as a newspaperman served as a fulcrum between Germany and German America, acting as a prime facilitator of the trans-national German ethnoscape. One expression of this was the *Abendpost's* frequent reprinting of articles from German newspapers. And as Raster's renown grew, he began to work in addition to his editorship of the New York German-American paper as a foreign correspondent for the *Augsburger Volkszeitung* (Augsburg People's Paper) and the *National-Zeitung* (National Newspaper) out of Berlin as well as a number of other influential, widely-read newspapers published throughout Germany. His foreign correspondent work for those German newspapers allowed him to have a major impact on the perception and general attitude of the German readership towards American affairs. Raster's efforts to connect Germany and the United States flourished especially during the time of the Civil War, when he implored the German readership to support the Union cause both in thought and in action through buying American war bonds.<sup>54</sup> After the Civil War the publisher of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* Anton Hesing called Raster, a highly renowned name in the German-American newspaper trade by then, to come to Chicago to work at his paper as editor in chief.

Anton Hesing, Lorenz Brentano, Wilhelm Rapp and Hermann Raster were the most prominent and longest-serving members of the editorial staff at the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* between its founding in 1848 and the 1880s. But they were by no means the only forty-eighters who left an impact on the newspaper and Chicago's German-

---

<sup>54</sup> Raster, *Reisebriefe von Hermann Raster. Mit Einer Biographie Und Einem Bildniss Des Verfassers*, 24.

American community. The newspaper itself was founded in 1848 by Robert Bernhard Höffgen, about whom very little is known. Höffgen was not a forty-eighter, since he was present in Chicago at least as early as 1845, when he established the city's first German-American newspaper the *Chicagoer Volksfreund* (Chicago Friend of the People). That paper operated for three years and ceased publication when Höffgen began publication of the *Staats-Zeitung*.<sup>55</sup> In 1851 Höffgen called upon George Schneider to join the newspaper as editor-in-chief.

Schneider's biography was that of a true forty-eighter. He came out of Rhenish-Bavaria in the southwest of Germany where he was active as a journalist, supporting the revolutionary causes in his writing. This garnered the young man a reputation among the revolutionaries and earned him an official position with the revolutionary parliament. After the reactionary forces cracked down on the uprisings, his revolutionary activities caused him to first flee into Baden, then to Switzerland and finally to the United States, where he arrived in New York in 1849. From there he went to Cleveland, Ohio and eventually ended up in St. Louis, Missouri. Schneider founded the *Neue Zeit* (New Time) in St. Louis, a newspaper dedicated to progressive politics and the abolition of slavery. After the newspaper's offices burned down two years after its inception, he received an invitation to write for the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* in Chicago. As editor he was primarily responsible for several innovations: he turned the paper from a weekly publication into a daily, and initiated a political shift towards abolition, against the Democratic Party and turned the *Staats-Zeitung*—and by extension the German-

---

<sup>55</sup> Edmund Janes James and Milo J. Loveless, *A Bibliography of Newspapers Published in Illinois Prior to 1860* (Springfield, Ill. : Phillips Bros., State Printers, 1899), 20, <http://archive.org/details/bibliographyofneoojame>.

American community—into one of Chicago’s strongest supporters of the nascent Republican Party. He then also put the *Staats-Zeitung*’s weight behind the presidential candidacy of Abraham Lincoln. After ten years he relinquished the reins of editorship to Lorenz Brentano and Wilhelm Rapp. He then accepted an appointment by President Lincoln as consul to Denmark and upon his return to Chicago in 1862 was selected for the position of Collector of Internal Revenue for Chicago.<sup>56</sup>

Caspar Butz held only short-term employments with the *Staats-Zeitung*, but his activities in local and national politics and his role in the German-American community of Chicago and the Midwest warrant a brief introduction—especially since Butz’ career was representative of the forty-eighter revolutionaries in exile. A poet at heart as a young man already, the desperate financial situation of his family left young Butz with no other choice but to take up a job with an industrial company close to his hometown of Hagen in Germany. This company sent him on a business trip to Algeria in 1847, where he encountered none other than Friedrich Hecker. The two young men became fast friends and remained close for the rest of Hecker’s life.<sup>57</sup> Beyond this chance encounter with a young radical, the journey opened up Butz’ mind in other ways, confronting him with different modes of political thought and action, while prompting reflection on his personal situation within the German nation. He moved to Paris, where he was swept up in France’s revolutionary fervor. After trying to find employment with republican newspapers in Berlin, he took part in the revolutionary uprisings in the

---

<sup>56</sup> Illinois State Historical Society, *Papers in Illinois History and Transactions* (Springfield, IL: Illinois State Historical Library, 1906), 331.

<sup>57</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 2006, 88.

Westphalian city of Iserlohn, in which he acted as a ringleader and agitator. The uprising was unsuccessful, and so Butz fled the country, first to the Netherlands, then to England, and finally to the United States. He founded a fur trading business in the city of Detroit, before becoming involved in both German-American journalism and American politics. He moved to Chicago after opening a local branch of his business there, involving himself with the Republican Party, for whom he worked as a political writer in the presidential campaigns of both Fremont and Lincoln. In 1858 he was elected to the Illinois legislature and held several elected positions in the subsequent years. During the Civil War he turned into one of Lincoln's biggest detractors, critical of the way the president handled the war, and championing an alternative Republican candidacy by John C. Fremont.<sup>58</sup>

Women played only a subordinate role in this group, as female revolutionaries were rare, mostly due to the fact that women had little access to higher education in Germany. German schools that gave out diplomas granting access to universities did not accept women, and women's schools did not grant these diplomas, barring women at large from higher education. There were few exceptions. Hermann Raster encountered Bettina von Arnim in Berlin, when she was already in her sixties, and—while a social activist in her own right—she was not quite a revolutionary. This did not, however, mean that female forty-eighters—women who fled Germany for the United States out of fear of repression for their involvement in the 1848 revolutions—did not exist. One such person was Mathilde Franziska Anneke, who was one of Germany's first women's rights

---

<sup>58</sup> "Butz, Caspar – Lexikon Westfälischer Autorinnen und Autoren – 1750-1950," accessed June 24, 2020, <https://www.lexikon-westfaelischer-autorinnen-und-autoren.de/autoren/butz-caspar/>.



activists. After annulling an arranged marriage and divorcing her nobleman husband, she became increasingly radicalized, and eventually married again. This time, her groom was Fritz Anneke, a resigned Prussian army officer, who himself went through a process of radicalization. In Cologne, the couple worked on several newspapers, all of which were subsequently banned, and became active in Marx' *Arbeiterverein* (Worker's Association).<sup>59</sup> Fritz was even briefly incarcerated for his activities. In the following invasion of the Palatinate by the Prussian reactionary forces, Mathilde served the revolutionary fighters as a messenger and a field nurse. After the revolution's failure, the couple emigrated to the United States, and eventually settled in Milwaukee, where both became active in politics and journalism. Mathilde herself became involved both in the abolitionist- and women's rights movement in the United States, publishing the first German-American women's newspaper in 1852, the *Deutsche Frauen-Zeitung* (German Women's Newspaper).<sup>60</sup> Anneke's path in the United States followed a broadly similar pattern to that of her brothers in the revolution. She even returned to Germany a couple of times, maintaining the movement of ideas and people across space that made up the German-American ethnoscape.

These German-Americans were largely representative of the social stratum of the forty-eighter revolutionaries and their specific mindset, political motivation and political outlook. As political exiles, they were a tight-knit group who either maintained

---

<sup>59</sup> Susan L Piepke, *Mathilde Franziska Anneke (1817-1884): The Works and Life of a German-American Activist Including English Translations of "Woman in Conflict with Society" and "Broken Chains"* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 17.

<sup>60</sup> Klaus Schmidt, *Mathilde Franziska und Fritz Anneke: eine Biographie; aus der Pionierzeit von Demokratie und Frauenbewegung* (Köln: Schmidt von Schwind, 2000), 110.

the bonds they established in Germany, or they ended up working together in American and German-American politics and journalism. They were, however, not representative of the forty-eighter generation of immigrants from Germany at large, as historian Bruce Levine stresses. Most German-Americans, regardless of which cohort of immigrants they belonged to, were essentially workers, farmers and laborers. The forty-eighter revolutionaries belonged to a relatively elite stratum of society, just below that of the affluent, trans-Atlantic German merchants and other truly wealthy individuals. The cohort of immigrants coming to the United States in the wake of the revolutions in Germany was significantly larger than just this relatively small group, and for the most part considerably poorer and lacking the prestigious education and political outlook of the revolutionaries.<sup>61</sup>

Nonetheless, the forty-eighters—the ringleaders of the failed revolutions—rose to become the figureheads and intellectual leaders of the German-American community at large for their time. This did not happen without some internal conflict within the German diaspora—especially since the more established German-Americans favored the Democratic Party, which the forty-eighters came to despise due to the party’s role in upholding the institution of slavery. But by the time of the Civil War, after a decade of internal struggle within the communities they inhabited and after having spent those ten years consolidating and settling in positions of influence, the forty-eighters gripped the reins of urban German-America. They directed their community according to their

---

<sup>61</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 62.

own strongly held political and ideological beliefs, leaving their brand on both their group and on American society at large.

## CHAPTER 2

### NEW WORLD, NEW LIVES, NEW PROBLEMS

#### **The Revolutionaries Confront American Nativism and Slavery**

When the forty-eighters arrived in Chicago, the city already had a thriving German-American community. Over the course of the 1850s, the new arrivals integrated into this existing structure, fended off nativist attacks and turned the German element of Chicago into a vital contributor to the rise of the Republican Party and Abraham Lincoln as its presidential candidate. Detailing the rise of the Forty-Eighters to leading positions within the German-American ethnoscape reveals the ways that an immigrant community as an informal, non-state actor influences and impacts nation-state politics.

A few weeks after the American Civil War broke out, German-Americans in Chicago organized volunteer companies for the 24th Illinois Infantry Regiment.<sup>1</sup> The Turner societies coordinated most of this effort. That German-Americans put together regiments to fight in a civil war of their new home country was in many ways a culmination of years of political thought and activity fostered by the forty-eighters. These political efforts were also an ongoing point of generational contention within German-America at large as well as in within German Chicago. The older generations of Germans, who came to Chicago in the founding decade of the city, were loyal to the

---

<sup>1</sup> Emil Dietzsch, Max Stern, and Fred Kressmann, *Chicago's Deutsche Männer: Erinnerungs-Blätter an Chicago's Fünfzigjähriges Jubiläum Geschichte der Stadt Chicago* (Chicago: M. Stern & Co., 1885), 52.

Democratic party. In contrast the forty-eighters' generation of immigrants thought differently about American politics and the role they and their countrymen should play in them. After their arrival in the U.S. and subsequent settling in, following some contested internal deliberations, the forty-eighters championed first the Whig Party and then the nascent Republican Party. Forty-Eighters assumed leadership positions within the German-American community, and successfully shifted the political affiliation of their fellow hyphenated Americans. They quickly enacted a significant influence on the American local and federal political landscape as a whole.

### **Grey & Green: Generational Differences in Politics and Political Alignments**

In the American two-party system, the Whig Party pursued anti-immigrant positions both in its rhetoric and in its politics, which caused older immigrant generations from several different origins to put their political loyalties with the rivaling Democratic Party. The Whig's anti-immigrant efforts culminated in the formation of the Native American or "Know Nothing" Party in the mid-1850s. By positioning themselves against the Whiggish notions of temperance laws, sabbath adherence and the championing of land reform bills, the Democrats in the northern states traditionally counted on the support of the German element across that part of the nation.<sup>2</sup>

As was the case elsewhere, the "grey" generation of German-Americans in Chicago—dubbed thusly because they were at this point aging immigrants who arrived in the U.S. in the 1830s—were firmly ingrained within the Democratic Party. This

---

<sup>2</sup> Bruce C. Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 151.

allegiance went back as far 1843 when shoemaker Karl Sauter was elected Democratic alderman of the second ward. He was not the first German-born alderman elected in Chicago, that honor went to Clemens Stose in 1839. Few records of Stose survived the Chicago Fire, and while his party affiliation is not entirely clear, he was in fact German-born. Given the primacy of the Democratic party among German immigrants at the time however, Stose's affiliation with the Democratic Party is highly likely.<sup>3</sup> In the same year, the first political meeting by and for German-Americans gathered in Chicago, at which the crowd publicly pledged their denial of any encroachment of nativists and their support of the Democratic Party.<sup>4</sup>

Northern Democrats championed the white, European immigrant and sought to foster solidarity along racial lines. The position of the party was that the freedom of the northern wage worker was tied to the unfreedom of the southern slave. Anyone seeking emancipation was endangering the liberty of the white race. The Democrats painted the Whigs and later the Republicans as parties that placed the importance of black freedom over that of whites—both native-born and immigrant. They also overplayed their political rivals as parties of puritan temperance and anti-Catholic sentiment. This strategy worked well with the older generation of Germans, but the forty-eighters were cut from a different cloth.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Germanistic Society of America and Deutsche-Amerikanische Historische Gesellschaft von Illinois., "Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter," *Jahrbuch Der Deutsche-Amerikanischen Historischen Gesellschaft von Illinois 1912-1937*, 1937, 41.

<sup>4</sup> Bessie Louise Pierce, *A History of Chicago Vol. I: The Beginning of a City, 1673-1848* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 382.

<sup>5</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 238.

The forty-eighters of Chicago were collectively part of the so-called “green” generation of German immigrants that arrived in the US in the late 1840s. The “greys” considered naïve newcomers as “green behind the ears” as the German idiom goes, who lacked insight into American culture and did not understand how immigrants had to behave in order to avoid nativist backlash. In contrast to the previous generation, the forty-eighters pushed the community to oppose the Democrats on the issue of Democratic support for the institution of slavery in the Southern states in general, with the passing of the Kansas-Nebraska Act serving as a catalyst. Illinois Democratic Senator Stephen A. Douglas introduced the act in 1854, with the intention of bringing order and a sense of organization to the vast and largely unsettled Nebraska Territory. In regards to the slavery question, the act built upon the concept of “popular sovereignty,” introduced in the Compromise of 1850, under which the local state residents could decide whether or not to allow slavery in their respective territories. This piece of legislation represented a repudiation to the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which banned slavery north of the 36°30′ parallel and required that for every new slave state admitted to the union, a new free state must be admitted to maintain equilibrium and vice versa.

The law generated a mixture of extreme reactions.<sup>6</sup> The Anglo-American abolitionists in Congress decried the act as detrimental to the free settlement of the new territories, since it would not make sense for free farmers to settle there and then have to compete with farms bolstered by slave labor. In order to shore up support for this

---

<sup>6</sup> Levine, 152.

position, this group of congressmen openly appealed to German-American newspaper publishers to rally them behind the anti-Nebraska cause—a call which was first answered in Chicago in late January of 1854. On Thomas Paine’s birthday under the initiative of the leading editors of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, a contingent of German-Americans met and resolved that their support for the Democratic Party could not continue under these circumstances.<sup>7</sup>

What then brought the immigrant element’s position towards Kansas-Nebraska to a boiling point was the Clayton Amendment, passed alongside the Kansas-Nebraska Act. This addition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act was introduced by John M. Clayton, a Whig senator from Delaware, which limited the franchise in the western territories to American citizens, while excluding any non-naturalized foreigners from holding public office in the Kansas-Nebraska territories as well. Through this provision, the amendment would have barred most immigrants from participating in the political process in general. In particular, the amendment excluded foreigners from acting on the “popular sovereignty” promised by the original act. German-Americans across the country saw this as an affront to their rights. The amendment was championed by the author of the original Kansas-Nebraska act, Stephen A. Douglas.<sup>8</sup> Up to that point the Illinois Democratic senator had enjoyed broad support among Germans from Chicago.

Douglas’s backing of the amendment, however, served to turn a large portion of the German element against him. Following the March 4, 1854 passage of the

---

<sup>7</sup> Sabine Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker: Two Lives for Liberty* (St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 155.

<sup>8</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 155.



legislation, Chicago Germans gathered in a protest meeting to discuss how to proceed politically. The meeting's resolutions concluded that loyalty to any political party was less important than loyalty to moral principles, especially when the principles in question served to damage the interests of their fellow immigrant countrymen. The Chicago Germans decried Douglas' actions as well as the proposed bill itself as detrimental to German pioneers of the American West, declaring Douglas the, "Benedict Arnold of 1854." Following the meeting, an outraged procession of Germans marched to Court House Square, carrying an effigy of the "Little Giant," which they burnt upon arrival.<sup>9</sup> The choice of mocking descriptor here is noteworthy. The German-American crowd, consisting of forty-eighter intellectuals, recently arrived artisans as well as longer established immigrants, did not label their Douglas effigy with something that only the members of the German-speaking and German cultured in-group would understand. They also did not pick a more universal label along the lines of calling Douglas a "Judas of 1854." Instead, they picked a figure from the founding myth of the United States itself, and indicator to onlooking outsiders that this was not a group of foreign rabble airing their grievances, but a group of people who claimed American mythology and American identity as their own.

The intellectuals among the forty-eighters perceived slavery as a black stain on their political role model of the United States and likened the Southern slaveholders to the noblemen and aristocrats they themselves rebelled against in the 1848 revolutions.

---

<sup>9</sup> Hildegard Binder-Johnson, "Adjustment to the United States," in *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 62.

The revolutions and the political ideology that birthed them still loomed large in the political imagination of the forty-eighters. When the various revolutionary committees across the German states came together to re-imagine and unite their home country as one, they had looked to the United States for inspiration. The American principles of freedom, the lack of a noble-born aristocracy and commitment to greater equality all were things the young German intellectuals sought to emulate in their own country. As was the organization of the land into a federal republic. The U.S.' place in their political imagination was also the reason that German forty-eighters came to America in the first place. Now that they were here and witnessed the American reality, many were shocked, appalled and frustrated at American political life, and the role slavery played in it. All of this was the reason that the forty eighters were at the forefront of German immigrants provided an impetus against the spread and maintenance of slavery. These men were credited by their contemporary American allies as “[...] men who had staked their entire careers on the side of freedom in the great struggle between privilege and democracy.”<sup>10</sup>

The connection between the forty-eighter struggle against German aristocracy and the struggle in America to end slavery recurred throughout the 1850s. The struggle for abolition was not, however, a conflict that saw a unified German-American front, but one that was also fought among the Germans themselves. In 1863, the *National Demokrat*, Chicago's foremost German-Democratic paper, declared the anti-slavery, abolitionist forty-eighters traitors to their own revolutionary spirit, repeating a common German-Democrat accusation that the actual parallel to German monarchical

---

<sup>10</sup> Binder-Johnson, 68.

oppression in America was not the slave-holding south but in fact the central government in Washington D.C. The editor of the *Staats-Zeitung* had some choice words regarding these accusations:

Yesterday this sulfur bandit of publishing enjoyed attacking those German revolutionists, who opposed the oppression of the people by the monarchy in Germany, and who consequently join the front against the lust for power of the slave holding caste in America. [...] He [the editor of the *National-Demokrat*] declares them being inconsequential in fighting against this high treason. Where did he pawn his brains? Does he not understand that he who enthusiastically fought for freedom in Germany needs to do the same in free America, if he wants to be free and not become a political servant of the South like the writer of the “Demokrat”?<sup>11</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* was at the fore of this conflict but, like the readership the newspaper catered to, the editors had taken some time to get there. While they favored the Democratic Party in the first years of publication, the newspaper’s allegiance shifted in the early 1850s with a change in editorship. The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* turned from a Democratic paper into one favoring first the Whigs and then the nascent Republican party.<sup>12</sup> George Schneider, a forty-eighter himself, took the editorial reins of the newspaper in 1851, and was primarily responsible for re-orienting the publication’s political position. Under his aegis, too, the pace of publication changed from bi-weekly to daily. At the time, the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* was one of only two newspapers in Chicago supporting the abolitionist cause – the other being the anti-slavery weekly

---

<sup>11</sup> “Reactionäre Begriffs-Verwirrung,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 11, 1861, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>12</sup> William Huntzicker, *The Popular Press, 1833-1865* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999), 73.

*Western Citizen*.<sup>13</sup> Schneider also agitated in secret, organizing a clandestine meeting of men sympathetic to the abolitionist cause in 1853. At this meeting he and the other free-thinkers discussed if and if so what concrete steps could be taken to ally themselves with “Americans hostile to slavery but sadly also to foreigners.”<sup>14</sup>

A short time later, on January 29, 1854 the paper called for an assembly of German-Americans to openly and publicly discuss opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The legislation’s proposed opening the western territories to slavery, and especially the intention to keep free foreign-born immigrants out of the new lands fueled the ire of the forty-eighters, which subsequently ignited the German immigrant community as a whole. The bill served as a catalyst the forty-eighters used to turn German support away from the Democrats in Chicago and at other German diasporic settlements across the American Midwest, as historian Joseph Wandel found.<sup>15</sup>

In 1855, the *Nationaler Turnverein*, the umbrella organization of the local *Turnvereine*, declared their platform during the national Turner convention in Buffalo. The first three points of the platform rejected nativism, slavery—especially the extension of slavery into new territories—and any form of temperance laws. Nativists often used those laws as a cudgel against immigrant populations. All of this was reported in the

---

<sup>13</sup> Illinois State Historical Society, *Papers in Illinois History and Transactions* (Springfield, IL: Illinois State Historical Library, 1906), 332.

<sup>14</sup> Eugen Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt* (Chicago: The George Gregory Printing Company, 1892), 124.

<sup>15</sup> Joseph Wandel, *The German Dimension of American History* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1979), 83.

*Staats-Zeitung* a few days later.<sup>16</sup> This hard stance on abolitionism combined with the growing reach of the paper as a leading mouthpiece of German-American thought in Chicago led to the *Staats-Zeitung* becoming an important tool in turning the German vote Republican.<sup>17</sup>

The Turners came to Chicago along with the forty-eighters. The first meeting of German-Americans to determine how to raise a local chapter of the association was held in 1853 at the Rio Grande Hotel on LaSalle Street. Many of the men present at this gathering had been active Turners already in the old country and were determined to continue their gymnastic and social practices in the new. In the early years of the Chicago Turnverein, the regular meetings and gymnastic exercises took place in and around various German-American taverns and restaurants. The number of members in late 1852 was 68, according to the official announcement to the *Nationale Turnzeitung* out of New York. The Chicago chapter was then officially accepted into the national Turner organization in 1854, with only 45 members. At the same time the Free Singing Society (Freier Sängerbund) was in its infancy and it cooperated with the Turner. Members of one association could join the other free of charge.<sup>18</sup>

The first Turner Hall (Turnhalle) in Chicago was built on Griswold Street. The hall was a rather primitive, wooden building with a leaky roof on an uneven lot. The

---

<sup>16</sup> Augustus Prahl, "The Turner," in *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 100.

<sup>17</sup> Rudolf Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago* (Champaign, Ill.: Stipes Pub. Co., 1976), 153.

<sup>18</sup> Theodor Janssen, *Geschichte der Chicago Turn-Gemeinde: Aus mündlichen Ueberlieferungen und Vereinsdokumenten zusammengestellt* (Chicago: Max Stern & Co., 1897), 13, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.31951002377815q>.

property lacked proper lighting or walkways, and contemporary chroniclers of early Chicago Turner history wrote that the Turner men had to carry their spouses in their arms to prevent their dresses from getting soiled. But this did not prevent the hall from becoming an epicenter of German-American social life, as a turn of the century German-language history of Chicago's Turners read: "Not just balls and concerts but also gatherings for educational presentations were organized here, which were mainly held by the editorial staff of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, and later also by Dr. Ernst Schmidt, Caspar Butz and some others."<sup>19</sup>

Caspar Butz, a German poet, writer and participant in the 1848 revolution in the city of Iserlohn, joined the staff of the *Staats-Zeitung* in the early 1850s. His poems and articles were published regularly. Being a forty-eighter, Butz despised slavery, deriding it as "America's bane" in his poem *Zum 4. July 1855 – Den Deutschen gewidmet* ("For July 4, 1855 – Dedicated to the Germans) which was printed in the *Staats-Zeitung* on that day. Butz wound up as an important voice of the forty-eighter intellectuals beyond the newspaper and the city—his writings and poetry were published in various German language newspapers across the country. In 1862, the *Anzeiger des Westens* out of St. Louis added a richly illuminated leaflet to the year's first issue of the paper, containing a long poem by Butz in which he lamented the fallen of the war and praised the brave German-Americans of St. Louis for their diligence, ending with, "cast into the chasm all

---

<sup>19</sup> Janssen, 14.

that survives itself—cast deep down the last slave chain—and the world will marvel at the new union!”<sup>20</sup>

Chicago was far from the only node in the German-American diaspora where forty-eighter newspapermen were busy agitating against Democrats, slavery and nativism. In New York City it was Herrmann Raster, who later served as editor-in-chief for the *Staats-Zeitung* after the Civil War until his death in 1891, who mobilized the German element against the Democrat mayor Fernando Wood from the pages of the *Abendzeitung*. Raster voiced his dissatisfaction with Wood and the parts of New York’s population who lifted the mayor to power in an 1857 letter to his old mentor Carl Elze in Dessau: “The task at hand was to depose the representative of the Irish rabble, [...]. And those boozehounds together with a large part of the rudest German beer rioters held the previous mayor up [...] as an idol. Now he is toppled, and I can be proud of myself for having bravely helped, but it cost plenty of calm and work.” Raster worked with the campaign to elect Daniel F. Tiemann of the Independent Party, a conglomerate of Know Nothings, disaffected Democrats and Republicans, where he wrote pamphlets agitating against Wood, published articles in the *Abendzeitung* calling for Wood’s removal, and gave public speeches, championing Tiemann to the Germans of New York.<sup>21</sup> Raster wielded the *Abendzeitung* in New York in a similar way to how Schläger did the *Staats-*

---

<sup>20</sup> Caspar Butz, “Zum neuen Jahre 1862,” *Anzeiger des Westens*, January 1, 1862, Missouri Historical Society (my translation).

<sup>21</sup> Hermann Raster, “Raster Letter to Elze, New York,” December 13, 1857, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library, (my translation).

*Zeitung* in Chicago, demonstrating how the forty-eighters understood to use print media as a tool of political agitation.

The forty-eighters moved into the leading positions of the German-American communities, especially in large northern cities, taking over from the “grey” generation before them. In Raster’s case those were the “beer rioters” (*Bierpöbler*—no connection to the Chicago beer riot), that is, German-Americans holding on to the Democratic party. In Chicago, a situation involving Hermann Kreismann, one of the *Staats-Zeitung* journalists and the editor of the *National-Demokrat*, was emblematic of this shift. The *Demokrat* was, as the name indicates, a Democratic Party paper. The newspaper was the brainchild of Stephen Douglas, who sought a way to directly influence German-Chicagoans. Douglas founded the paper with the aid and funding from the ostensibly richest German-American Chicagoan of the time, Michael Diversey, co-owner of the Chicago Brewery.<sup>22</sup> At a meeting to consolidate mutual aid and relief for German immigrants, Kreismann succeeded in pushing through his agenda organizing relief for German immigrants by fellow German-Americans instead of appealing to the state for help. This was an effort to defuse nativist, anti-immigrant sentiment, blaming immigrants for relying on taxpayer money for welfare. The push resulted in the formation of the German *Arbeiterverein* (workers’ association), Chicago’s first workingmen’s association that organized laborers across crafts.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 200.

<sup>23</sup> John Jentz, “The 48ers and the German Labor Movement in Chicago,” in *The German-American Radical Press*, ed. Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James P. Danky, 1992, 54.



## The Lager-Beer Riot of 1855

One of the biggest sources of contention between German immigrants and “native” Americans in the mid-nineteenth century revolved around the respective cultural approaches to the consumption of alcohol. Throughout the 1800s, especially following the Second Great Awakening, various temperance movements, societies and policies were formed, formulated and enacted throughout the U.S. In many cases the issue of temperance was an easy tactic to suppress immigrant populations and paint the foreigners as dangerous, rowdy and violent drunkards. On June 2, 1851, the State of Maine enacted the Maine Temperance Law that outlawed the sale of liquor for any purposes except as medicine. This “Maine Law” became the blueprint and rallying banner for temperance societies all over the country. Two years later a cross-denominational convention of proponents of anti-liquor laws met in Chicago, vowing to only align themselves with politicians who unwaveringly supported the Maine Law.<sup>24</sup> In regard to alcohol consumption and Sunday closing laws the Chicago Germans did, admittedly, not make many friends with their behavior. Local contemporary German-American historian and erstwhile *Staats-Zeitung* writer Eugen Seeger reminisced in his *Chicago – History of a Wonder City* about these early days of German Chicago: “On Sundays they went, accompanied by blaring brass music, through the streets of the cities, preferably often passing by crowded churches, out onto the open field, where there was merriment and few constraints, and the beer flew in streams.”<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Pierce, *A History of Chicago Vol. I: The Beginning of a City, 1673-1848*, 437.

<sup>25</sup> Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*, 26.

While this description of Germans quite intentionally “misbehaving” and teasing the uptight “Yankees” seems exaggerated, behavior like this was in fact exemplary for the differences in approaches to alcohol consumption in relation to social life among Anglo-Americans and German immigrants respectively. Among the German element, the tavern, the bar, the beer hall and -garden and the *Lokal*—all localities where alcohol was consumed—served various vital social functions, going far beyond places one would go to simply to get drunk. To the Germans, those places served as hubs of social life, from informal gathering spots to official meeting places of the various *Vereine* (associations) that were central to the German community.<sup>26</sup> As German-America grew, so did the number of German-Americans working in various areas of the alcohol trade, from breweries to distilleries to bars. By 1880, more than thirty percent of all barkeepers nationwide were German-American—a much higher percentage than German-Americans in the general population.<sup>27</sup> German-brewed beer greatly differed in alcohol content from the alcoholic beverages preferred by their Anglo-American countrymen. German “lager-beer” had far less alcohol than the ubiquitous whiskey and gin and was also lighter than British style ales. This made German drinking culture much different from that of American English speakers. Due to the difference in alcohol content in the beverages of choice, Germans needed both a longer time and more drinks consumed to become intoxicated, which meant that alcohol consumption and social gatherings that

---

<sup>26</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 59.

<sup>27</sup> Walter D. Kamphoefner, “German and Irish Big City Mayors: Comparative Perspective on Ethnic Politics,” in *German-American Immigration and Ethnicity in Comparative Perspective*, by Wolfgang Johannes Helbich and Walter D. Kamphoefner (Madison, WI: Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, University of Wisconsin, 2004), 239.

had other purposes than collective inebriation were possible at the same time. The lighter beer allowed for a much more lenient and less heavy-handed approach to drinking in general.<sup>28</sup>

The forty-eighters were no exception to this approach to alcohol. The *Turnhallen* (Turner Halls) of the *Turnverein* were sites of alcohol consumption during communal gatherings as well as of gymnastic exercise and athletic competition. And, like the rest of their countrymen, the forty-eighters were prone to frequenting beer halls for socializing and more. Eugen Seeger recalled the early 1850s:

The lives of the forty-eighters back in the day [shortly after arrival] was mostly one endless lounging around in pubs, during which endless debates were held on important political and social questions, often into the small hours of the morning, where at the same time in remembrance of the old country one had been driven from so ruthlessly, solace was given to each other, while waiting for the hour where a return might be possible.<sup>29</sup>

Given the central importance of beer halls for German-American social life, the attacks on German drinking culture by temperance minded Anglo-Americans were a threat to German-American social life in more than one way. Up to this point, the city officially forbade the Sunday opening of establishments serving alcohol, but this law was barely ever enforced by police. An 1854 *Chicago Daily Tribune* letter writer to the editor complained:

[...] it may be some people's notion of democracy that people have a perfect right to drink, swear, gamble, fight and demoralize themselves [...] on a Sunday [...]; but it well behoves [sic] the moral part of the community [...] seriously to decide whether vice such public, vice as the law condemns and punishes, shall openly triumph and set at defiance not only public sentiment, but the statutes of city and the State. [...] It is utterly impossible

---

<sup>28</sup> Wandel, *The German Dimension of American History*, 128.

<sup>29</sup> Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*, 106.

on a Sunday evening to pass along a main thoroughfare without being disgusted by the obscene profanity, the babel confusion, the beastly drunkenness which these open sepulchers present.<sup>30</sup>

In reaction to sentiments like these, mayor Isaac Miliken ordered a stronger enforcement of the Sunday closing laws. This however did not sit well with his German-American constituency, who derided him harshly on the pages of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*—with the effect that Miliken then promptly withdrew the order.<sup>31</sup>

The culmination of this brewing conflict came shortly after the mayoral election on March 8, 1855, when Chicago elected Levi Boone—grandnephew of the legendary frontiersman Daniel Boone—to the office of mayor. The fact that Boone ran on an anti-immigrant Know Nothing platform as well as on the issue of temperance spelled trouble for the city's immigrant communities. The German community's apprehension towards the new mayor's outlook on alcohol consumption and nativism proved well founded: on March 17, 1855, the newly inaugurated Boone issued a proclamation declaring a change in approach to Sunday closing laws. From this day on, Sunday closing laws would be strictly enforced. Also, adding injury to insult, Boone raised the price of liquor licenses from \$50 to \$300 a week later. At the same time, following the Know-Nothing motto, "America for Americans," the new mayor shifted police hiring policies to one of employing native-born citizens only, hiring 80 new policemen to enforce the newly strengthened liquor laws. These combined strikes were clearly and openly aimed at

---

<sup>30</sup> "Sunday Drunkenness Again," *Chicago Daily Tribune (1847-1858)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, June 24, 1854.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Junger, *Becoming the Second City: Chicago's Mass News Media, 1833-1898* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 23, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=3413852>.

immigrant communities, as the police descended upon German and Irish establishments especially, forcing innkeepers to give up their businesses upon inability to pay the new, stiff fee, or face arrest.<sup>32</sup>

The *Daily Chicago Times*, the city's major Democratic paper lamented that Boone's liquor laws were inviting abuses of power by the police, especially against immigrants, since it incentivized police to "[...] accuse, sentence, imprison and release, without the interposition of any oath or the action of any magistrate" in reaction to section 17 of the liquor law, which made any form of public drunkenness a punishable offense.<sup>33</sup> The *Times* was no friend of mayor Boone and his Know-Nothing allies; the newspaper's editors frequently took the side of the immigrants in the face of know-nothing and temperance offenses, verbally and otherwise. In response to scathing remarks by the *Chicago Tribune* that the city was, "cursed only by the presence of infamous 'Dutchmen who live in beer halls'" and Irish immigrants constantly looking for fights with their American-born neighbors, the *Times* remarked that in fact Chicago was a city in the U.S. with a remarkably low percentage of immigrants holding any sort of public office. Contrary to the claims of the *Tribune* that Chicago's city administration was shot through with foreign elements that only saw to diminish the prospects of their Anglo-American countrymen, the city's government actually had comparatively scant representation of its immigrant population.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago*, 56.

<sup>33</sup> "The Seventeenth Section of the Liquor Law," *The Daily Chicago Times*, May 1, 1855.

<sup>34</sup> "Irish! Irish! Irish!," *The Daily Chicago Times*, February 26, 1855.

The fact that the new police officers enforced these temperance laws very selectively lead to a major escalation soon after Mayor Boone's election: while German and Irish barkeepers received special scrutiny, "native" American establishments received much more lenient treatment. Eugen Seeger explained this situation in his history of German Chicago: "While [...] German establishments were very closely guarded by the police on Sundays and had to remain closed, a conspicuous blind eye was turned towards the 'finer' American schnapps bars."<sup>35</sup> Reportedly, some German tavern keepers found ways around the Sunday closing laws by blocking out windows and front doors to their institutions, thereby obscuring any activity within. But they had no way of avoiding the newly-raised liquor fees, which drove some immigrant barkeepers out of business or into jail when they refused payment.<sup>36</sup>

Mayor Boone's police arrested more than 200 German innkeepers for their unwillingness or inability to pay the exorbitant new fees. In reaction to these arrests a large, armed group of Germans accompanied by the sound of drums and pipes marched on the Chicago courthouse on April 21, 1855, where that very day a group of innkeepers were to be tried by Judge Henry Rucker. The innkeepers had collectively refused to pay for the new liquor licenses and had resumed their businesses without valid permits.<sup>37</sup> Mayor Boone intended the trial to set an example, and to show to his constituency that

---

<sup>35</sup> Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*, 111.

<sup>36</sup> Dietzsch, Stern, and Kressmann, *Chicago's Deutsche Männer*, 24.

<sup>37</sup> Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago*, 56.

he was serious about clamping down on intemperance. But the immigrants did not allow for such an easy show of force without resistance.

Earlier in the day, an unruly crowd had marched on to the courthouse, led by alderman S. B. La Rue. Later in the day, an even larger crowd, composed primarily of Germans, joined in. These north-siders decided to cross the Clark Street bridge, and march South towards the city courthouse, to pressure the mayor into releasing their countrymen. To outsiders, this self-styled relief party must have seemed like a threatening, violent mob, armed with pitchforks and guns. Marching to their drums' military staccato, they approached courthouse square. There they were welcomed by a 50-man strong throng of club-wielding police. In the ensuing pandemonium, a police officer was badly hurt, a number of protesters injured and one person killed. Then, later that afternoon another group of even angrier protestors formed on the German North Side, vowing revenge, and marched on the site of the first clash. This group was then kept from immediately proceeding by an Irish bridge keeper who raised the Clark Street drawbridge. "[...] the threatened butchery was prevented by the ready wit of an Irish bridge-tender, who [...] swung his bridge wide open and kept the doughty warriors off the South Side," according to Seeger.<sup>38</sup> Stopped in their tracks, the crowd's anger and resolve dissipated, and they unceremoniously returned to their homes. Thus ended what became known as the "lager beer riots."

Mayor Boone's reaction to the uproar was conciliatory. None of the rioters were prosecuted. While the liquor license requirements were not immediately reduced to the

---

<sup>38</sup> Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*, 111.

level they were before Boone's inauguration, the riots still served as an immediate impetus for change. The incident galvanized the immigrant vote, so that in the 1856 elections German and Irish voters, roused by the experiences of the previous year, turned up in large numbers and elected Thomas Dyer as mayor. Dyer in turn returned the city to the pre-Boone liquor regulations. He campaigned, however, on a ticket championing the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and successfully tied the anti-Nebraska Democrats as anti-immigrant and pro-temperance. To ring that point home, Dyer chose a saloon for his campaign headquarters. But the election of this pro-Nebraska and proslavery candidate to the mayor's office had in turn itself a political consequence: the rallying of the anti-slavery vote and Republican Party's successful wooing of Chicago's German-American element.<sup>39</sup>

### **Anton C. Hesing, German-American Chicago and the Republican Party**

Despite the nascent Republican Party's roots in the Whig Party, the former revolutionary German-American newspapermen rallied their readership behind the cause of antislavery and abolition. In the face of human chattel slavery, the forty-eighters deemed all the ideological and political baggage the Republicans inherited from the Whig Party secondary. Supporting the Republicans for their efforts towards abolition was more important than rejecting the new party for the anti-immigrant stance of the organization it grew out of. Eugen Seeger commented on the *Staats-Zeitung's* Republican turn:

[The newspapermen] preached, recalling the big ideas they stood up for in the old country here too the noble gospel: 'down with slavery, this

---

<sup>39</sup> Pierce, *A History of Chicago Vol. I: The Beginning of a City, 1673-1848*, 212.



stain in the constitution of this great country.' 'Us Germans should,' they cried, 'before all others stand like one man against this curse-worthy institution and contribute to its destruction, even if it went against our own interests even if it meant we had to ally ourselves with our own enemies the "know-nothings" to carry out this great task!'<sup>40</sup>

In New York, Hermann Raster used his position at the *Abendzeitung* to actively promote the Republican party to the point that he was nominated elector and cast his vote for Republican candidate John C. Fremont. Raster maintained contact with his family in Germany, but also with his mentor Carl Elze, to whom he wrote about his endeavors regarding the Republican Party: "[...] during last year's presidential elections I stood in such close personal relationship to Fremont, that I was seen as the official arbiter between him and the German Republicans. Also, I had been selected as one of the 95 electors [...] an honor that never before had been given to a German."<sup>41</sup> Raster, like most of his fellow revolutionists, agitated for the Republican Party platform among his countrymen. The general consensus among the forty-eighters was that the fight against slavery in the United States was not just a continuation of the spirit of the American Revolution and the fulfillment of its promises, but also a resumption of their own struggle for democracy, republicanism and against the reactionary nobility and aristocracy in German-speaking Europe.<sup>42</sup>

In Illinois, Abraham Lincoln mobilized popular hero of the '48 revolution Friedrich Hecker to garner support for Republican candidate Fremont in the 1856

---

<sup>40</sup> Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*, 115.

<sup>41</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," August 1, 1857, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>42</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 217.

presidential elections. At this point, Hecker was already heavily involved in the German-American community, with letters and calls to action published in German-language newspapers from Philadelphia to Chicago. Hecker was especially concerned with turning the German-Americans from what he perceived as “voting cattle” (*wahl-vieh*) into a political force that was able to stand up for its own interest instead of being trapped in a role of perpetual kingmakers. And this interest in his view was best served in 1856 by supporting the Republican party—no matter the party’s connections with anti-immigrant sentiments of the Know-Nothings—since on the one hand the issue of slavery had to be tackled and the Republicans were the only ones willing to do this. On the other hand, he argued, the Democratic Party through the Clayton Amendment enacted the most egregious anti-immigrant law and therefore should be forsaken by the German-American voting bloc.<sup>43</sup>

In 1857 publisher and editor-in-chief of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* Georg Schneider and the Chicago Germans were instrumental in the nomination and subsequent election of Republican “Long John” Wentworth to the mayor’s office in Chicago. Since the German vote and the *Staats-Zeitung*’s sizable influence on it in the mayoral election were deciding factors for the Chicago Republicans’ ascent to power, German-Americans reaped political rewards in the election’s wake. Schneider’s fellow forty-eighter and *Staats-Zeitung* colleague Hermann Kreismann was appointed city clerk as reward for his tireless touring of German taverns where he held speeches

---

<sup>43</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 179.

championing Wentworth. The Wentworth election was also the point at which Anton C. Hesing entered the political stage of German Chicago.<sup>44</sup>

Hesing himself was a remarkable figure in German-American Chicago and shaped the community for an entire generation. He was not a forty-eighter, having arrived in the United States in 1839, settling at first in Cincinnati. A baker by trade, he worked various jobs, and eventually became involved in American politics in the Whig Party. In 1854 he came to Chicago, where he unsuccessfully tried his hand in the brickmaking business. After Kreismann witnessed Hesing giving an impassionate speech for mayoral candidate John Wentworth to a saloon full of German immigrants in early 1857, he decided to bring Hesing on board for the Republican mayoral campaign's effort to boost the German vote. While the Republicans had made some inroads with the German element in Chicago, they lacked good public speakers who had a good grasp of the German language. This was where Hesing came in. His speeches and Kreismann's writing in the *Staats-Zeitung* put the bulk of the German vote successfully behind Wentworth.

For his efforts, Hesing was subsequently rewarded with the nomination for the office of Cook County Deputy Sherriff in 1858, against the protestations of Chicago's nativists, which only motivated Hesing to double down on his efforts. Local politician and alderman Samuel Shackford described Hesing in a letter: "[...] a wholly obscure man, who has just come here from Cincinnati, brought himself forward in some of the ward gatherings by a sort of rough eloquence. [...] George Schneider, the editor of the

---

<sup>44</sup> Dietzsch, Stern, and Kressmann, *Chicago's Deutsche Männer*, 28.

*Staats Zeitung*, believed him to be a brave, honest man, who deserved a better fate than a brickmaker's." Shackford's letter made clear that Hesing was regarded with some suspicion in the sphere of Chicago politics.<sup>45</sup> In the same year he traveled to the Republican state convention in Springfield as the Chicago North Side delegate. In 1860 he was elected Cook County Sherriff.<sup>46</sup> Being Sherriff proved quite lucrative for Hesing. With the money he made through his public office, he bought a third of the shares of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* in 1862, taking over as the paper's publisher, with George Schneider and Lorenz Brentano holding the remaining two thirds in the paper, respectively.<sup>47</sup>

In matters of politics, Hesing led from behind. In his obituary printed in the *Chicago Tribune* his erstwhile nemesis, editor Joseph Medill, wrote that "Hesing's strength lay in great part in the fact that he knew his countrymen thoroughly and sought to be always on the side which they favored."<sup>48</sup> This approach to politics and the reach of the *Staats-Zeitung* under his leadership guaranteed him an exalted spot in and for the German-American community. In many ways, Hesing possessed qualities the forty-eighters writing for him lacked: he was a roughhewn, self-made man, not a scholar or intellectual, but he understood how to wield his more high-minded subordinates in ways that benefitted both himself and the German-American community at large.

---

<sup>45</sup> Samuel Shackford, "Notes on A.C. Hesing," 1859, Hermann Raster Papers, Chicago History Museum.

<sup>46</sup> Dietzsch, Stern, and Kressmann, *Chicago's Deutsche Männer*, 45.

<sup>47</sup> Peter H. Olden, "Anton C. Hesing: The Rise of a Chicago Boss," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984)* 35, no. 3 (1942): 286.

<sup>48</sup> "Anton C. Hesing," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 1, 1895.

In the run up to the 1860 presidential election, Hesing proved once more a vital political asset for the Republican Party. He rallied voters, gave speeches and penned editorials for the *Staats Zeitung*, extoling the virtues of the Republican Party and their presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln, with overwhelming success. In the election, Chicago Germans gave 75 percent of their vote to Lincoln, turning the city into a Republican stronghold, and cementing Hesing's role as a leader of his ethnic constituency.<sup>49</sup> This had not been a foregone conclusion. The German community favored Seward over Lincoln initially. But, as Emil Dietzsch, forty-eightier, *Staats-Zeitung* contributor and chronicler of German Chicago wrote in a book detailing outstanding German-American celebrities of the city, thanks to “[...] their newspapers they got to know and love the character of the big man, and fell in line with the Republicans with great enthusiasm.”<sup>50</sup>

Exactly how much the German vote contributed to Lincoln's victory—if at all—has been a point of contention among historians. The forty-eightiers saw themselves as kingmakers. Lincoln certainly rewarded them as such, awarding the men with public offices and positions. But the German vote was by no means unified or loyal to any one party, and the ferocity with which German-Americans supported the Republicans, anti-slavery and Lincoln himself varied, usually depending on location. What is certain is that most northern, urban German-American communities lent their support to Lincoln. In the cities and towns where German-American public life was dominated by

---

<sup>49</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 253.

<sup>50</sup> Dietzsch, Stern, and Kressmann, *Chicago's Deutsche Männer*, 47.

associations like the Turners and the singing societies, which in turn were led by anti-slavery forty-eighters, the German-American communities came out for the Republican candidate. The situation was different in the countryside. In places like Wisconsin, where German-American political affiliation was more diverse, Lincoln was less popular.<sup>51</sup> Just how important the German-American element was in the election became obvious by regarding Lincoln's treatment of prominent members of this group after his inauguration. Carl Schurz, who had led the Wisconsin delegation of the party at the Chicago convention of the Republican Party, received an appointment as minister to Spain.<sup>52</sup> Other forty-eighters received ambassadorships in other countries around the world as well as several consulates in Germany (if the persons in question were allowed back in their original home country).<sup>53</sup> Two Turner volunteer companies accompanied the first Republican President's inauguration as part of his personal guard.<sup>54</sup> Also Lincoln himself bought the Springfield German-American newspaper *Illinois Staats-Anzeiger* (Illinois State-Advertiser) in 1859—in secret. The expressed goal of this purchase was to sway the German-American vote directly.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Laurence S. Thompson and Frank X. Braun, "The Forty-Eighters in Politics," in *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 140.

<sup>52</sup> Wandel, *The German Dimension of American History*, 97.

<sup>53</sup> Thompson and Braun, "The Forty-Eighters in Politics," 149.

<sup>54</sup> Wandel, *The German Dimension of American History*, 94.

<sup>55</sup> Thompson and Braun, "The Forty-Eighters in Politics," 136.

At the time of the forty-eighters' arrival the German-American immigrant community in Chicago was already sizeable, but Americans did not regard Germans with terribly high esteem. Germans were largely still seen as alien, different in customs, religious faith and social practice. The German community had produced successful businessmen, but little in terms of political leadership, neither in terms of internal leadership of the German immigrant community, and even less in terms of leadership on a citywide level. Over the course of the decade of the 1850s the new, "green" arrivals managed to change that, at times aggressively and in ways that provoked animosity from members of the established "grey" generation. The older immigrants feared that the newcomers did not understand how America worked, and what Americans regarded as the proper way for immigrants to behave. The "greys" held it against the forty-eighters that their generation threw itself into the quagmire of American politics right after they arrived, often long before they had acquired American citizenship for themselves. The established German-Americans saw this as the newcomers jumping the line, they had not yet paid their dues required for the leadership positions they aspired to or earned the necessary experience to understand how America functioned.<sup>56</sup>

Despite the animosities from both their own established countrymen and from American nativism, the forty-eighters with their brash nature and strong political conviction prevailed. They quickly and successfully worked their way up to positions in which they could lead the German diaspora in Chicago, both in thought and in action. A vital component of their toolkit that enabled this success was the newspaper. Within a

---

<sup>56</sup> Dietzsch, Stern, and Kressmann, *Chicago's Deutsche Männer*, 28.

few years the new arrivals turned the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* from an unremarkable foreign language weekly into vital organ that the editors and their political allies then used to largely unify, shape, and direct the German community of Chicago. The newspaper began to fulfill several important functions for the Chicago Germans. The publication connected German Chicago to the broader German-speaking world, on American soil and beyond, becoming a central fulcrum of the German ethnoscape in Chicago. With German Chicago turned Republican, the forty-eighters soon used their newfound positions of power to mobilize their diaspora to stand up against what they perceived as the worst, blackest stain on the American constitution: slavery.



## CHAPTER 3

### THE REVOLUTIONARIES GO TO WAR

#### **THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, 1861-63**

As the United States descended into civil war, the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* served its German-speaking readership as a link between the battlefields of the south and the city. The various correspondents also reported on how the war in America was received in the German homeland. But more than reporting on the war, the newspapermen also utilized the growing reach of their publication to further the Union war effort: they organized drives for volunteer soldiers, raised funds and donations. But they also continued to make use of their influence by shaping public opinion and provided a unifying voice for the still sometimes disparate German-American community. The newspaper's circulation grew during the war, as did its staff. Also, the publication's leadership changed, with Republican Party firebrand Anton C. Hesing joining forty-eighter Lorenz Brentano and former *New York Staats-Zeitung* typesetter Robert Bernhard Höffgen as part-owner and publisher in 1862.<sup>1</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* editorship managed to cement their paper as the leading voice of and for the Chicago Germans, an invaluable asset in mobilizing the immigrant population for the Union cause.

---

<sup>1</sup> Emil Dietzsch, Max Stern, and Fred Kressmann, *Chicago's Deutsche Männer: Erinnerungs-Blätter an Chicago's Fünfzigjähriges Jubiläum Geschichte der Stadt Chicago* (Chicago: M. Stern & Co., 1885), 17.

Participation in the American Civil War changed the German-Americans, their community and their understanding of themselves in their new home country. The *Staats-Zeitung* brought the war home to the readers, bridging the distance between the battlefields in the South and Chicago. Meanwhile, the immigrants furthered the transnational cultural sphere they belonged to, by writing home to Germany about the war, some in professional, some in private capacity. German-American newspapermen like Hermann Raster, who during the war still lived in New York, worked as foreign correspondents for German newspapers, thereby bringing the events in America that many friends and relatives of Germans were now involved with closer to the German homeland. Meanwhile, the forty-eight newspapermen in Chicago continued to demonstrate how the German ethnoscape impacted nation-state politics, by continuing their support for President Abraham Lincoln, the Republican Party, and the Union cause.

When the Civil War broke out, the Chicago Germans immediately organized a volunteer regiment. Part-owner of the *Staats-Zeitung* Anton Hesing participated by recruiting members for the regiment's B-company, dubbed the "Hesing sharpshooters." In Chicago, as in other parts of the country, German-Americans were the first non-Anglo-American ethnicities to establish volunteer regiments. Overall, German-Americans sent 28,569 more soldiers than other ethnic groups with an overall number of 176,817 German-born volunteers in the Union army.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Rudolf Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago* (Champaign, Ill.: Stipes Pub. Co., 1976), 165.

The Turner societies, part German nationalist organization, part gymnastics association and part political club, were vital in organizing these volunteer regiments in Chicago. At the North Side Turner Hall, just a two-day registration drive was sufficient to muster two whole companies.<sup>3</sup> Out of these efforts emerged the so called *Erstes Hecker Jäger Regiment*, (First Hecker Hunter Regiment) the 24<sup>th</sup> Illinois Volunteer Infantry, named after its commander, forty-eighter hero and veteran of the Baden Revolution, Col. Friedrich Hecker. This so called “ethnic regiment” was comprised completely of German, Hungarian and Slovak immigrants, with a large number of forty-eighters among the German companies. Hecker’s regiment was also overall the first battle-ready unit out of Chicago.<sup>4</sup>

Friedrich Hecker had initially not considered a regimental command. He wanted to enlist with the rank of private in the army, which he did in Missouri where he enlisted in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Missouri volunteer infantry alongside his oldest son. But his larger-than-life reputation among the German-Americans set things in motion even before Hecker himself knew. The aforementioned volunteer recruitment drives and the initial steps towards forming the 24<sup>th</sup> Illinois infantry regiment that already bore his name were carried out without his knowledge. George Schneider, Lorenz Brentano and Caspar Butz even attracted the recognition of President Lincoln—necessary for the volunteer regiments—before they approached Hecker about his willingness to lead the unit on the

---

<sup>3</sup> Theodore J. Karamanski, *Rally 'Round the Flag: Chicago and the Civil War* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 71.

<sup>4</sup> Ella Lonn, “The Forty-Eighters in The Civil War Era,” in *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 202.

battlefield. Initially Hecker declined, due to his citizen soldier's code borne out of the forty-eighter ideology. This code asked each "honorable man" to gauge their own military capabilities, and sort themselves into the most fitting role accordingly. And Hecker found himself lacking in comparison to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Missouri Infantry commander, fellow forty-eighter revolutionary veteran and former minister of war of the Baden Republic Franz Sigel. However, after some soul-searching, Hecker eventually agreed to pick up the mantle of regimental command.<sup>5</sup>

The Hecker regiment was not the only German-American unit out of Chicago. The Turners themselves formed the "Turner Union Cadets" company, while other Chicago Germans formed the "Lincoln Rifles" in the Illinois 60<sup>th</sup> infantry regiment, as well as the "Union Rifles II," the "Washington Light Cavalry" and the "Washington Light Infantry" companies. Many of the men volunteering in these units had at least some experience in military service from fighting in the German 1848 revolution. In general, the eagerness to go to war among German-American Chicagoans ran high when it came to go to war against the slave-holding aristocracy that now was threatening to destroy their newly chosen home country.<sup>6</sup>

In 1861 the publishers of the *Staats-Zeitung*, George Schneider, Robert Höffgen and Lorenz Brentano, decided to bring former *Turnzeitung* editor and forty-eighter Wilhelm Rapp to Chicago to serve as editor and later editor-in-chief of the *Staats-*

---

<sup>5</sup> Sabine Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker: Two Lives for Liberty* (St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 222.

<sup>6</sup> Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago*, 88.

*Zeitung*. After his stint with the Turners, Rapp had moved to Baltimore, where he worked for the local German newspaper *Baltimore Wecker*. His abolitionist and anti-secessionist writing for the *Wecker* caused Rapp to almost lose his life and forced him to flee Maryland. Rapp came to Baltimore in 1857 to work at the *Wecker*. During this time Rapp was the only editor of the newspaper and used this position to further the abolitionist cause, as he wrote in a letter he sent to his father in Germany in 1861: “I conducted the *Wecker* from my first to my last day there in accordance with the principles of the Republican party.” This he did against the expressed wishes of his publisher Wilhelm Schnauffer. In Rapp’s own words Schnauffer was an “ignorant, myopic and fearful person.”<sup>7</sup>

Schnauffer disagreed with the direction of his editor, but ultimately understood too little of the editing business himself to counter Rapp’s direction effectively. In addition to his work at the newspaper, which was the only Baltimore publication to champion the presidency of Abraham Lincoln, Rapp also organized political rallies in support of the Republican candidate. All of this political agitation eventually drew the attention and anger of the Democrats of Maryland, who not just heckled Rapp and the speakers at one of the rallies but started throwing objects and eventually shot their guns at the speakers and organizers, ending the event in turmoil. But Rapp remained steadfast in his conviction and continued his campaign for the Republican cause, protected by allies and police. His luck changed with the bombardment of Fort Sumter

---

<sup>7</sup> Wilhelm Rapp, “The Baltimore Riots of 1861 - Translated by Fritz Caspari,” *The Newberry Library Bulletin*, no. 9 (1950): 277.

on April 12, 1861. After that day the Democratic forces in Baltimore became emboldened to the point that Rapp and his supporters had to fear for their lives on a daily basis. Rapp even attempted to organize an armed resistance against the proslavery forces in Baltimore, but to no avail.

On April 20<sup>th</sup> a violent, pro-secessionist mob descended upon the offices of the *Wecker*, calling for Rapp to be lynched. The editor managed to hide out in the offices until police dispersed the rabble, at which point he fled into the building of a nearby brewery to wait for the morning to come. The following night Rapp shaved off his beard and disguised himself as a wandering minister. He set out to take the early train into Washington. But the erupting war interrupted rail traffic, so the fugitive editor decided to walk along the train tracks into the nation's capital. In Washington he was well received by friends and allies. Postmaster General Montgomery Blair offered Rapp a high position within the Postal or Customs Services, but Rapp declined. Instead he took up *Staats-Zeitung* co-publisher Robert Hoeffgen's offer to join his editorial staff in Chicago.<sup>8</sup>

In the same letter Rapp expressed remorse about the failed unification of the German-speaking countries, the Battle of Bronzell, and the Shame of Olmütz. These incidents were bloodless conflicts and showings of force meant to enforce the counterrevolution in the Grand Duchy of Hesse, which eventually pitted Prussia against Austria, and cemented the division of German-speaking countries in the mid-nineteenth

---

<sup>8</sup> Rapp, 282. This episode turned into something of a legend that Rapp upon his arrival in Washington was received by President Lincoln who supposedly offered him the position of postmaster general, which Rapp declined.

century. Rapp's frequent reference to those incidents indicated that they influenced his views of slavery. He feared that appeasing the slave-holding aristocracy of the Southern states in similar terms would result in splitting the Union. His work at the *Wecker* strictly opposed this split, as Rapp was not only staunchly anti-slavery, but also anti-secession. Rapp saw himself as a uniquely-positioned person. On the one hand he was German, a revolutionary, and a republican. On the other hand, he was an American, enthusiastic member of the Republican Party, and his allegiance was a proponent of the Union and highly critical of the southern secessionists and slaveholders. In these views, he was much in line with the overall forty-eighter common sense. Across the U.S. the former revolutionaries declared that opposition to slavery and the slave-holding classes of the south was an obligation to those who fought in the revolutions, since the slave holders were analogous to the aristocratic reaction of Germany.<sup>9</sup> Rapp also reported that he would gladly volunteer as a field correspondent for the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*.

About this newspaper he wrote that it was not anti-religious but neutral, unlike other German-American anti-slavery papers. The forty-eighters were known for their atheism, anti-clerical activity, and strong suspicion of organized religion. Due to the overreaching power of the clergy in the German states, any men of the cloth and those following them quickly raised many forty-eighters' suspicion if not outright hostility. The strong religiousness of Americans oftentimes perplexed them, as they deemed organized religious practices as unnecessary for an enlightened mind. This did not mean

---

<sup>9</sup> Bruce C. Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 217.

that the forty-eighters were anti-religious in principle, however. Rapp himself had been a student of theology and originally intended to become a Lutheran minister like his father before the revolution swept him up. The forty-eighters were opposed to organized religion and in general championed a strong separation of church and state. In the years leading up to the revolutions, the various aristocratic state governments had cracked down on more egalitarian new religious movements in both the predominantly Catholic as well in the Protestant states of Germany. The noble rulers backed the established, conservative churches over any reform attempts. This gave rise to a strong anti-clerical stream within the overall forty-eighter ideology and was the reason publications like the *Staats-Zeitung* opposed temperance politicians as strongly as they did.<sup>10</sup>

The editors of the *Staats-Zeitung* had few illusions about how destructive the coming war could be. On June 13, 1861, a month after Wilhelm Rapp became editor, the newspaper reported on the formation of the Hecker's regiment. Rapp mentioned that the Germans were among the first ethnic groups to volunteer for the Union cause in large numbers and lamented that the patriotism they displayed was not appreciated by the American commanders. He then established a direct connection between the men fighting for Hecker in the Civil War, and Hecker's old comrades back in Germany: "Like Hecker's brothers in arms against the despotic violence in Germany are even today gleefully aware of their participation in those acts, so will the soldiers of the Hecker regiment look back with pride to their time serving under the leadership of the German

---

<sup>10</sup> Levine, 48.



patriot.”<sup>11</sup> For Rapp the term “patriot” worked in two ways: for Hecker’s German patriotism and the heroic deeds he performed during the German revolutions, as well as for his American patriotism, especially regarding defense of the Union. This dual patriotism, the love of both German homeland and its people as well as the love and devotion to the new homeland and its ideals and principals, was central to the self-image of many forty eighters. The term perfectly summarized the dual nature of the German-Americans’ national identity, being both German and American at the same time.

On June 18, 1861, an editorial titled “The Supplementation of the Regiments” explained to the readership that the war would last longer than initially assumed, and that the conflict would be “a fight of extermination between two diametrically opposed principles: that of free labor, and that of slave labor.” Wrote Rapp, “this battle will not be over, before one or the other reigns supreme over the entire United States.”<sup>12</sup> The editor predicted a large number of fallen soldiers from both bullets and disease in the coming conflict, preparing the readership for the sacrifices ahead. The report mentioned that three Chicago-based regiments were about to depart the city: the Hecker-Regiment, the all-Irish-American volunteer Irish Brigade, and the volunteer Zouave-Regiment, an Anglo-American regiment. All Union units were still comprised solely of volunteer soldiers by 1861. But soldiers of different ethnicities remained among themselves, for

---

<sup>11</sup> “Das Heckerregiment,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 13, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>12</sup> “Die Ergänzung Der Regimenter,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 18, 1861, Newberry Library (my translation).

various reasons, the most practical one being an attempt to avoid language barriers among soldiers and their commanding officers.<sup>13</sup>

The editorial revue on the same page stated that the Hecker-Regiment needed support from all the Germans of the state of Illinois, since “there can be no doubt that the next destination [of the regiment] is there, where German countrymen faithful to the Union need protection from the secessionists’ wrath!”<sup>14</sup> This sentiment again demonstrated both how eager the forty-eighters were to go to war, preparing the German-speaking public for great losses. But this excerpt also showed that German-American was an identity separate from both German and American. This was more than a localized effort to get men from one town to march to the registration office together. This was an attempt to engage the German-speaking public of the Midwest to participate in the Union cause. The *Staats-Zeitung* presented German-Americans as overwhelmingly pro-Union, invoking rhetoric that required German-Americans to stand together against the secessionists.

A day later on June 19, 1861, the *Staats-Zeitung* reported on the Hecker-Regiment marching off to war. At the ceremonial sendoff Lorenz Brentano, forty-eighter, lawyer and contributor to the *Staats-Zeitung*, addressed the troops and the gathered masses. He lauded the Germans for using their vote for the principles of freedom in times of peace. Now, Brentano said, the time had come to go into armed battle for the very same principles. He also praised the Hecker Regiment as the first

---

<sup>13</sup> James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford University Press, 1988), 323.

<sup>14</sup> “Revue,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 18, 1861, Newberry Library (my translation).

completely German unit from the Northwest. Brentano pointed out that many of the members of this regiment already fought in the revolutionary battles in their old homelands. The newspaper cited Friedrich Hecker himself addressing the gathering. He spoke following Brentano ceremoniously presenting him with an American flag, a banner for the regiment, sewn by two local Germans: “The southern aristocracy has to be broken, if freedom is to prevail. If I ever turn my back to this flag [the Stars and Stripes], I command you to kill me on the spot. But if I fall in battle, so brothers, I command you to avenge my death.”<sup>15</sup> Hecker drew further parallels between the Southern aristocrats and European nobility, both of whom, in his view, were out to exploit their fellow men. Both the addresses cited showed the traits of German-American national identity at the outset of the Civil War. A substantial number of people had gathered to see Hecker and his men off. Hecker as much as Brentano stressed the republican principles of freedom and democracy that German-Americans had fought - and would now die for. They did all these things as Germans at this point, conscious of their heritage and the revolutionary battles behind them, but also as Americans, marching under the Stars and Stripes—not under the black, red and gold of the flag of the united Germany they strove for in the past.<sup>16</sup>

As early as July 1, 1861 the *Staats-Zeitung* reported on the reception of the Civil War in the German homelands. The paper ran an article in the issue of that day describing how,

---

<sup>15</sup> “Fahnen Überreichung an Das Hecker Jäger Regiment,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 19, 1861, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>16</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 222.

German newspapers of all colors are now receiving letters from North-America, from the camps just as from the cities of the north and west [...]. There is more talk than ever about America, and it is felt that a vigorous and then also lucky conduct of the American war of the special confederacy [Sonderbund], which is now inevitable and has threatened the country since the Missouri Compromise, will also impact European politics and take a burden of the shoulders of the people.<sup>17</sup>

The German-American newspapers established a transnational gyre of information around the globe, contributing to a cultural sphere, an ethnoscape that crossed borders and oceans, with the newspapers representing the prime facilitators of this circulation. Here the focus was on the perception of the Civil War abroad in Europe, and how direct news from former countrymen shaped the perception of the American political situation in Germany. The article specifically mentioned that letters from German-Americans would now be bound and published as analysis of the political situation in the United States. This project would continue for the foreseeable future, indicating a vested interest by the German public in the events abroad which their emigrated friends and relatives were involved with. But an undertaking like this also served to inform any subsequent generation of immigrants on the workings of American political and social life as well as on what prevalent issues the country was struggling with that new arrivals had to be prepared to face, contributing to the German speaking, transnational cultural sphere.

In 1861 Hermann Raster defended the United States for waging the Civil War to his former mentor Carl Elze. His German mentor must have uttered doubts about

---

<sup>17</sup> “Korrespondenz Aus Stuttgart,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 1, 1861, Newberry Library (my translation).

Raster's life in the corrupting and egotistical United States. Raster responded that Elze should not worry about those things, since, "the nation spends millions of its wealth on the preservation of an idea that is ridiculed all across Europe [the republic], a nation that sends hundreds of thousands of her sons to their deaths for it."<sup>18</sup> Raster was referring to the Union's effort in the Civil War to preserve the republican ideal. He believed that the United States was not a perfect place for him to live, but that America was still superior to Europe, where the concept of a republic was not even attempted, much less defended. In a way this was a display of Raster's disaffection with the old country that failed his republican idealism.

Another service the *Staats-Zeitung* rendered to its readers especially during wartime was one typical for foreign-language newspapers addressing large recent immigrant readerships: advice for how to navigate the new country. During the war, this service included advice for German-American soldiers specifically: where to register for the volunteer regiments, what to look out for when joining the war effort, and most importantly, to make sure that the American recruiting officers took down the German names with the correct spelling. German names were often spelled in odd variations by non-German speaking Americans, especially if they contained special German characters such as umlauts. As only a veteran whose registration documents matched

---

<sup>18</sup> Hermann Raster, "Aus Raster's New Yorker Zeit, II," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, September 14, 1891, Newberry Library (my translation).

his other paperwork would be able to receive a military pension after the war, this was an extremely important matter to address.<sup>19</sup>

A year later, the *Staats-Zeitung* commented on the steady stream of immigrants from Europe, who came to the United States despite the ongoing war. The author of the article, likely again penned by Rapp, openly derided the Irish in particular as “illiterate fools” who bought into the rumor that America had fallen into a state of total anarchy due to the Civil War, where “people were butchering one another in the streets, and eating one another akin to the lions in the fable.”<sup>20</sup> The Germans on the other hand were found to be well informed about the conditions on the ground in the United States, and thus had a lot more realistic expectations in regards to the state of the country during wartime. “The Union still shines as a beacon of hope for all the oppressed of the old world, her shine not dimmed by the rebellion of the slaveholders. [...] The battle she is fighting against freedom hating elements within herself only strengthened the faith of the Germans in her, themselves weary of Europe.” Again, the nation-less nationalism of the German-Americans came to the fore, praising the German spirit, which was weary of the German home country but willing to fight for the new one. If the German immigrants were overwhelmingly in agreement with the sentiments of the *Staats-Zeitung* was questionable, however the author still wrote that those future German-

---

<sup>19</sup> “Augen Auf Bei Der Musterung!,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 8, 1861, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>20</sup> “Die Einwanderung Aus Deutschland in Der Jetzigen Krisis,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 11, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

Americans were the best hope of the United States, declaring them the perfect citizens: American and German spirits the perfect match.

Germans and Irish frequently found themselves the target of the same nativist resentment and in instances like the Beer Riot literally fought for the same cause alongside each other. But German-Irish relations were not always quite so rosy, especially not when the Irish behaved in ways that marked them as backwards and intolerant themselves in the eyes of the forty-eighter newspapermen. An article emblematic of how quickly the German perspective on the erstwhile brothers-in-arms shifted, reported on such an incident. An editorial asked, “are Mulattoes and Negroes allowed to use Public Busses?” The *Staats-Zeitung* published this article a year into the Civil War, a mere seven years after the Beer Riot. The editor described an incident concerning a Black man who entered a public bus of the Walker’s omnibus lines. The bus driver and a passenger however were strongly opposed to this. Both were Irish immigrants—which the editor pointed out repeatedly. The bus driver eventually resorted to physical violence, punching the Black man in the face before kicking him off the bus and driving off. The *Staats-Zeitung* then used this incident to extol the virtuousness of African-Americans while also pondering how it could be that a race such as the Irish who, “are oppressed in their home country like no other nation” would resort to this kind of racist violence. The article closed on a conspiratorial note: “The acts of brutality that occur against the negroes at different places at the same time lead

us to fear a plot, at the point of which, clad in shadow, stand the SECESSIONISTS. Thus we tell you to be on your guard!”<sup>21</sup>

During the war, the *Staats-Zeitung* reported not just on politics and warfare, the newspaper also printed several serialized novelettes. These bits of fiction—mostly written by German and German-American authors like Friedrich Gerstäcker and Balduin Möllhausen—were published mainly for entertainment purposes. They did however, advance the political leanings of the editorship. In the Sunday editions of the paper in May and June of 1862 the *Staats-Zeitung* ran an abolitionist novella titled, “The Mulatta,” followed by another serialized short story titled, “The Negress.” These stories furthered the perception of the African-Americans’ inherent humanity, championed abolitionist causes, and put names to (fictional or fictionalized) Black people who would otherwise remain simply an anonymous statistic. Whether or not these stories intended to accurately depict life in the southern slave society is difficult to assess, but the point of these novellas was not authenticity, but to spread abolitionist ideas and venerating the oppressed. In general, these stories represented an effort by the editorship to act as thought leaders of their community and to increase the German-American engagement with the war effort and the abolitionist cause.<sup>22</sup>

As the Civil War progressed and the various German-American regiments, companies, and their commanding officers had chances to prove themselves on the battlefield, criticism with echoes of Know-Nothing arguments arose, deriding the

---

<sup>21</sup> “Irländer vs. Neger,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 15, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>22</sup> “Die Mulattin,” *Chciago Sonntags-Zeitung*, May 11, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).



German contributions to the war effort. Throughout the duration of the war, the *Staats-Zeitung* editors devoted many pages to the defense of German-Americans' honor that were besmirched by ill-meaning Americans and, even in some cases, other German-American voices. German-American participants in the war were often disparaged as cowardly or simply insufficiently abled. This could be ascribed to language barriers and prejudice working in tandem, making ethnic soldiers appear less competent compared to their Anglo-Saxon counterparts, which then caused outrage in the German press. In late May 1862 the *Chicago Medical Journal*, for example, published an article complaining about the apparent incompetence and confusion on the battlefield by two German field surgeons at the Battle of Shiloh. The *Staats-Zeitung* countered that if the battle had been accurately planned and the Union army generals had been less reckless, it would not have been necessary to bring in non-military medical personnel in the first place.<sup>23</sup> The paper rarely missed a chance to openly and vehemently defend fellow German-Americans. But sometimes it was those very countrymen who were the offending party, such as these surgeons, which made things a little more complicated.

When German-American publisher and forty-eighter radical Karl Heinzen attacked Franz Sigel on the pages of his *Pionier* newspaper out of New York, the *Staats-Zeitung* promptly jumped to Sigel's defense. The affair demonstrated that the German-American milieu was not unified by any means, not even among ostensibly like-minded, pro-union forty-eighters. Heinzen was known in the German-American intellectual

---

<sup>23</sup> "Schamloser Know=Nothingismus Gegen Die Deutschen Aertzte in Der Armee," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 20, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

community as a radical's radical, and in his attack on Sigel he stayed true to his reputation. Sigel came to the defense of German-American Brigadier General Louis Blenker, who at the time was under close scrutiny for some alleged corruption accusations that were never proven, but which also never quite went away. Heinzen, as one of the accusers of Blenker, then tried to paint Sigel with the same brush, suggested that the latter's reason for defending the former was due to a mutual propensity for corruption, bribery and personal enrichment in office. In response, the *Staats-Zeitung* ran a three-part defense of Sigel, in which the Chicago editors pulled apart the accusations leveled against him.<sup>24</sup>

On July 11, 1862 the editors again exchanged written blows with yet another German-American paper from Chicago—this time with the *Chicago Union*, a smaller German-American paper loyal to the Democratic Party - and the southern slaveholders. The *Union* ran a small article praising the *Chicago Times* for its growing number of subscriptions, while also deriding the *Staats-Zeitung*: “Can such an influential institution as the *Times* be barked at or even destroyed with the soft strokes of the feather of a German-Republican paper?” To which the *Staats-Zeitung* shot back, “it is, finally, a sign of the times that barely a lunch advertisement appears here and there in the German proslavery rag; a sign that the Germans – true to their nationality – are friends of freedom, haters of oppression and despisers of the priests of cruelty.”<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> “Carl Heinzen Und General Sigel,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 29, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>25</sup> “Der Deutsche Prosklavereiwisch pufft den Englischen Prosklavereiwisch”, *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 11, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

The *Staats-Zeitung* also engaged in further abolitionist and emancipatory rhetoric. In an article titled, “The Numbers Prove It!” the editors challenged the then-prevalent anti-emancipatory argument: that emancipation of the southern slaves would come at the detriment of the northern, white worker. The reason for this argument was that the “Southern States are exclusively under control of the slave holders, who [...] saw to push out all white workers and replace them with negroes.” This line of argument showed that even the German-American papers were involved in the discourse surrounding emancipation and what repercussions were feared this step would have for the country’s free labor force. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors clearly saw the necessity to disprove arguments against emancipation among their own readership.<sup>26</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* kept its readership informed about the fate of German-American communities across the United States, which made the newspaper an important gear in the machinery of greater German America. In a July edition of the paper, in an article titled *The Germans of Missouri*, the editors republished and commented on an article which originally ran in the New York *Demokrat*. The German-American newspaper community in the U.S. was at this point already well connected, as can be seen here by a Chicago newspaper printing and commenting on an article that ran originally in a New York paper, which in turn reported on the situation in St. Louis. The article detailed how the German element in St. Louis specifically was responsible for bringing the fight against slavery home to the border state: “The Germans of St. Louis

---

<sup>26</sup> “Zahlen Beweisen,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 8, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

are, almost down to a man, for emancipation, and without the leaden weight of the *sine qua non* of colonization or any other conditions which would postpone emancipation *ad Graecas calendas*.”<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, while the original article stated that some St. Louis Germans had vested commercial interests in the South succeeding in the war, the editors commented that, “it would appear the editor here exclusively communicated with the big German merchants, who in part are strongly sympathetic to the South.”<sup>28</sup> Historian Adam Arenson stresses that St. Louis was a Unionist bastion in a politically torn state, and German-Americans were at the forefront. In May 1861 Germans here, too, had volunteered to defend the Union by joining a pro-Union militia that marched on the forces rallied by the Democratic governor of the state, Clairborne Fox Jackson. The governor would declare war on the United States, while St. Louis remained in its position as a Union bulwark, which the local German-American community contributed to significantly.<sup>29</sup>

The Hecker regiment of the 24<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry in the meantime brought its namesake little fulfillment or glory. Hecker became weary not only of the general state of the unit and its readiness for action—most of the volunteers were not trained soldiers—but also of the rear-end guard duties delegated to the regiment. Hecker resigned his command on December 24, 1861 in frustration and returned to his farm in

---

<sup>27</sup> “Die Deutschen in Missouri,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 4, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>28</sup> “Die Deutschen in Missouri.”

<sup>29</sup> Adam Arenson, *The Great Heart of the Republic: St. Louis and the Cultural Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011), 116.

southern Illinois.<sup>30</sup> His friend Caspar Butz wrote that Hecker was depressed, both from being driven into what he perceived as early retirement, but also by the rampant anti-German sentiment that kept German regiments from the front lines. This caused the *Staats-Zeitung* leadership—Schneider, Hesing, Brentano and Butz—to send a letter to U.S. Representatives Lyman Trumbull, Isaac N. Arnold, Elihu Washburne and Lovejoy Browning, condemning the manner in which German units and their commanders were treated. Meanwhile other friends of Hecker lobbied General John C. Fremont on his behalf, to call on to him to form a new, second Hecker regiment. After the preliminary emancipation proclamation in September 1862 and the concurrent new push by the Lincoln administration for more volunteer soldiers, Hecker was indeed again called upon to lead, this time the 82<sup>nd</sup> Illinois Infantry regiment, the Second Hecker Rifles.<sup>31</sup>

The forty-eighters across the country received the Emancipation Proclamation on 1 January 1863 overwhelmingly positively. The consensus among the group was that the war was primarily fought to end slavery, with the added goal of maintaining the Union and to put an end to the insurrection and secession. But while most of the German-American intellectuals saw President Abraham Lincoln's step to free the slaves in states in rebellion favorably, a group of radicals, especially Karl Heinzen and Caspar Butz, disagreed. To them, Lincoln was too weak on slavery, too lenient towards the Confederacy and his emancipation proclamation did not go far enough, allowing slavery

---

<sup>30</sup> William Wagner, *History of the 24th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Old Hecker Regiment)* (Illinois Staats-Zeitung Publishing, 1911), 8, <http://archive.org/details/historyof24thilloowagn>.

<sup>31</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 238.

to continue in too many parts of the country still. Over time, this sentiment grew into a full-blown opposition movement to Lincoln. In the run-up to the 1864 election the radicals around Butz and Heinzen argued that Lincoln's weakness on emancipation and lack of decisiveness in war was grounds to deny him the Republican nomination. They instead rallied support for an alternative candidate, John C. Fremont.

### **The German-Americans at Chancellorsville**

The battles of the Civil War itself held additional challenges that served to test the German immigrants' standing within American society. The most prominent was the Battle of Chancellorsville. There the predominantly German Eleventh Corps of the Potomac Army was forced to retreat by the advancing forces of Stonewall Jackson. Historian Christian Keller remarks that the dismal outcome for the Eleventh Corps had many different reasons, on which the cowardice or bravery of individual elements of the unit had little bearing. Earlier in Spring 1863 the unit's commander, the widely beloved General Franz Sigel had resigned from his command in protest and frustration of what he saw as mistreatment of himself and his fellow German-Americans by the army command. Sigel was not allowed to return to his post when he changed his mind a few weeks later. The new commander of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps, Major General Oliver Otis Howard, did not get along well with the German-Americans, a circumstance which depressed troop morale long before the Battle of Chancellorsville even began.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Christian B. Keller, *Chancellorsville and the Germans: Nativism, Ethnicity, and Civil War Memory* (US, UNITED STATES: Fordham University Press, 2007), 47, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=3239437>.

The new commander of the Army of the Potomac Major General Hooker planned a sweeping march to outflank Confederate General Robert E. Lee at Fredericksburg in early May, 1863. On May 2, Hooker consolidated his troops, ordered a defensive position, and placed the Eleventh Corps as far away from where he assumed the enemy would most likely make an attack. Keller noted that Hooker's reasoning here was influenced by many different factors, the most salient of which that the Eleventh was just over half made up of German-born men, who the Anglo-Americans did not quite trust and still regarded as alien. As the day advanced, the men of the Eleventh noticed disturbing commotions in the deep woods around them that seemed to indicate that the enemy was attempting to flank them. The dispatches sent to Howard were dismissed by the commander. As Stonewall Jackson's units began their attack in the late afternoon, the men of the Eleventh Corps found themselves facing in the wrong direction. While some parts of the Eleventh managed to mount a brief defense, the entire corps' position was untenable, and most of the men fled away from the Confederate advance. Some regiments successfully rallied, regrouped and rejoined the battle. All things considered—low troop morale in general, a commanding officer who disliked and distrusted his men, and who disregarded warnings about enemy movements and an imminent attack, the Eleventh bearing the brunt of Stonewall Jackson's flanking maneuver—the Eleventh Corps fought as well as could be expected. The unit was mismanaged, ill prepared for attack and subsequently outflanked and overwhelmed.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Keller, 74.

After the battle, the soldiers of the Eleventh underwent some soul searching. Trying to overcome the trauma of the battle, they attempted to figure out what exactly had happened. American Civil War scholar James S. Pula found numerous field letters from the Eleventh, in which the soldiers squarely blamed both Generals Howard and Hooker for the defeat. From the soldiers' perspective the generals failed in their command, allowed the Eleventh Corps to be flanked and ignored all warnings about enemy movements their scouts provided them.<sup>34</sup> The Anglo-American press however portrayed the situation differently in the reporting on the Battle of Chancellorsville that ensued in early May. Various newspaper editorships laid the blame for the loss on the German element of the Eleventh Corps, which the newspaper editors blamed for breaking and fleeing in disgrace. They heaped ridicule and blame on the German-American soldiers, in no unclear words putting the responsibility for the Confederate win on their shoulders. These statements were supposedly based on eyewitness reports of newspapermen witnessing the battle firsthand. The most ardent criticism of German behavior at Chancellorsville came out of the New York newspapers.<sup>35</sup> The *New York Times* published an especially scathing editorial by New York Lawyer Lorenzo Crouse, who stated that the Germans under forty-eight year old General Carl Schurz' command fled from the battle as soon as the first shots rang out, effectively causing the defeat through their acts of cowardice. Due to the *New York Times*' leading position in the

---

<sup>34</sup> James Pula, *Under the Crescent Moon with the XI Corps in the Civil War. Volume 1: From the Defenses of Washington to Chancellorsville, 1862-1863*. (Havertown: Savas Beatie, 2017), 216, <https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=5760419>.

<sup>35</sup> Keller, *Chancellorsville and the Germans*, 76.



Anglo-American newspaper landscape, these editorials were then picked up and reprinted by innumerable other newspapers across the country.<sup>36</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* editorship responded with an editorial on May 7, 1863, less than a day after the week-long battle's conclusion. The defeat and retreat of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps was not the fault of its German contingent argued the editor. This editorial was a direct rebuttal of the pieces published the *New York Times* deriding the German element.<sup>37</sup> These Anglo-American articles labeled the Germans of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps as “cowardly Dutchmen” and blamed them for the defeat. The *Staats-Zeitung* listed the divisions of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps and concluded that the individual divisions fleeing the scene were ones that consisted predominantly of Americans. In closing, the editor stated: “We will not follow the bad example of the *Times* correspondent, we will not make mean spirited differentiations between the nationalities.” Another short entry on the same page relayed the worries of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps under its new commander General Oliver Otis Howard, who banned the consumption of beer for the enlisted soldiers. Turning the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps into “teetotalers against our will” was highly detrimental to corps morale, a field reporter wrote.<sup>38</sup> This situation also demonstrated that the German regiment's practice of drinking copious amounts of *Lagerbier*, which was indeed portrayed and perceived

---

<sup>36</sup> Pula, *Under the Crescent Moon with the XI Corps in the Civil War. Volume 1*, 217.

<sup>37</sup> “FROM THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,” *The New York Times*, May 5, 1863, sec. Archives, <https://www.nytimes.com/1863/05/05/archives/from-the-army-of-the-potomac-details-of-the-important-operations-to.html>.

<sup>38</sup> “Über General Howard, Den Kommandeur Des. 11. Corps,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 5, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

by the American public as a German particularity, was a definite signifier of the German ethnicity of those soldiers.

Five days later, the cover page of the *Staats-Zeitung* opened with another angry rebuttal to the articles in the *New York Times* and the *Missouri Republican*, which both accused the German soldiers at Chancellorsville of cowardice.<sup>39</sup> The editor contested the facts of the battle and defended German soldiers' prowess in war: "German soldiers have been proving their bravery for more than fifteen hundred years and have renewed this proof on a thousand battlefields."<sup>40</sup> Ever since the rediscovery of Tacitus's *Germania* during the Renaissance, the intelligentsia of German-speaking Europe saw themselves and their people as descendants of the brave Germanic tribes Tacitus wrote about a thousand years earlier. Tacitus's description of Germanic tribes also had another long-term effect on Renaissance-era Europe: it led to the construction of a fictive kinship between Germans and Native Americans, since Tacitus wrote about the savage tribes of Germania using very similar language that explorers of the Americas used to describe American Indians.<sup>41</sup>

The accusation of cowardice kept occupying a prominent space on the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung* in the following days. The editors published a detailed description of

---

<sup>39</sup> "Analysis of Hooker's Campaign," *The New York Times*, May 14, 1863, sec. Archives, <https://www.nytimes.com/1863/05/14/archives/analysis-of-hookers-campaign.html>.

<sup>40</sup> "Die Bemerkungen Der Chicago Tribune Über Die Angebliche Feigheit Der Deutschen Unter Hooker," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 8, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>41</sup> Brian E. Vick, *Defining Germany : The 1848 Frankfurt Parliamentarians and National Identity* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), 34.

the Battle of Chancellorsville which repeated that the German regiments of the 11<sup>th</sup> were not the ones who fled the battlefield from Stonewall Jackson's assault. Unlike the other editorials explicitly defending the Germans' honor, this battle description struck an almost neutral tone in comparison. Other than stipulating exactly which part of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps fled the battle, the editor made no further comments on the matter of allegedly cowardly Germans.<sup>42</sup> On May 11 the newspaper ran a translated reprint of an editorial previously published in the *Chicago Tribune* that chided the Know-Nothing and Copperhead attitudes of General Henry Halleck, who the *Tribune* editor blamed for having caused the ouster of General Franz Sigel from command in the Eleventh Corps, which crippled troop morale in the process. These circumstances led the *Tribune* editor to ask, "Does anyone believe the German regiments would have fled the battlefield if their beloved general had led them into battle?" The issue was not whether the German parts of the Eleventh fled the field but shifted the blame of the unit's low morale onto the leadership. The *Staats-Zeitung* editor's reaction to the *Chicago Tribune* again demonstrated how integrated into the public sphere of Chicago the *Staats-Zeitung* was, and that the editors and the publisher were paying attention to much more than just German-speaking America.<sup>43</sup> The issue of the fleeing 11<sup>th</sup> Corps persisted on the pages of

---

<sup>42</sup> "Detaillierte Beschreibung Der Großen Schlachten Bei Chancellorsville Am 2. Und 3. Mai," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 8, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>43</sup> "The War in Virginia," *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, May 6, 1863.

the *Staats-Zeitung* because the supposedly cowardly German troops remained an issue for other American newspapers across the country.<sup>44</sup>

In the May 13 issue, the *Staats-Zeitung* reprinted an exchange of letters between General Carl Schurz and Major General Howard, who had commanded the Eleventh Corps. Howard exonerated Schurz, stating, “I do not believe you could have done any more than you did in this trying moment. The accusations towards your division are not true.”<sup>45</sup> Schurz complained in his letter about several articles published in various American newspapers. The sentiment of these articles combined with the fact that the issue of German cowardice in battle remained in discussion not just at the *Staats-Zeitung* showed how important an issue proving their worth in the Civil War to their American compatriots was to the German-Americans, even though—or especially because—they seemingly carried on mocking them.

Where the widespread accusations of cowardice towards the Germans of the Eleventh Corps originated was not quite clear. Historian James Pula suspects that commanding officers of the Army of the Potomac were anxious to deflect blame for the defeat, and found an easy scapegoat in the German element of the Eleventh Corps, which had born the brunt of the initial Confederate attack. The nativist sentiment that many Anglo-Americans still held towards their German-American countrymen then served to make the accusations of cowardice and incompetency believable to a wider

---

<sup>44</sup> “Die Bemerkungen Der Chicago Tribune Über Die Angebliche Feigheit Der Deutschen Unter Hooker.”

<sup>45</sup> “General Schurz Durch General Howard Selbst Vertheidigt,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 13, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

audience, especially once venerated voices in the press such as the *New York Times* picked the accusations up and amplified them.<sup>46</sup>

In August of 1862, the *Chicago Sonntagszeitung* - the Sunday edition of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* - published a two-part analysis of a biographical article on President Andrew Jackson that the *Edinburgh Review* published originally. The editorship justified the assessment by saying that, “it is especially interesting to us, because it was written by the enemy.” In this case, the enemy was Great Britain – who were opposing Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812, and the time of publication of the article, was opposing the German countries in the 1860s on the side of Denmark to keep the duchy of Holstein in Danish hands. The editor of the *Staats-Zeitung* prefaced the second part of the analysis with an accusatory apology to his readers: “Our correspondent gives us, as we sadly only noticed immediately before time of publication, a terribly stupid libel against our grand and patriotic Andrew Jackson – a libel whose truly Great British stupidity and ignorance deserves more ridicule than mourning.”

The original author was harsh towards Jackson, deriding him as a backwater brute. But the subsequent condemnation of the British author by the *Staats-Zeitung* editor seems almost infantile in its choice of words. After all, this was a German-American author defending a figure of American public life whose relevance had faded long before the forty-eighters even arrived in the United States. More so, Andrew Jackson was a very prominent member of the Southern aristocracy, a slaveholder, and

---

<sup>46</sup> Pula, *Under the Crescent Moon with the XI Corps in the Civil War. Volume 1*, 221.

not in any way a figure anywhere close to the political ideals of the forty-eighters. Here the German-American author acted as predominantly American, arguing mostly on a nationalistic basis and, defending an almost sacrosanct hero of the American civil religion from British attacks. In that he even ostensibly abandoned the values the forty-eighters fought for, by cheering for a Southern slaveholder. But this slaveholder was responsible for suppressing North Carolinian secessionist impulses in the so-called nullification crisis. The German Republicans of the 1860s read this as analogous to the then-current secessionist predicament of the Civil War, and thus stylized Jackson as a public figure who in this reading was in opposition to the South by his virtue of having prevented a secession during his presidency. This episode demonstrated what unexpected outcomes the amalgamation of two national identities could have.<sup>47</sup>

Meanwhile, Hermann Raster wrote to his mentor from New York that change was in the air. Specifically, he was confident that if the Union strictly implemented the conscription law, it would spell doom for the Confederacy. Raster spoke of the Civil War as “our war,” revealing how much he himself was invested in it: “Only the impossibility of leaving my child to herself has kept me from picking up a saber and donning epaulettes!” He consciously bridged the gap between Europe and the United States in this letter, stating that, “maybe it does not seem that way [that the Union is getting back on track of winning the war] to the European observer, since nothing of notice has

---

<sup>47</sup> “Präsident Andreas Jackson,” *Chciago Sonntags-Zeitung*, August 5, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

happened within the last three months.”<sup>48</sup> But as the war worsened, Raster began losing hope. “I have begun to doubt the victory of the North. Or at least, the victory of freedom. For it is unthinkable that the fight for national unity will be given up, even if [George] McClellan becomes president.”

Here Raster argued as a forty-eighter whose main objective in the war always was the end of slavery in America. When it came to the war, the reasons for forty-eighters to sympathize with the Union was foremost one of abolitionism and the goal of ending slavery. They saw this practice as an abhorrent stain on their political role model, and even the restoration of the Union came second to its removal. In the letters to his former teacher Carl Elze, Raster regarded himself as American, ridiculed the British as a nation of spineless merchants unable to produce people of higher cultural worth, closing this rant off by saying, “But now the American in me better shut up and let the Dessauer speak.” Raster’s sentiments revealed a common thread among the forty-eighter German-Americans: a strong dislike for anything British, as the above-mentioned analysis of the British-penned Andrew Jackson biography showed. Here the forty-eighters combined their negative disposition towards Britain coming out of German nationalist sentiment with a negative disposition towards the kingdom coming out of an adopted, American nationalist sentiment. For the Germans, Britain was an enemy due to its position in Europe and the recent role the United Kingdom had played in the First Schleswig War. For their adopted national identity of Americans, Britain was the sworn

---

<sup>48</sup> Hermann Raster, “Raster Letter to Elze, New York,” 1863, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

enemy of the United States due to its roles as colonial master and during the War of 1812 as well as issues like the Oregon Boundary Dispute of the 1840s.<sup>49</sup>

At the end of the war, the German-American regiments suffered heavy casualties. Out of the 1,000 men who joined the 24<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry at the beginning of the war, only 400 returned.<sup>50</sup> The German-Americans fighting on the battlefield had proven themselves in the eyes of the American public as reliable soldiers and no less patriotic towards the Union than any native-born American. The common experience of the grueling war also removed many cross-cultural barriers by exposing German-Americans to large numbers of Anglo-American compatriots. Participation in the war served as an integrating catalyst for many. This exposure served to defuse many lingering nativist hostilities from the side of the Anglo-Americans, while making the German-American element at large more amicable towards their non-German countrymen. In the cases of many prominent German-Americans, service to the Union brought them rewards in the form of respectable – and lucrative – government positions.<sup>51</sup>

The war also had a lasting effect on the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. When hostilities broke out in 1861 the newspaper's ownership was split three ways among George Schneider, Lorenz Brentano and Anton C. Hesing. Schneider sold his shares to Hesing in 1862 after a stint as consul general to Denmark, which secured for him a post as

---

<sup>49</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," August 19, 1864, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>50</sup> Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago*, 89.

<sup>51</sup> Carl Friedrich Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution; the German Forty-Eighters in America* (Westport, Conn, Greenwood Press, 1970), 241.



Collector of Internal Revenue for Chicago. Brentano's services were rewarded with a post as consul to Dresden in 1872 after the Prussian government granted general amnesty to veterans of the 1848 revolutions in the year 1868. Brentano had also sold his remaining shares in the *Staats-Zeitung* to Helsing a few years prior, making Helsing the sole proprietor and publisher of the newspaper for the rest of his life.

To replace Brentano as editor-in-chief, Helsing turned to Herrmann Raster, who came to Chicago from New York in 1867. Raster then served as editor-in-chief until his death in 1891. The Dessauer had become quite a celebrity in German-American circles through his activities in New York, where he wrote for the *Abendzeitung*, and worked as foreign correspondent for several prominent newspapers in Germany. He served as a delegate at several Republican National Conventions, acted as presidential elector in 1856, and was a staunch opponent to the temperance movement for all his life.<sup>52</sup>

Raster's position on German-American writing was one of linguistic purity. He loathed the adoption of anglicisms into the German language, in speech as well as in writing, and insisted publicly that Germans in the diaspora should maintain their language as best they could. Writing to his mentor Elze, he argued:

Reading your commemorative leaflet, I was especially delighted by your holy zeal against the butchery of the German language with the despicable Gerstäckerisms [Friedrich Gerstäcker was a prominent German author of the time who traveled the U.S. and worked his experiences into several novels]. I have tried to act towards this less through reading and more through writing in the past thirteen years, but the work is too tedious for one person, and the successes thus limited.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Carl Frederick Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), 94.

<sup>53</sup> Raster, "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," August 19, 1864.

### **The *Chicago Times* and the Burnside Order, June 1863**

One episode during the height of the Civil War illustrated the way the forty-eighters behind the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* emphasized certain political values and principles over others. Free expression and freedom of the press were some of the most cherished rights the United States offered for the forty-eighters, but not to the point that these rights were regarded as untouchable absolutes. In 1863, a political opponent of the *Staats-Zeitung*, the *Chicago Times*, ended up in the political crossfire of the Civil War. The *Times* was a thorn in the side of the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship since the late 1850s, but with the outbreak of the Civil War, the animosity towards the Democratic paper reached a fever pitch. In 1862 the *Times* was officially declared Chicago's Democratic Party paper of record. When the *Times* openly expressed gratitude towards Mayor Francis Cornwall Sherman for this honor, the *Staats-Zeitung* reminded its readers of the suggestion the *Times* made to members of Congress just a few days earlier, which was, to back secession and bring the "wheels of government to a standstill." The *Staats-Zeitung* then concluded that, "A compliment from a paper that preaches such rankly treasonous thoughts [...] is a shameful insult and should be answered with a lawsuit for libel by the Democratic mayor and the 10 Democrats on city council!"<sup>54</sup>

In late May 1863, the German-American editors somewhat gleefully reported on the *Times* receiving a slap on the wrist for their inaccurate reporting on the 6<sup>th</sup> Iowa cavalry regiment. The *Times* reporting on the regiment revealed the newspaper as a

---

<sup>54</sup> "Zur Ehre Des Deutschtums - Deutsch-Amerikanischer City Collector Legt Amt Nieder," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 21, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

copperhead rag to the *Staats-Zeitung* editors, and being opposed to fighting for the freedom of the enslaved people in the South. The editor went on to quote said regiment's response, which amounted to negating the allegations and stated furthermore that it would only serve the slaveholders if the Civil War was portrayed as a fight in which white people died solely for the sake of black people.<sup>55</sup>

This commentary indicated the deep running animosity between the *Staats-Zeitung* and the *Chicago Times*. Political acrimonies ran deep, especially since the German-American editors had turned towards the Republican Party while the *Times* remained the largest Democratic Party publication in Chicago. Also, this incident was not the first time the two newspapers clashed. The *Staats-Zeitung* often openly defended the German-American community from overblown or inaccurate accusations from the *Times*. This smoldering antipathy came to a boiling point following a string of inciting articles against General Ambrose Burnside and the Union war effort in general. Burnside ordered the insolent Democratic paper suppressed by military force on June 1, 1863. The ensuing public discourse proved that the forty-eighters' devotion was more towards concrete principles like loyalty to a group of people and actively working towards ending slavery and injustice, and less towards more lofty ideals like freedom of expression.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> "Eine Ohrfeige Fuer Die Chicago Times," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 29, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>56</sup> Karamanski, *Rally 'round the Flag*, 192.

The *Staats-Zeitung* began close coverage of the affair on June 4, printing a German translation of Burnside's order no. 84, as well as the reactions from the *Times*' editor Wilbur Storey. The paper also printed a translation of the injunction the *Times* filed with U.S. Circuit Court Judge Thomas Drummond. This was then followed by a description of the court proceedings on June 3, and further translations of court documents and decisions as well as the restraining order issued by Judge Drummond forcing the Army to let the *Times* resume operation.<sup>57</sup> In this issue, the *Staats-Zeitung* reporters only wrote about the proceedings, without taking much of a position on the matter at hand. Judge Drummond refused to file an injunction, and the occupation of the *Times* proceeded. Troops summoned from Camp Douglas were stationed at the offices of the Democratic newspaper, forcing a stop to the paper's production, and destroying the already-printed issues of the day.<sup>58</sup>

When the Lincoln administration withdrew the order on the following day, the forty-eight editors were outraged. In an article titled "Prohibition against the 'Times' rescinded – Cowardice and Shame" the editors charged both the Lincoln administration and the judge rescinding the order with cowardly conduct in the matter of restraining the *Times*. The editors argued that the swift withdrawal from the position of suppression was nothing but a capitulation before the copperhead Democrats. On the same issue's editorial page a column titled "Freedom of Speech and of the Press as the Constitution

---

<sup>57</sup> "Die Unterdrückung Der Chicago Times," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 4, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>58</sup> "The Chicago Times Establishment Taken Possession of by the Military Authorities--Meeting of Its Friends in the Evening." *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*, June 4, 1863.

Guarantees It”, fielded arguments against a complete, total and unquestionable freedom of press and speech, since such a thing would spell doom for any orderly society. The editor contended completely uncurtailed freedom of the press was not any in country’s interest, and certainly would not have been what the framers of the Constitution had in mind. In support of this argument, the article contained quotes from Supreme Court Justice James Story: “Everyone should have the freedom to publish what is true, publish for righteous reasons, and for just ends. [...] WITHOUT THESE LIMITATIONS however it would become the whip of the Republic, it would shake the foundations of freedom by making virtuous patriots hated through the horrors of the press.”<sup>59</sup>

Freedom of the press and freedom of speech in general remained at the heart of this dispute. An editor stated that Burnside “[...] reminds every citizen of his duties to fulfill during this crisis [...].” And that while freedom of discussion and criticism of the government were all welcome during peacetime, during the time of war “[...] they quickly turn into high treason, when they seek to undermine the trust of a soldier in his commanding officers or his government.”<sup>60</sup> This article was a translated reprint of an editorial that first appeared in English on the pages of the *Chicago Tribune*. This reprint demonstrated that the *Staats-Zeitung* editors oriented their paper’s own position along with that of the *Tribune*. Overall, the *Staats-Zeitung*’s position here was somewhat conflicted, since on the one hand, the forty-eighters that ran the paper were very

---

<sup>59</sup> “Rede Und Pressefreiheit Wie Sie in Der Constitution Garantiert Sind,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 5, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>60</sup> “General Ordre Nro. 95 Des General Burnside. Milde Gegen Die Verführten, Strenge Gegen Die Verführer,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 5, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

supportive and appreciative of the freedom of the press and freedom of speech that the U.S. Constitution guaranteed, especially in contrast to the harsh censorship laws found in the German statelets. But on the other hand, they did not see freedom of the press as a limitless and absolute right—even going so far as portraying such a thing as detrimental to a free society.

The editors maintained the *Times* should remain suppressed, stating that if a suppression order like Burnside's had been issued a year prior, little attention would have been raised. At that time in 1862 the country was gearing up for war, the United States—and here the writer specifically referred to the North—was not as divided between copperhead Democrats and Republicans as it was in 1863, another year into the conflict. In the same article the editor further argued that “The Chicago Times was one of the primary agents of causing insubordination, obstruction, and desertion [among the soldiers in the field], and upon this came the order of suppression [...]” As indicated by the reprints from other, like minded newspapers, the German-American editors positioned their publication alongside other Republican leaning Chicago publications. They stated this openly, writing, ‘Not just the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* but also the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Evening Journal* lay a large part of the responsibility [for appeasing the Copperheads] squarely at the door of the advisors.’<sup>61</sup> Specifically, the editors referred here to higher ups in the Lincoln administration responsible for these

---

<sup>61</sup> “Wer Sagt Die Wahrheit? Ein Beitrag Zur Geschichte Des Widerrufs Der Burnside'schen Ordre,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 6, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

issues in Illinois, namely Senator Lyman Trumbull and representative Isaac Newton Arnold.

The *Staats-Zeitung* kept dragging these two men further through the mud as its coverage of the *Times* suppression continued in the following days, chronicling the disappointment of Chicago's population with their elected officials: "[...] our American compatriots express their deepest indignation about this step by the men mentioned, who by the voice of the people have been raised to their positions of responsibility, and who at the crucial moment together with the Copperheads in a secret conclave advised the President towards shameful leniency."<sup>62</sup> Representative Isaac N. Arnold had attracted the ire of publisher Anton C. Hesing especially. The partial owner of the paper did not forgive Arnold for this infraction, which he took as a personal affront to the German-American community. Hesing believed the German-Americans were instrumental in heaving Arnold into office. The article's last paragraph detailed Arnold's relationship with the community, stating that the German element should convene a mass meeting to discuss whether or not to keep their loyalty with him since, "[...] it was their efforts and votes that Arnold can thank for his election to Congress."<sup>63</sup>

Arnold was now such a *persona non grata* for Hesing that a year later, when he was up for re-election, Hesing vowed to thwart Arnold's further success. In a letter to then former *Staats-Zeitung* editor-in-chief George Schneider, Arnold wrote that "[...]

---

<sup>62</sup> "Massenversammlung Wegen Annulierung Des General Ordres," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 8, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>63</sup> "Massenversammlung Wegen Annulierung Des General Ordres."

Hessing [sic – the spelling of his name varied among Anglo-Americans] is crazy in the Arnold question & says that if I am nominated, he (H.) will name an independent candidate [...].”<sup>64</sup> This excerpt hinted at the growing animosity between the two men, but also indicated the growing political power of the *Staats-Zeitung* publisher. Another issue revealed here was the connection between the *Staats-Zeitung* editors and Illinois politics, as well as the influence they – very consciously – wielded in and on the German-American community at this point. Following another debacle surrounding the conscription law of 1863 that further weakened Arnold’s position, especially among the German-American element, he eventually caved to the pressure and left the field to former Chicago mayor “Long John” Wentworth, who ultimately won his seat.

The *Times* editors then wrote that the *Chicago Tribune* initiated the closed-door meeting that resulted in a telegram pleading President Lincoln to rescind Burnside’s order. They sent dispatches containing these accusations to be printed in other Northern Democrat papers. The *Tribune* editorship harshly denied the *Times*’ allegations that they called this meeting out of fear of mob violence, writing, “the proprietors and friends of the *Tribune* felt perfectly confident of their entire ability to repel any number of Copperheads that might attempt its destruction.”<sup>65</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* joined the fray, denying the accusations against the *Tribune*. The German-American editors argued that denying this publicly opened the *Tribune* up to retaliation

---

<sup>64</sup> Isaac Newton Arnold, “Letter to George Schneider,” July 8, 1864, George Schneider Papers, Chicago History Museum.

<sup>65</sup> “A Falsehood Repelled.,” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, June 6, 1863.



by the Democratic mob roaming the streets, and praised the *Tribune* writers for their principled bravery.<sup>66</sup> And yet, while *Tribune* editor and publisher Joseph Medill was in strong agreement with the suppression order, there was some truth to the accusation that the meeting had been called by the *Tribune*: Judge Van H. Higgins who organized it was in fact one of Medill's paper's stockholders.<sup>67</sup>

The whole affair of the *Times* suppression order exhibited how the German-American element in the 1860s had grown into a position of decisive power in Chicago. Under Hesing's management the *Staats-Zeitung* evolved into an organ of leadership that felt comfortable in its position, capable of mobilizing its readership to follow political goals set by the editors – at least to some extent. Also, through national and international distribution and correspondence, the *Staats-Zeitung* steadily built a network of influence and information that flowed far beyond the borders of Chicago. The newspaper kept the German-American Chicagoans in touch not only with other German-speaking immigrants across the United States in times of peace and in times of crisis, but with friends and relatives in the old country as well. Meanwhile, Hermann Raster, who came to Chicago after the war's end, was still in New York, where he worked as a foreign correspondent for a number of German newspapers like the *National Zeitung* out of Berlin, the *Weser Zeitung* out of Bremen and the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, providing accounts from the war and the German-American participation in it. Raster's efforts made the German-American element more understandable to his

---

<sup>66</sup> "Furcht? Keine Spur Davon," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 9, 1863, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>67</sup> Karamanski, *Rally 'round the Flag*, 193.

German audience and American circumstances of living (and dying on the battlefield)

better comprehensible for his erstwhile countrymen.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE GERMAN ELEMENT AND PRESIDENT LINCOLN IN LIFE AND DEATH

#### **The American Civil War, 1864-65**

While President Lincoln was very popular with the majority of the German element at the outset of the war, the terrible losses of life the many bloody battles wrought, and the slow pace of emancipation raised the ire of some prominent German-Americans. This chapter details the changing relationship the forty-eighters as a whole had with President Lincoln, and how the presidential election campaign of 1864 split the German-American community. Further, this chapter will show how participation in the Civil War and the national politics surrounding the conflict aided the German-American element and the forty-eighters in particular in assimilation into overall American society, and how the German-Americans at the end of the war could rightfully claim their place in the newly United States.

Caspar Butz—poet, forty eighter and *Staats-Zeitung* contributor—was one of the earliest German-American critics of Lincoln. In November 1861, Butz gave an impassioned speech at a mass gathering of German-Americans in Chicago, suggesting former presidential candidate John C. Fremont should run for president in the 1864 election in Lincoln's stead. In 1863, Karl Heinzen's *Pionier* suggested the same thing. Small groups of radical Republican Germans gathered across the North in newly organized radical associations. Parts of the forty-eighter press across the country threw its weight behind the demands as well. In May 1864, these various clubs and

associations sent representatives to Cleveland, with the goal of forming a new party of radical Republicans. The leadership of the *Staats-Zeitung* refused to attend, with the exception of Caspar Butz.<sup>1</sup>

### **The 1864 Presidential Campaign**

The radicals were displeased with the President, but also with the Republican Party leadership in general, and felt urgently they needed to facilitate political change. Butz published a long article in his monthly journal *Deutsch-Amerikanische Monatshefte für Politik, Wissenschaft und Literatur* (German-American Monthly Journal for Politics, Science and Literature) detailing the resolutions of the conventions, posing the question: “A new design of the republic needs to be the task of the NEAREST future, before it is too late. Is one of the big, old parties capable of facilitating this?”<sup>2</sup> The issues that Butz and his ilk had with the Lincoln administration’s actions in wartime were concerned with how slow the war proceeded. Butz took issue with the administration selling even the smallest victories as yet another augur of the Confederacy’s imminent collapse to the public. He also condemned that the Lincoln government accepted the continued existence of slavery on American soil further without the institution being swiftly quashed by unilateral presidential action. Butz further expressed his umbrage at the suppression of the *Chicago Times*. In that, he disagreed with his colleagues at the *Staats-Zeitung*. In his view the Burnside order was a clear cut case of governmental censorship and overreach unbecoming to a democratic

---

<sup>1</sup> Carl Friedrich Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution; the German Forty-Eighters in America* (Westport, Conn, Greenwood Press, 1970), 245.

<sup>2</sup> Caspar Butz, “Die Neue Partei,” *Deutsch-Amerikanische Monatshefte Für Politik, Wissenschaft Und Literatur* 1 (1864): 75.

nation. He wrote that, “the suppression of the ‘Chicago Times’ last year by Burnside caused a storm of applause in the ‘loyal’ press and the retraction of this prohibition by the President caused Lincoln the derision of those, who now prostrate themselves before him and regard him as a ‘second Washington’ and a ‘High Prince of Peace.’”<sup>3</sup> Butz also made a transnational argument for the nomination of Fremont, who he proclaimed was “known and well regarded in both hemispheres [...]” and that his nomination would be a sign to Europe that “America knows to honor its merited men accordingly.”<sup>4</sup> In the same article he also reprinted the 12 points of the proposed party’s platform, as well as a German translation of the acceptance letter Fremont for the presidential nomination.

The *Staats-Zeitung* as an institution openly opposed replacing Lincoln on the Republican Party ticket and rejected any efforts put forth by the radicals to run Fremont as a third-party candidate. The editorship boycotted the Cleveland convention. They refused the overall thrust of the Cleveland platform in general. The German Democratic Party element entertained the idea of fielding Fremont as a candidate against Lincoln as early as March 1864. The leading voices of that part of the German-American community speculated that running Fremont instead of former General in Chief George B. McClellan would make courting political figures opposed to secession – and McClellan as an arbiter of such – easier. In that, the Germans in the Democratic Party found themselves pushing for the same goal as Karl Heinzen’s camp of those who the

---

<sup>3</sup> Butz, 78.

<sup>4</sup> Butz, 82.

*Staats-Zeitung* dubbed “radicalissimi”—the most radical ones.<sup>5</sup> The official reason to replace Lincoln the German Democrats cited on the pages of the *Cincinnati Volksfreund* was their fear that Lincoln’s goal in the war was “not a defeat of the rebellion, but an expansion of his presidency for life (!).”<sup>6</sup>

These attitudes lead to the *Volksfreund* remaining in the crosshairs of Rapp, Hering and his newspaper for the time being. The *Cincinnati* paper kept championing the cause of Fremont, while the Chicago forty-eighters publicly scratched their heads over how the German radicals could work together with these apologists of slavery. The *Volksfreund* editors were up in arms, proclaiming censorship of freedom of speech when a Union army officer was reprimanded by the administration for speaking out. The *Staats-Zeitung* then countered that the officer in question did in fact not just speak his mind, but raised doubts about the legitimacy of federal legislation concerning fugitive slaves and the armament of African-Americans: “Because Abraham Lincoln is suing an officer who riles the people and the military up to armed resistance against . . . federal law, he is, following the logic of the *Cincinnati* Fremont-Copperhead paper a tyrant, a Louis XIV.”<sup>7</sup>

The *Turnverein* and the leading forty-eighters of Chicago shared the same opinion towards the Copperheads, probably due in part to an overlap in personnel. When the Democrats decided to hold their 1864 national convention in Chicago, the

---

<sup>5</sup> The forty-eighters would often and seemingly at random pepper their language with loan words from foreign languages, especially from Latin, Greek, French and – in this case - Italian.

<sup>6</sup> “General Fremont Und Der Cincinnati Volksfreund,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 17, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>7</sup> “General Fremont Und Der Cincinnati Volksfreund.”

party leadership inquired with the Turnverein about the use of their venue. The Turners refused, stating that lending support to the Democrats this way would violate their core principles. The *Staats-Zeitung* reported that, “The Turner community in their decision assumed the very correct position that it would not agree with their honor and principle to open their Turnhalle to a convention, to which here and there, as it is known, have already been elected disloyal and treasonous delegates.”<sup>8</sup> The editor went on to stress that the Turners were very willing to open their venues to events held by Union loyalists and parties, regardless of the allegiances any individual organizers might have to any political party.

The war had long since destroyed old alliances and animosities alike, and the election year 1864 brought forth new ones. The conflicts arising during the run-up to the 1864 election would have been unthinkable just a few years earlier to all parties involved. That the radical German Republicans found themselves under the same ideological tent as the War Democrats caused perpetual puzzlement across German-speaking America. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors openly mistrusted all Democrats that had only recently changed their positions on the slavery question, while in turn also stating support for those who did so at the very outset of the war, agreeing here with the *Chicago Tribune*. The *Tribune* was a publication that in the 1850s was a loud mouthpiece of Know-Nothingism and thereby was strongly opposed to the *Staats-Zeitung*. But little of that old animosity survived into the war years. “The *Chicago Tribune* is a warm friend of Lincoln, but she does not proclaim in childish spite that it

---

<sup>8</sup> “Die Turnhalle Und Die ‘Demokratische’ National Convention,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 18, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

would refuse the Baltimore convention, should it not elect THEIR favorite candidate.

[...] The *Tribune* is also right in its distrust towards Copperheads recently converted to abolitionism [...].” At the same time the editor repeated his warning and accusations of the radical Fremont faction of intending to split the “great northern party of freedom” of the Republicans, which would spell doom for a Republican victory and for the northern war effort itself.

In late March 1864, several committees from various political parties and persuasions met in New York, one of which was the German-Republican National Committee. This group laid out points that were generally in line with radical Republicans like Thaddeus Stephens, but not as extreme as the positions of the German ‘radicalissimi’ around Heinzen. The platform agreed upon at this New York convention stated that there could not be any mercy given to the Southern insurgents, that with secession the southern states had effectively forfeited statehood, and that they should be thusly reorganized into territories once the Union won the war. Further points of the platform were a strong repudiation of sharecropping as not to “chain the peasant to the land” and a championing of the Homestead Act of 1862 as a tool of emancipation through which freed slaves would be entitled to the lands they worked on for their former masters. This latter step was described as one that would make “[...] impossible big, landed aristocracy. [...]” a point that unmistakably bore forty-eighter handwriting. Hermann Raster was among the leaders of the convention and disseminated the points to like-minded German-American papers across the country.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> “Interessante Politische Bewegungen in New York,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 23, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).



The *Staats-Zeitung*'s readership was not limited to the urban German population of Chicago, with many readers living in rural communities across the Midwestern states, where the newspaper was sold along the railroad lines. To demonstrate just how widespread German-American support for President Lincoln was across German-America, the paper sometimes featured particularly relevant letters to the editors. One of these letters read:

The German idealists or demagogues ala Butz and Heinzen think they have the German vote safely in their pocket. However the rural German has his own head and his own views that inform the ways in which he acts. It is safe to say that Lincoln has defused the party-based hatred, which was very dangerous for me and my family, through his slow and prudent actions more than a Fremont or Chase ever could.<sup>10</sup>

This letter came from a German farmer in Lacon, Illinois. Caspar Butz was at this point a *persona non grata* to the editors, due to his rallying for Fremont and the “radicalissimi.” The Lacon farmer’s point here was that the situation for Republican Germans in the countryside was more fraught than people like Butz realized, that these rural communities were also home to numerous copperhead Democrats, and that Lincoln’s actions may have been slow, but ultimately allowed to defuse the tensions in those places across the north.

Butz became the subject of much derision by the editors in the run-up to the Cleveland convention, which he had helped to organize. The same issue of the newspaper also contained reports on a gathering of anti-Lincoln radicals led by Butz. The coverage of this gathering illustrated how much the German-American element of

---

<sup>10</sup> “Die Deutschen Farmer Und Abraham Lincoln,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 28, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

Chicago was split--although the editors also strongly doubted how much this assembly represented the German-American population of the city at large.

We do not know if the venue, one of the smaller halls in the city, was chosen due to the anticipated low participation. When we then mention that only 130 persons were present at the opening of the assembly [...] the audience shall decide whether or not those 130 persons [...] can be counted as representative of the 40.000 Germans of Chicago.<sup>11</sup>

The meeting concluded with the resolutions that if Lincoln should be nominated at the Republican Party convention in Baltimore instead of Fremont, this would serve as a reason to split from the Republican party and form a separate “freedom party” to field Fremont as candidate. This event and the veracity of the claims of a higher number of attendants than reported by the various local papers kept the presses rolling and demonstrated the severity of the split by the intensity of the reaction to the assembly.

After Butz sent a letter to the *Tribune* declaring that at least 800 people were present at the gathering, the *Tribune* in turn approached the *Staats-Zeitung*, inquiring about the venue’s capacity, which the latter gleefully obliged: “According to the assessment of the builders, the hall can seat 400 people at the most. All people who have no interest in fueling the fiasco of Caspar and consorts are in agreement that not even half the hall was occupied, and that there were no more than 200 people present at any time.” The editors then analyzed the numerous points and conclusions made by the speakers, detailing the various issues addressed in which this group differed from more mainstream Republicans. The biggest point of contention of this constituency was the general thrust of the Republican Party to accept a second nomination of Lincoln as a

---

<sup>11</sup> “Anti-Lincoln Versammlung in Uhlich’s Block,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 28, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

foregone conclusion. “If Lincoln is a patriot, he must not be opposed to seeing another man elected president. In other states close to the site of the war he has no friends. From there we have to hear the opinion of the patriots!” Wisconsin Republican Edmund Juessen proclaimed that, “[...] we must never be a part of a political movement nor should we start one, since such a partition [of the Republican Party] would have the consequence of allowing a man to be elected who is not sufficiently stringent enough in supporting a radical platform.” But Juessen’s call for party unity was summarily rejected. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors did not take kindly to Butz’s attempt at creating an anti-Lincoln movement. They dubbed him a “chaser of public titles” and a “demagogue.” Butz drew further anger from Helsing and consorts by providing a translation of his position to the “traitorous rag” the *Chicago Times*.<sup>12</sup>

This irritation grew over the course of the following weeks. When Butz announced openly that he would seek membership in the *Arbeiterverein*, Helsing’s editors were quick at hand with scathing commentary. “A strange change must have happened in the views and opinions of this man who just 3 years ago, when one of his erstwhile friends let himself be induced into the same association, he did know nothing but reprimand for them [...]”<sup>13</sup> To his detractors Butz’s political aspirations could only go nowhere. The purported mass gathering in Uhlich’s Hall that Butz sold to his followers as a revolutionary moment that would mobilize the German-American public against Lincoln fizzled out with reportedly only 40 people remaining at the end of it,

---

<sup>12</sup> “Blumenlese Aus Den in Der Anti-Lincoln Versammlung Gelesenen Reden,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 29, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>13</sup> “Caspar Butz Als Arbeiter,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 4, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

according to reports in the *Tribune*. And so, the *Staats-Zeitung* continued to ridicule their former colleague, especially since Butz—like all other forty-eighter intellectuals—was very much not a worker himself. The editors of the *Staats Zeitung* thought his induction into the Arbeiterverein a thinly veiled political stunt. The fact that Butz hired a clerk to do the work for his public office of city treasurer, which he had only recently been elected to, drew particular ridicule in this context. An article regarding this situation read that it was not extraordinary to hire help in the United States, but that it would behoove the clerk doing Butz’s work to be an honorary member of the Arbeiterverein more than it did Butz himself. After all, Butz, instead of working, rather traveled around the country so he could engage in his political activism.

Butz’ effort with the *Arbeiterverein* was however indicative of the radicalissimi’s broader approach to the presidential primary election. As historian John Jentz stresses, the Fremont movement sought to build its success upon organized labor. An unintended consequence of this attempt was that the more radical forty-eighters successfully integrated the German-American workers into a broader, inter-ethnic labor movement in Chicago and beyond. Caspar Butz was no worker, and the *Staats-Zeitung* editors correctly assessed that the cause of labor was less important to him, personally, than the Fremont election. But others like former *Staats-Zeitung* editor and fellow forty-eighter Eduard Schläger remained active in the emerging labor movement, contributing to an inter-ethnic labor movement that sought social reforms.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> John Jentz, “The 48ers and the German Labor Movement in Chicago,” in *The German-American Radical Press*, ed. Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James P. Danky, 1992, 56.

When it came to casting ballots for or against Butz' induction into the Arbeiterverein, he ended up 9 votes short, further indicating how little credibility he had with Chicago's labor organization. However, the leadership of the association then suspended its constitution and inducted him anyway. Furthermore, although he openly declared himself split from the Republican Party, he remained a member of the Republican Central Committee of the City of Chicago, refusing to surrender this elected office even though he had publicly left the party earlier. The *Staats-Zeitung* and *Tribune* both kept repeating the point that Butz was a "collector of titles," of which they saw his attempt to gain foothold in the Arbeiterverein as affirmation.<sup>15</sup>

In the following weeks, the gathering in Uhlich's Hall caused ripples across the national media landscape. For the *Staats-Zeitung* it was clear that Butz' behavior was damaging the reputation of German-America as a whole. Now the "copperhead rags"—Democratic Party leaning newspapers across the North—fielded the meeting as proof that the German-American element as a whole, not just the radicals or just the Chicago German-Americans, were splitting with Lincoln and rallying collectively towards Fremont. The *New York World*—at the time a staunchly Democratic paper—reported that, "they are thoroughly serious [about flocking to Fremont], there is nothing in the world that could move them to vote for Lincoln!" The *World* took Butz's speech at the gathering as evidence of this. The *Staats-Zeitung* then rebuffed: "We would not be surprised if the speech of the hon. Caspar Butz . . . was also published in the Richmond papers. . . Maybe an embassage to Berlin is in the cards for the hon. Caspar Butz now –

---

<sup>15</sup> "Den Aufocroierten Minoritäts-Arbeiter Caspar Butz Betreffend," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 7, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

just not from Washington.”<sup>16</sup> Historians Laurence Thompson and Frank Braun remarked that while the heavy concentration of Germans among the anti-Lincoln movement was bemoaned by those German-Americans who stood with the president, this overly strong immigrant representation was ultimately detrimental to the group’s goal. The German-Americans around Butz and Heinzen were too optimistic about their influence and overestimated the reach their faction had.<sup>17</sup>

To demonstrate that Lincoln had indeed more support than opposition from the German element, the *Staats-Zeitung* was quick to report on the Wisconsin Republican Party convention held in Madison. Governor Edward Salomon, a German himself, was elected delegate to the forthcoming national convention in Baltimore and proclaimed that he would gladly cast his vote for Lincoln since, “he was pursuing so unshakably a strong emancipatory politics, so the speaker agreed with the masses in the loyal states and agreed with them that Abraham Lincoln should be elected President of the United States again.” Defending the president against his detractors from both parties, the convention then also concluded that, “Abraham Lincoln has fulfilled his duties as head of state in a period full of unprecedented difficulties and dangers to such an extent that he won our full and complete trust.”<sup>18</sup> The report on the Wisconsin convention then closed with an editorial comment that surely the radicals would not see this convention

---

<sup>16</sup> “Das Frohlocken Der Copperhead-Blaetter Ueber Das Gebahren Der Deutschen Separatisten,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 8, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>17</sup> Laurence S. Thompson and Frank X. Braun, “The Forty-Eighters in Politics,” in *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 144.

<sup>18</sup> “Die Glänzenden Fortschritte Der Lincoln Bewegung,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 1, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

as part of a pro-Lincoln conspiracy, and would certainly also not find it in them to condemn Governor Salomon as a ringleader of such a conspiracy.

A similar sentiment, and a broad rejection of Caspar Butz's taking credit for fomenting the German refusal of loyalty to Lincoln also appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*. The political frenzy of the German-American element did not go unnoticed outside the broader immigrant sphere. The *Tribune* generally disagreed with Butz's proclamation that a nomination of Lincoln would split the German-American Republican voting bloc in any significant way. The article concluded with a statement that, "If President Lincoln shall receive the Baltimore nomination, we are certainly confident that not one German Republican in a hundred will either vote for a Copperhead candidate or throw away his ballot on a third candidate."<sup>19</sup>

The two-party split among the German newspapers in Chicago kept causing tempers to flare up on the pages with regularity. The *Telegraph* was one of Chicago's prominent German-language Democratic papers besides to the *Demokrat*. The *Staats-Zeitung* repeatedly reprinted excerpts of articles from the *Telegraph*—with added blistering commentary. But more than just staying limited to the German-American newspaper landscape, the political split of the German population spilled over into the anglophone press as well. The *Chicago Tribune* reported on an article that originally appeared in the *Telegraph* praising Fremont over Lincoln and how the German-Americans of Chicago were supposedly in favor of the former over the latter. Said article was then translated into English and published in the *Chicago Times*, the city's foremost

---

<sup>19</sup> Caspar Butz, "Letter from Caspar Butz.," *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, March 29, 1864.

English language Democratic paper, dubbed “Jeff Davis’s organ” by the *Staats-Zeitung* and *Tribune* editors alike.

The upcoming party conventions and the looming presidential election became the impetus for a near constant quarreling on the pages of the Chicago newspapers. The warring factions tried their best to not only bring their own points across to their respective audiences, but also to discredit and ridicule the arguments made by the opposing sides. The times had changed. Only a few years prior, the *Chicago Tribune* had lambasted German immigrants as loudmouthed drunkards and louts, and thus in turn had attracted the wrath of the *Staats-Zeitung*. Now the German-American editors regarded the *Tribune* as an important ally in opposition to the Democratic voices—and also the voices of radicals clamoring for a Fremont presidency. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors shot against the alliance among Democratic Party loyal newspapers:

The reporter of the German *Telegraph* is also a reporter for the secesh-*Times*. The two papers rent him out in partnership to prop up Fremont and to castigate Lincoln. A nice arrangement! [...] These two rags seem to hunt on the same paddock, trying to cause a split and dissent in the ranks of the German Republicans, but their infamous plan will not succeed [...]<sup>20</sup>

The *Tribune* was again cited when the editors reported on the rumor that some members of the Republican Party had asked Lincoln to withdraw his candidacy, upon which Lincoln supposedly replied that if they could produce a man who would be better than him, who would maintain the unity of the Republican Party better than he could, then he would reconsider. The *Staats-Zeitung* commentary then stated that such a man

---

<sup>20</sup> “Die Chicago Tribune Über Die Brüderschaft Zwischen Der Chicago Times Und Dem Telegraph,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 2, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).



would be impossible to come by, but that if these party members could produce one, Lincoln surely would be patriot enough to honor his words.<sup>21</sup>

Leading up to the Cleveland convention, German-American papers across the country kept on either lionizing or deriding the so-called “bolters” from the Republican Party, demonstrating an overarching cohesion of the German-language newspaper landscape. The *Abendzeitung* out of New York ran a long report on the proceedings of the splinter group, noting that even the bolters themselves were not quite as unified as their leaders made them out to be. Some of those unhappy with Lincoln proclaimed to only threaten leaving the party over another Lincoln nomination, while having no intention of following through. The various papers—in one case the *Staats-Zeitung* editors quoted the *Abendzeitung*, which in turn quoted the *Wächter am Erie* out of Cleveland—agreed on one thing in this instance: that most of the “radicalissimi” were only threatening to leave the party and nominate a spoiler candidate in order to enact pressure on the Republican convention. The editors asked incredulously if the bolters “forthrightly believe that THREATENING and INTIMIDATING their fellow Republicans would be a good way of forcing them to accept certain opinions?”<sup>22</sup> The Chicago editors then concluded that while the “radicalissimi” also derided the very nature of party conventions that nominated candidates, that such conventions were in fact some of the most de-facto democratic institutions the country had. If a subgroup of a party did not

---

<sup>21</sup> “Angebliche Aufforderung an Lincoln Zum Rücktritt Vom Kandidatur,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 6, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>22</sup> “Die Newyorker Abendzeitung Ueber Die Seperatistischen Krakeeler Und Ueber Ihre Angriffe Auf Die Herausgeber Der Illinois Staats-Zeitung,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 19, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

agree from the outset that they would concede if their candidate did not receive the nomination, then the very principle of democracy itself would be in danger.

However, as the Cleveland convention approached, the power and reach of the Fremont movement failed to live up to the boisterous claims of its leaders. German-American historian Carl Wittke remarks that while Germans were overrepresented within the Fremont movement, this did not mean that most of or even a majority of German America stood behind the “radicalissimi,” and not even the radical forty-eighters were a unanimous faction for Fremont. Wittke finds that many German-American newspapers, even if they initially favored Fremont over Lincoln, switched their allegiance during 1864 went on.<sup>23</sup> And the buy-in of the broader, Anglo-American newspapers was no better.

The *Wächter am Erie* noted in early May 1864, only one English-language publication had reported on the upcoming convention, while most of the publications that did report on it were in German or Czech, thus lacking a reach beyond that of various radicalized immigrant splinter groups. This belied the claim by the Cleveland convention of being a convention of the people. This lack of inclusion—or rather the lack of participation—of Anglo-Americans was indeed a problem for the Cleveland convention. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors remarked that,

The fact alone that out of the 22 states that were represented at the Chicago [Republican] convention, there could be only found men willing to inaugurate such a separatist movement in 9, and that out of the three great states of the West, Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa, not a single American could

---

<sup>23</sup> Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution; the German Forty-Eighters in America*, 247.

be found to sign on to the convention, puts the whole thing under a bad horoscope and shows this movement does not appeal to Americans much.<sup>24</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* also published strongly derisive commentary about the fact that the New York Central Railroad under the leadership of Copperhead Erastus Corning was allowing the convention-goers to ride their railroad free of charge. That Corning agreed to such a thing was a sign to the paper that the Copperheads had a vested interest in facilitating the convention, in the hopes that its outcome would deny the Republicans a victory in November of the same year.<sup>25</sup>

In the meantime, Karl Heinzen's attempted to declare the outcomes of the convention—whatever they would be—as binding for every German radical. But the camp of the radicals itself was not sufficiently unified to make this a meaningful claim. Meanwhile, the *Wächter am Erie*, which represented another part of the radical movement openly opposed the claims of Heinzen, found the convention could not be binding for anyone. The platform clearly lacked adequately wide representation. The *Staats-Zeitung* editor then added that the German-speaking radicals were not the only ones who lacked cohesion across their own ethnic group: “By the way, the differences in opinion between the few Americans attending the Cleveland ‘national convention’ are even deeper than among the Teutons and Germans, so that next to the Teutonic confusion and clamoring the American one will alongside it.”<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> “Convention Der Bolters in Cleveland,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 9, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>25</sup> “Bezeichnend Für Die Bevorstehende ‘Nationalconvention’ Der Radicalissimi,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 18, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>26</sup> “Uneinigkeit Unter Den Deutschen Und Deutschen Radikalissimis Bezüglich Cleveland,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 25, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

The rifts within the radical camp grew wider as the convention's opening date approached, prompting more derision and scorn from the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship. In Missouri, where local radical groups first brought up the idea of running Fremont as an alternative to Lincoln, radicals organized separate local conventions leading up to a planned statewide radical convention in Jefferson City. Resolutions were passed at those local conventions, which essentially took the wind out of the Cleveland convention organizers' sails. More than one of those local Missouri conventions declared that the Republican convention in Baltimore, regardless of who was nominated there, would have the final say in the nomination for Republican presidential candidate. A split of the party had to be prevented by all means. The *Staats-Zeitung* published one Missouri convention's platform, that stated: "Resolved, that the friends of the Union when they are gathered at the convention in Baltimore can decide best who should be the banner bearer in the coming election, and that we shall support the regular nominee of the convention called for this reason."<sup>27</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* compiled several resolutions from several smaller Missouri conventions into one comparative editorial to stress just how little cohesion there was in the radical camp, and also how little actual change the organizers of the Cleveland convention could hope to achieve, commenting that,

It was shown through the result of the state radical convention in Missouri that this whole thing had its tip broken off, because it has been shown [...] that the radicalissimi of Missouri, with whom this whole Fremont tremor began originally, are but a laughable, pathetic minority within their own party. The vast majority of Missouri radicals will subject themselves to the

---

<sup>27</sup> "Die Radikalen in Missouri / Radikale Stimmen Zu Gunsten Der Wieder-Erwaehlung Lincoln," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 28, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

Baltimore convention, who will certainly welcome these delegates with open arms.<sup>28</sup>

Not just treasonous behavior or actions that seemed to play into the hands of the Confederacy or the Democratic Party in general angered Hesing's editors. Especially aggravating the editors was that disgraced former Union General Justus McKinstrey took the podium at the Cleveland convention, rallying support for the absent John C. Fremont. During McKinstrey's command in the St. Louis quartermaster's office the general was involved in several corrupt schemes for self-enrichment. He was subsequently found guilty of corruption in office, removed from the generalship and served some time in jail—the only Union general to do so. In 1863 he attended the Illinois Copperhead convention in Springfield. The *Staats-Zeitung* portrayed this, in combination with his role at the Cleveland radical convention, as a sign that Fremont—and by extension the entire radicalissimi project—was nothing but a front for Copperhead Democrats to start a fire in the rear of the Union war effort:

“McKinstrey revealed himself back then in the hour of extreme danger to the Republic as a traitor to the fatherland. He took part in a criminal, highly treasonous movement [...] Truly, those who won't see the participation of such a subject even if Fremont tries to sell him as a true patriot and brave soldier as an indicator of the true reasons and goals of the Cleveland convention, if one won't see that, then they are truly blind – or traitors.”<sup>29</sup>

McKinstrey's statements and allies of the past years did in fact serve to make him appear detrimental to Union victories. In Illinois he partnered with Democrats opposed to the war, who rallied for an immediate end of hostilities and restoration of the union

---

<sup>28</sup> “Die Radikalen Missouris Und Abraham Lincoln,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 12, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>29</sup> “Die Charakteristik Des Exgeneral McKinstry, Eines Matadors Der Clevelander Convention,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 1, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

regardless of any questions related to slavery. The *Staats-Zeitung* condemned this as tantamount treason, a brush with which the forty-eighter editors painted the radicals at nigh every opportunity they saw.

The *Staats-Zeitung* fielded further accusations of corruption and incompetency against the radicals beyond the condemnation of McKinstry. The attendants at Cleveland argued among themselves about adopting a provision stating that none of the participants of the Cleveland convention would accept any political office offered to them by the next president. However, as the *Staats-Zeitung* reported, “[The resolution] was summarily rejected under general neighing laughter [...]. The participants might have agreed to virtuous abstinence had they limited the resolution to the president chosen at this convention, since the participants all surely knew that he could never be elected, that he would not even carry the electoral votes out of Missouri.”<sup>30</sup> This circumstance revealed to the Chicago forty-eighter editors that the radicals were in fact more interested in political offices and government contracts than in any less tangible political goals. To Rapp and his colleagues the radicals were nothing but traitorous opportunists, playing politics and toying with the fate of the nation for nothing but petty, personal gain—a curious argument given Hesing’s position within the Chicago Republican party and his rise to riches through political contacts and favors earlier in the decade.

The Cleveland platform drew further condemnation by not concretely positioning itself firmly against slavery—at least not in the eyes of the *Staats-Zeitung* and its forty-

---

<sup>30</sup> “Die Clevelander Und Ihre Ämter,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 2, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

eighter board of editors. Instead of committing to a stance that would guarantee the death of the South's "peculiar institution," the Cleveland radicals instead insisted upon adopting a resolution that declared slavery dead already and in need of no further abolition. In its place they asked for a constitutional amendment that would simply forbid the restoration of slavery in the future. The convention participants also voted down a more actively abolitionist resolution that would have declared slavery still alive in and need of ending. The *Staats-Zeitung* understood this as a compromise geared towards "fishing for" Copperhead votes.<sup>31</sup> The circumstance of the Cleveland platform not mentioning the Emancipation Proclamation in any way also served the editor as evidence that this was a conscious decision to court Democratic voters for their candidate, since Democrats were known to despise the document.

Specifically the intention of simply outlawing future slavery by constitutional amendment seemed like a point the German-American element required more elaboration. The editors brought up the issue in several articles that laid out how and why approaching abolition in this way at this specific time was an exercise in futility, due to the American political landscape and how the federal government was both set up and staffed in 1864. The paper informed its readers repeatedly that in order to amend the constitution a two-thirds majority in the House of Representatives was necessary, and that passing such an amendment would not be possible against the resistance of the Democrats. Furthermore, the editors contended that the idea of prohibiting a restoration of slavery was futile since slavery was in fact not yet defeated

---

<sup>31</sup> "Die Clevelander Plattform - Ein Reaktionäres Pfschwerk," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 4, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

or dead. Outlawing the restoration of something that never went away would not in any way further abolition. The *Staats-Zeitung* then insisted that “if the convention wanted to truly work towards abolition, it would demand the outlawing of slavery ITSELF. However it abstracted from this demand in order to not alienate their Copperhead brothers.”<sup>32</sup>

Fremont eventually accepted the nomination of the radicals—in writing as he could not attend the Cleveland convention, and only tentatively. This condition served as yet another point of contention for Hering and his editors, who believed it proved Fremont’s true Copperhead colors. The so-called “Pathfinder” stated that if the Baltimore Republican convention were to end up nominating Lincoln on the ticket, he would accept and run against Lincoln. If anyone but Lincoln received it, he would refuse. For the *Staats-Zeitung* the case was clear. Fremont’s conditional acceptance was a threat aimed at the Republicans. “If you nominate Lincoln again, I will become the banner-bearer of ‘radical democracy’ and do anything in my power to split the party and ensure a victory of the Copperheads.”<sup>33</sup> The editors portrayed the entirety of “radicalissimi” politics through this lens, disregarding any actual grievances this group might have had, while focusing solely on the aspect that a radical counter-candidate to Lincoln would solely serve as a spoiler for the Republican candidate and thus as a boon for the Democrats, Copperhead or not.

---

<sup>32</sup> “Verbot Der Wiedereinfuehrung Der Sklaverei,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 6, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>33</sup> “Herr Fremonts Bedingte Annahme Der Kandidatur,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 7, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).



In the wake of the Baltimore Republican convention at which Lincoln and Andrew Johnson received the nomination the *Staats-Zeitung* triumphantly wrote that this ticket was the “TRUE TICKET OF THE PEOPLE.”<sup>34</sup> The editors were quick to point out that Lincoln was not an aristocrat and that he had come from very simple roots. The article detailed how Lincoln had worked his way up to the presidency. In some ways the editors may well have attempted to draw parallels to the life of A.C. Hesing, who might have even written the article himself. Hesing too came from simple roots. Through odd jobs and hard physical labor he worked his respective way into American politics, if at a much lower level. He too saw—and portrayed—himself as a man of the people. The article also pointed out that in contrast to the honest working men Lincoln and Johnson, the contender John C. Fremont was an aristocrat and that it was the aristocracy of the United States that took umbrage at leaders from simple, non-aristocratic backgrounds. This was in many ways a criticism that was in line with the forty-eighter ideology, regardless of Hesing himself not being one of the former revolutionaries. While the forty-eighters were not quite lionizers of working people, they were very much anti-aristocratic, which was the most unifying factor among them and the core of their political philosophy.

The Fremont movement’s success was predicated upon the unpopularity of Abraham Lincoln and the dragging civil war that appeared to go nowhere. As Bruce Levine notes, when the tide of the war turned in the Union’s favor in September 1864 with General William Tecumseh Sherman capturing Atlanta, the efforts of the

---

<sup>34</sup> “Die Baltimore Platform,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 9, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

“radicalissimi” began to fall apart. The embattled administration was re-invigorated in the public eye. Fremont could not offer any meaningful alternatives.<sup>35</sup>

As election day approached, the Chicago forty-eighters went on one last political offensive by organizing a mass meeting at the Turner Hall in an attempt to mobilize the city’s German-American element at large. The *Staats-Zeitung* served to spread the word of this gathering. In the announcement on September 5, 1864 the editors again stressed the main points their publication had defended Lincoln on for the past years. “[...] Restoration of the Union on the basis of universal human freedom [...] suppression of the rebellion and honorable and lasting peace [...].”<sup>36</sup> This was a repudiation of the Cleveland platform again, in the eyes of the forty-eighters and Hesing a restoration of the Union to a status quo ante was an insufficient goal. The institution of slavery had to be once and for all put down, the enslaved freed, the slavers punished.

Also any possibility of a resurgence of human chattel bondage had to be made impossible. Restoring the union with slavery still intact in any way shape or form was out of the question. Only when slavery was destroyed could the resulting peace be one that brought honor to the nation and allowed restoration of the Union as a whole. One of the speakers at the gathering was the Republican governor of Wisconsin Edward Salomon, as well as a Dr. Adolph Wiesner of Baltimore. Wiesner had a hand in reshaping Maryland’s constitution in 1864 and previously held the position of publisher at the Pennsylvania newspaper *Der Geist der Zeit* (The Spirit of the Time). The inclusion

---

<sup>35</sup> Bruce C. Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 262.

<sup>36</sup> “Massen Versammlung Der Deutschen Unionsleute in Der Neuen Turnhalle,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, September 5, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

of these two men again demonstrated just how interconnected and wide-ranging the span of German-America had become, but also how much effort the forty-eighter element in Chicago invested in the re-election of Lincoln. That the gathering was held at the newly erected Turner Hall was also notable, since this meeting served as a signifier of how central the Turnverein was for the German-American community. But holding the meeting at this venue also showed the amount of people the organizers expected to show up.

With the Lincoln administration back in good public standing, Fremont eventually withdrew from the primary in late September. Carl Wittke noted that leader of the “radicalissimi” camp Karl Heinzen was distraught by this turn of events, but ultimately conceded that Fremont withdrew in order to prevent a split of the Republican ticket which would have all but guaranteed a Democratic win. German Fremont clubs shifted their allegiances and turned into Lincoln clubs, and the majority of the German radical press equally shifted their support towards the incumbent.<sup>37</sup> Ken Levine stressed that after the collapse of the Fremont campaign, the German-Americans that had been invested in the anti-Lincoln candidate returned to the Republican Party, where they then continued to represent the radical faction.<sup>38</sup>

On election day, Hesing’s editors addressed their readership in ways that for a moment collapsed the hyphenated, immigrant identity into that of American citizens. The newspaper ran a final, impassioned plea to its readers, which appealed to their duty

---

<sup>37</sup> Carl Frederick Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), 247.

<sup>38</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 262.

towards the new homeland while reminding them that the “Entire civilized world is watching this election with bated breath [...]”<sup>39</sup> This urge to cast the ballot for the Lincoln ticket came with an appeal to the German-American element—not in their role as foreign-born immigrants, but in their role as American citizens with all the civil duties that this status brought with it. America was supposed to remain the “asylum for the oppressed of all nations,” for sure, but it was also supposed to “crush the Copperheads and silence their hissing and make it so that their despicable venom may cease to poison our great political system.”<sup>40</sup> The article made out the author’s position as a purely American one that just happened to be written in German blackletter instead of the plain Latin script of Anglo-American newspapers. Another article published in the same *Staats-Zeitung* issue appealed to the audience to *Give a day to your country!* in the heading. The editor pleaded with the reader to ensure that he fulfill his patriotic duty to the full extent—by making sure that not only every German-American himself cast his ballot. The reader should also confirm that neighbors and friends cast theirs, indirectly reminding the readers that the rights and duties of a free country’s citizen should not be taken for granted. This plea implicitly conjured up comparisons with the old country, where citizens did not enjoy such freedoms.<sup>41</sup>

Underneath these addresses to the general readership the paper published a targeted appeal to its working-class readers titled “A Word to the Workers!” Here the

---

<sup>39</sup> “An Unsere Mitbürger!,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 8, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>40</sup> “An Unsere Mitbürger!”

<sup>41</sup> “Gebt Einen Tag Eurem Lande,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 8, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

editors again stressed how Lincoln and Johnson both rose up from poor, working people backgrounds. In this, the editor attempted to speak to the worker readership's emerging class solidarity. This was not the first time the *Staats-Zeitung* emphasized the Republican candidates' simple roots. However, in those instances the reasoning for this focus revolved around highlighting the class differences between the aristocratic John C. Fremont and Lincoln, while not quite serving as an appeal to class conscious workers to vote for one of their own.<sup>42</sup>

The day after the election was a time for celebration and breathing a sigh of relief at the *Staats-Zeitung* offices. The headlines read "Big Union victory!"—The paper's coverage of the election and the war converged in equating Lincoln with the Union and his opponents in politics as in war with the secessionist Confederacy. The election battle—literally, since one common German word for "election campaign" is 'Wahlkampf'—was won. Hesing and his Chicago Republicans had fought well and valiantly, the city delivered a Republican majority of 1,765 votes. Lincoln's presidency was saved, the war could go on, and the chance to decisively defeat slavery and the slaveholding class was at hand now. The Copperhead element in the North in general and in Chicago in particular was defeated. The voices who proclaimed that putting the incumbent up for re-election would spell doom for the Republican Party and the Union were proven wrong.<sup>43</sup>

Three months later, as the war approached its conclusion a few weeks after Lincoln's second inauguration, the *Staats-Zeitung* selected some choice articles from

---

<sup>42</sup> "Ein Wort an Die Arbeiter," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 8, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>43</sup> "Die Gestrige Wahl - Grosser Unions Sieg," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 9, 1864, Newberry Library (my translation).

Southern newspapers for republishing. These reprints served to stress the dysfunctionality and barbarism the Southern military exercised on its own population. When Wheeler's Cavalry plundered storefronts in Columbia, North Carolina, the paper ran an article that quoted a letter to the editor of the *Richmond Whig*. The writer detailed the scenes of refugees fleeing the city from the approaching forces of General William T. Sherman, with the ostensibly friendly cavalry unit plundering stores with practiced efficiency. Meanwhile, the letter's author put the blame for the situation solely on the administration of the city, instead of the advancing Union forces. The city, they insinuated, should have been evacuated much earlier, as if facing an oncoming force of nature like an approaching hurricane, not an approaching enemy army. In its role as a Republican paper, the *Staats-Zeitung* both related the situation on the distant battlegrounds through these letters to Southern newspaper, but also distributed blame for the dismal conditions of the suffering civilian population. The letter writers laid that blame squarely on the shoulders of the Southern military and civilian administrations, concluding that, "you can understand why our populace would rather see the Yankees or the devil himself coming, than a party of Wheeler's cavalry."<sup>44</sup> The Confederacy's own units were depicted here as the worst of all as they looted their own civilian population and disregarded even their own generals. Focusing on this served to deeper entrench the readership against what northern Republicans like Hising and his editorship saw as the biggest flaws in Southern society: displaced morals, a lack of honor and a blatant disregard for any form of decency.

---

<sup>44</sup> "Rebellen Panique in South Carolina," *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*, March 15, 1865, Newberry Library (my translation).

When the leader of the Confederate armies General Robert E. Lee finally surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse, the *Staats-Zeitung* heaped plenty of praise on the leader of the Union armies, General Ulysses S. Grant. In their evaluation of Grant's achievements in the final battles of the Civil War the editorship drew parallels its German immigrant readership would readily understand. They stated that Grant's army "completely put down the enemy's main army faster than Napoleon did with the Prussian army after the battle at Jena and Auerstedt."<sup>45</sup> Comparing Grant's success with this decisive battle in Napoleon's campaign against Prussia instead of any wars and battles fought on American soil made a lot of sense for a newspaper whose audience was for the most part born in Germany. For the German-Americans this was part of their own history much more so than any battles in America's past, fought a long time before their arrival and without their or their families' involvement. Conjuring up the image of Napoleon was more useful in this context to illustrate Grant's military achievement than it was to compare him to American figures like George Washington or Andrew Jackson, whose military successes would not have been as present in the minds of the immigrants in comparison.

### **The German-Americans and President Lincoln's Assassination**

On April 9, 1865, that year's Palm Sunday, the leader of the Confederate forces General in Chief Robert E. Lee officially surrendered to the leader of the Union army, General in Chief Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia. The American Civil War was over, the Union victorious. The North readied victory parades. Five days

---

<sup>45</sup> "Capitulation Lee's Und Seiner Armees!", *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 12, 1865, weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

later, on April 14, 1865, Good Friday, the first day of that year's Easter weekend, John Wilkes Booth fatally shot President Abraham Lincoln at the Ford Theater in Washington D.C. The President died of his injuries the next morning. The country, especially the northern states, were deeply shocked by the sudden, violent death of the president. Given the enthusiasm German-American Chicago mustered for Lincoln during the Civil War and the election campaign the year before, it is hardly surprising that his assassination less than a week after the official surrender of the Confederacy was met with much shock, grief and mourning. The *Staats-Zeitung* praised the deceased president as a "martyr of freedom," a "noble minded friend of the poor and oppressed around the world" who "never abused the awesome power of his office" and "remained a son of the people" who had earned "nothing less but the martyr's crown."<sup>46</sup> A subsequent article struck a decidedly aggressive tone, comparing the southern slaveholders to "wild beasts who have nothing in common with human beings but their form [...]" who "cannot be taught" and whose "destruction and eradication is now absolutely necessary [...]" and that there must be "no amnesty!" towards the South. This article then was followed up with a short blurb telling the readers to "Trust and Help President Johnson."

After the newspaper's long and ardent support for Lincoln, the editors now saw a need to maintain the momentum with which they had rallied the readership behind the Republican Party and President Lincoln during the previous year's election campaign. But they also felt the necessity of calming the minds of the German-American

---

<sup>46</sup> "Der Freiheitsmartyrer Abraham Lincoln," *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*, April 16, 1865, Newberry Library (my translation).



community, lest their compatriots succumb to desperation. The same stub telling the readers to trust President Johnson reappeared in the issues of the *Staats-Zeitung* published during the weeks following, wherever a page had a few square inches of open real estate.<sup>47</sup> The editors then provided detailed reporting on the series of events leading up and during the assassination, the assassination attempt on William Seward, as well as Lincoln's death struggle and transport of his remains to the White House.

The *Staats-Zeitung* also advertised a mass gathering of German-Americans at the Turner Hall on the coming day, Monday April 17, 1865. The article appealed to the readers to appear in strong numbers at the meeting, in order to publicly express their grief. "It is now up to us Germans to not stay behind our American compatriots, neither in the manifestation of grief over the death of Abraham Lincoln and our outrage over the attempted murder on Seward, neither in swearing fealty to always support our federal government."<sup>48</sup> This gathering served several functions. On the one hand, it would give the German-American community a much-needed opportunity for collective mourning. But on the other hand, it would also serve as a demonstration to outsiders that the German-Americans of Chicago were in fact strong supporters of the late president and of the federal government. Historian Martha Hodes remarks that many German communities in the north leaned more towards Democratic Copperhead positions and broke out in public celebrations after Lincoln's death. This circumstance made a public

---

<sup>47</sup> "Der Meuchelmord," *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*, April 16, 1865, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>48</sup> "Trauer-Versammlung Deutscher Bürger in Der Turnhalle in Nord-Clarkstraße," *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*, April 16, 1865, Newberry Library (my translation).

display of grief for the deceased president a prudent, pressing political action for Chicago's German community.

The German-Americans felt a need to display that they were loyal to the Union and the Republican Party, and they wanted to make their position as clear as possible. German Chicago had to disassociate from any of their fellow German-born countrymen cheering on the death of the president. They had to be more visible in their grief than those cheering the assassination on were in their joy, in order to prevent any remaining nativist sentiment against to rise again. The *Staats-Zeitung* also featured several articles detailing the resolutions of various German-American clubs and organizations such as the Ramah-Loge and the German Freemasons, further underlining an implicit claim that the entirety of German-American Chicago was unified in mourning and condemnation of the assassination.<sup>49</sup>

The *Nationaler Turnbund*, the federal umbrella organization of all local Turnverein chapters, held a general assembly in Washington D.C. where they negotiated a new constitution for the federal association. The individual points of this constitution were then printed in full on the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung*, as well as in other German-American newspapers across the nation whose editorships had ties to the *Turnerbund*. The association's representatives once more concluded that they would not retreat from the political scene, and that they would focus on politics with a revolutionary spirit, opposing slavery and oppression as well as nativism in all forms. The *Turnverein* was indeed a close associate of the *Staats-Zeitung*. Both the newspaper's editorship and the

---

<sup>49</sup> Martha Elizabeth Hodes, *Mourning Lincoln* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 82.

Turners had a mutual sympathy for each other's political actions. Both Turner leadership and *Staats-Zeitung* editors were aware of the sheer importance of the political gymnastics association for the German-American community as a whole, which was once more illustrated by the amount of real estate given to the organization's announcements on the page.<sup>50</sup>

Details of Lincoln's death and funeral as well as the reactions it provoked around the country dominated the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung* in the following weeks. As with Anglo-American papers, the assassination and funeral ceremonies shook the editorship deeply, but unlike their Anglo-American counterparts, the sense that the German-Americans still felt a need to further prove their loyalty to the Union and the Republican party, especially in this time of crisis, was pervasive. The editors of the *Staats-Zeitung* staunchly defended their publication's pro-Lincoln position while maintaining their aggression towards Copperhead Democrats and Lincoln nay-sayers. The editors published articles and opinion pieces that extolled the virtues of the deceased president, conspicuously demonstrating their loyalty to the federal government and the Republican Party. The *Chicago Times* in particular angered the forty-eighter editors when it ran an article equating John Wilkes Booth to John Brown. The German-American editors were outraged, decrying the comparison and stating that,

We did not think it possible that there could be a beast like this in a northern city that would even THINK to euphemize the deed of John Wilkes Booth. We thought it even LESS possible that such a beast could have the audacity to prostitute the freedom of the press in this way by announcing that the

---

<sup>50</sup> "Platform Und Statuten Des Neuen Turnerbunds," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 19, 1865, weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

assassin might have actually righteously believed killing Abraham Lincoln would rid the world of a tyrant.<sup>51</sup>

The *Times* further fanned the flames of Teutonic-Republican anger by suggesting the people of Union-occupied Mobile, Alabama should prefer death on the battlefield to surrender. The editors argued that through this suggestion the *Times* was trying to incite further bloodshed and violence, merely to provide a safeguard, a distraction from the ring-leaders of the rebellion still at large. In subsequent articles the editors laid out intricate details of the president's funeral ceremonies in Washington, describing the order in which the procession took place, relating to their readers everything down to the draperies and ornamentations adorning the city, and even the look of Lincoln's dead body and the expression on his face.

The editors also paid close attention to reactions to Lincoln's death around the country and the world. Writing about such responses served the purpose of anchoring the German-American community within the larger social framework of the United States at this time of crisis. Providing testimony and reports on mourners in Nova Scotia and San Francisco allowed the Chicago Germans mourning Lincoln an awareness of being a part of a greater community of grievers. On another page the *Staats-Zeitung* reported on official condolences and incidents of public mourning across Europe: of a speech Queen Victoria of England, of a special assembly of the Italian parliament and of acts of official condolence by other European governing bodies.<sup>52</sup> These reports allowed

---

<sup>51</sup> "Die Chicago Times Und Die Verteidigung Des Meuchelmordes," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 26, 1865, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>52</sup> "Schmerz Und Lincolns Ermordung," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 10, 1865, Newberry Library (my translation).

the German-Americans to feel a closer connection with their non-German, American compatriots. Reporting on the mourning of the dead president thereby functioned as a vehicle of political integration and assimilation. The reports also detailed the reactions of freed African-Americans to Lincoln's death, which illustrated for the audience that his death—and the deaths of the Americans fallen in battle—had not been in vain.

In mid-May the *Staats-Zeitung* reported on the response to Lincoln's death in German newspapers. These articles and editorials again served a different function from the reports on other Americans' mourning, since these reports re-established the links with the old homeland. The editors let the German-Americans know that their grief was shared not just by British and Italians, but also by their old countrymen. The coverage contributed to the understanding and perception of the German-Americans as a part of a world that was larger than Chicago and even greater than just the United States. Hering and his editorial staff established a refraction of the ethnoscape by transcending national and natural boundaries. All these articles were written in German using typical German blackletter font. The language and the font made it unlikely that this kind of reporting served to conspicuously express fealty to the federal government. The average American was unable to read the German headlines bemoaning the death of Lincoln and the funeral procession plans while perusing papers at a newsstand. These articles, reports, and titles were written exclusively for consumption by German eyes alone. Conspicuous grieving and mourning to display loyalty to the Union and to the deceased president was reserved for public funeral celebrations and parades.

When the dead president's body was slowly paraded through the streets of Chicago, German-Americans and their associations marched along as official parts of

the funeral procession. This was the moment for the German element to prove they were loyal to the American martyr and opposed to the last vestiges of slaveholder terror. As historian Mary P. Ryan remarks, public parades in American cities in the nineteenth century often served as a distinct public arena with elaborately established structures. This was especially true for the way in which distinct, ethnic elements were expected to appear, as closed groups, together, representing their community—and then neatly divided into the individual associations and further sub-groupings to which members of any ethnic community belonged.<sup>53</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* published a detailed list of the procession: the second division of the funeral train included the 24<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry—the old Hecker regiment—as well as the German freemasons, while the third division included the German Roman Catholic Welfare Society and the *Arbeiterverein*, the 4<sup>th</sup> saw the *Turnverein* marching alongside the Sons of Herman as well as an array of other German associations, clubs and societies. The *Staats-Zeitung* also printed detailed instructions for members of individual groups; for example the members of the 24<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry were asked to gather at the *Turnhalle* to coordinate their participation and mourning clothes. The Turners themselves also printed an appeal to all Chicago members to appear at their Turner Hall in order to practice their formations for the upcoming procession.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century*, Reprint 2019 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 93, <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520922082>.

<sup>54</sup> “Die Leichenfeier Des Präsidenten Lincoln (in Chicago),” *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*, April 30, 1865, Newberry Library (my translation).

Participation in such a parade was also, as Ryan notes elsewhere, a thoroughly American endeavor, since large, public parades of this kind were at the time a uniquely American feature of public participation and spectacle.<sup>55</sup> When immigrant groups participated in these spectacles, their performances signified being part of the larger American project. Therefore, the German-Americans and their various associations and clubs participations in Lincoln's funeral procession were more than simply public mourning of a national hero. Participating in that parade meant a demonstration of fealty to the Republican Party, but also staking a claim to being American. After the Civil War, the many losses the German-American community endured, they now had a chance to demonstrate openly that they, too, were part of the social fabric of Chicago and of the United States at large.

One of the reactions to Lincoln's death was that several Chicago forty-eighters decided to organize a new singing society. The war and the high number of casualties among the German-American regiments had torn substantial gashes into the German *Vereinswesen*' (landscape of associations and clubs). The survivors of the war then took Lincoln's funeral parade as an impetus to reorganize and start new associations, clubs and societies. Some 150 forty-eighters and other German-Americans came together as something of an impromptu singing society at Lincoln's coffin while the president lay in state in Chicago's Cook County courthouse. The German-American singers then performed German-language elegies and other somber tunes. They had quickly organized with assistance of the *Turnverein* in the roughly two weeks between the

---

<sup>55</sup> Mary P. Ryan, "The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order," in *The New Cultural History: Essays*, by Lynn Hunt, vol. 6, Studies on the History of Society and Culture (University of California Press, 1989), 136.

announcement of the president's assassination and the arrival of the funeral train in Chicago on May 2nd. The men took this as an opportunity to rally support for a new singing society, which became the *Germania Männerchor* (Germania Male Choir).<sup>56</sup> The singing society eventually evolved into a broader—but still private—social club with a membership numbering in the hundreds, becoming a cornerstone of German-American Chicago's social life in the years and decades to come. The organization eventually built the Germania Club Building in the Near North Side in 1889, which still stands today.

The Civil War left a deep and lasting impression on German-American Chicago, not just because of the many lives lost. Service in the war, even if some German units received derision for perceived cowardice, functioned as a tool of assimilation and acceptance of the immigrants by American mainstream society. The war also tied the German diaspora closer together across the nation, as soldiers from different German-American communities served together on the battlefield, and as German-language newspapers exchanged reports and articles to be reprinted by one another. The conflict also brought more attention to the United States from the German homeland, as German-Americans' relatives and friends wrote letters back and forth across the ocean, and as German-American newspapermen like Hermann Raster reported in intricate, minute detail on the war as foreign correspondents for German newspapers.

---

<sup>56</sup> Eugen Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt* (Chicago: The George Gregory Printing Company, 1892), 128.



## CHAPTER 5

### A FLURRY OF PATRIOTISMS

#### **The Franco-Prussian War and German Unification, 1870-1871**

The years of 1870 and 1871 were a time of tumultuous upheaval for the German-American community in Chicago. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871 served as a cataclysm that reinforced both material and ideological ties to the old homeland, out of which emerged a unified Germany as the German Empire took shape. The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* was at the height of its popularity and outreach at this time, and at the forefront of reporting and opining on all of the issues of the day. The newspaper also provided its readership with more numerous and closer connections to Germany, while also allowing Germans in Germany a connection to their family and friends overseas. At this point, the newspaper had turned into a pillar of the German-American community establishment, firmly entrenched as essential day-to-day reading of the status quo. This position put the newspapermen at odds with the new immigrants and their emergent working-class identity and socialist persuasions. This dynamic provided for ongoing tensions within the community, one that proved hard to resolve.

During the Franco-Prussian War and the unification process that birthed the German Empire, the former revolutionaries and their allies used the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* to tie the German-American community of Chicago into the broader German speaking, transnational sphere. They furthered the idea of a German national project,

aware that the events unfolding in Europe could lead to the foundation of a nation state similar but different from the nation state for which they fought in 1848. But the promise of national unity for the German people at last was more important than the political and ideological purity of a lost revolution.

The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* functioned as a facilitator of the German ethnoscape in Chicago during the war. The forty-eighter editorship and publisher Anton Caspar Hesing provided ideological, personal and material connections between the German-American diaspora and the German homeland. The ideological connection consisted of close reporting on the events on Europe's battlefields as well as political commentary that explained the justifications for the war. The personal connection came through Hesing himself, who was on a trip across Germany at the time the war broke out, and who proceeded to run interference on behalf of his Chicago-German community and readership, reporting back in travel letters the *Staats-Zeitung* published. And lastly, the newspaper established a material connection by collecting charitable donations to be sent to war widows and invalids.

### **The Franco-Prussian War**

Anton Caspar Hesing, now sole proprietor and publisher of the *Staats-Zeitung*, called on Hermann Raster to come to Chicago and work for the paper as editor-in-chief in 1867. Raster answered the call, moved to Chicago, and took over the editorial reins. One of the most directly noticeable changes to the paper after his arrival was a change in writing style. For most of his life in German-America, Raster loathed the way many German-American papers treated the German language, incorporating many clumsily

Germanified American-English terms while neglecting proper German grammar and orthographic rules. The change in the overall quality of German language used before and after Raster's arrival at the *Staats-Zeitung* was noticeable. Before, many of the published articles engaged in these "Gerstackerisms" as Raster referred to them himself—a reference to German writer Friedrich Gerstäcker who traveled the United States extensively and wrote about his experiences in numerous novels detailing his journeys. During his tenure, these German-American linguistic quirks rapidly diminished in frequency.

International news reporting itself also changed. The time required to report on news from overseas drastically contracted due to the advent of the transatlantic telegraph. Raster detailed this in a letter to a correspondent for the paper:

On Sunday morning at breakfast time we received the declaration that Grammont had given at 10pm the night before. The extracts of all important (and less important) newspaper articles about the situation [the election of the King of Spain in 1870] will be telegraphed to us as well as official and unofficial declarations, rumors, conjectures [...] and troop movements, etc. so our readers have more comprehensive material on what happened in Europe only a few hours earlier than the average newspaper reader has in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

The speed with which German-American newspapers could now report on news stories from Europe was a particular point of pride for Raster, since American papers (regardless of language) in general operated faster than German ones did. This difference in turnaround was caused not just by ongoing official censorship in Germany, but also by the telegraphic infrastructure in the United States being more widespread

---

<sup>1</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Bauer, Chicago," July 12, 1870, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

and readily available than in mainland Europe. Prussia was among the first German states to install a telegraph line, from Berlin to the city of Aachen in the west of the country, in 1848. However, due to the ongoing fragmentation of the German states, a wider telegraph connection through larger parts of the country was slow to proceed.<sup>2</sup> This meant that German newspapers took longer to receive news items, often longer than German-American newspapers did. The result of these circumstances then was, as Raster described, that German-Americans often had better information on events in Europe and Germany than German readers. But the transatlantic telegraph also allowed for a simultaneity, for a sense of belonging and instantaneous togetherness of the German speaking world, since the Germans living in America could easily and quickly receive information on the old home country. This was a vital part of the German-American ethnoscape, which stretched far beyond the national borders of the German Confederacy and other German-speaking countries of Europe at this time.

At the height of the German-American immigration boom of the late nineteenth century, New York City Germans published about as many newspapers as Berlin. The German-American population was voracious in its appetite for news from new and old countries alike. In combination with the generally more advanced printing technology of the United States, as well as the earlier and faster spread of the telegraph, this led to a curious situation in which German-American newspapers frequently reported on events in Europe before German newspapers. *Staats-Zeitung* editor-in-chief Hermann Raster

---

<sup>2</sup> Conrad Tiemann, *Der electrische Telegraph - Leicht verständliche Abhandlung über das gesammte technische Telegraphenwesen - Mit 116 Holzschnitten* (Berlin: Wilhelm Baensch Verlagshandlung, 1882), 2.

made it a habit to send copies of his newspapers to his German family when he was still working for the *Abendzeitung* in New York. He did this to let his relatives partake in his work, but also to provide them with what he thought was better information than German newspapers offered.<sup>3</sup> The German-American publishers were aware of this situation and responded with a mixture of bemusement and disappointment. The war presented an ongoing series of events that the readerships on both sides of the Atlantic followed closely. But several factors served to keep the German newspapers in a sorry state. A big issue was state censors, since the German press was far less free than it was in America. Another was that the German press failed to broadly adopt the telegraph for correspondence and instead had to rely on postal letters. The third was that the German readership apparently did not care much for a hastier and more current reporting by the papers they read.

Germany at the time had a different newspaper culture than the United States. Germany's was less modern and less interested in the latest breaking news, in comparison with the newspaper culture of America. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors found that, "events which our Germans over here learn about from our paper within a few hours remain unknown to our countrymen beyond the Rhine for days."<sup>4</sup> The technological advancement and greater freedom of the press integrated German-American news media so closely into events in Europe, that German-Americans often

---

<sup>3</sup> Hermann Raster, "Hermann Raster Letter to Askan Raster," December 4, 1857, The Raster Family Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>4</sup> "Die Deutsche Presse Hüben Und Drüben," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 28, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

were better and more immediately informed about such events than were their European countrymen. This was a peculiar development for the German ethnosphere. The advances in technology and the American embrace of such technologies, which the German-Americans followed, brought German-American newspapers in some ways closer to European events than even Germans themselves were. But the German-American publications also furthered a particular kind of national pride among the German-Americans for their newspaper landscape and its reputation in both home countries old and new. This particular article was reprinted from the *New York Staatszeitung*, which indicated that this phenomenon was not limited to just one outstandingly fast German-American newspaper, but a feature of the German-American newspapers at large.

The new speed at which the news from Europe traveled to America allowed for more timely reporting and in turn allowed for immediate journalistic reactions to whatever European news the German-American papers reported upon. When the Franco-Prussian war broke out in early July 1870, the German-American communities across the country received news of it within a day. Within another day they enacted impromptu patriotic gatherings and celebrations, and within yet another day—on July 22, 1870—the *Staats-Zeitung* reported on these widespread reactions to the war. But beyond that, the telegraph now allowed *German* newspapers to report on the outbreak of national enthusiasm among *German-Americans* within a few days.

Raster stressed how important it was to demonstrate a unified German patriotism not just at home but also abroad for the overall moral of the country soon

after the declaration of war was reported in Germany. “There is no doubt about that the moral impression of this tangible proof of a unified German patriotic feeling is most important in Germany.”<sup>5</sup> In this instance Raster described the unity of all people of German descent, wherever in the world they lived at this time. He argued that the war effort required a positive reaction from abroad as immediate as possible, since many Germans were most apprehensive about how the war would be received outside the German states. The *Staats-Zeitung* became quite actively involved in the German patriotic fervor that bubbled up with the war’s outbreak. In an official telegram to Chancellor of the North German Confederation, Duke Otto von Bismarck, the editors offered a reward of 200 Prussian Talers (about \$6300 today) for whichever German soldier captured the first French flag.<sup>6</sup> Raster insisted that all Germans, regardless of country of residence, now had to band together and keep encouraging their countrymen at home, since the homeland was now surrounded by enemies. The degree to which a trans-national yet still nationalist unity was conjured up at this time was remarkable. Raster implored an ethnic unity of people of German descent, regardless of what nation-state they resided in. This clearly demonstrated the existence of a German-speaking sphere, made up of individuals, spanning far beyond the confines of national borders. As Raster put it, where Germans resided, whatever hyphenated identity beyond their

---

<sup>5</sup> “Die Deutsch-Amerikaner Und Der Krieg,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 22, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>6</sup> Currency conversion following this table: Deutsche Bundesbank. *Kaufkraftäquivalente historischer Beträge in deutschen Währungen*. (Berlin: Deutsche Bundesdruckerei, 2021). <https://www.bundesbank.de/resource/blob/615162/d55a20f8a4ecedd6d1b53e01b89f11c4/mL/kaufkraft-aequivalente-historischer-betraege-in-deutschen-waehrungen-data.pdf>, accessed 03.31.2021.

German one they cultivated since emigration, they still felt German, still had an obligation towards their home country and their family and friends they left behind to support the war effort—if not materially, then at least in word and spirit.

That the forty-eighter editors cheered on the Prussian war effort led by the same Wilhelm von Hohenzollern who in previous years they only referred to as the “Kartäscher Prinz” (the shrapnel prince) due to his brutal bombardment of revolutionary forces in 1848 was not seen as a contradiction by either the editors or their readership. Historian Carl Wittke notes that in their enthusiasm for German victories and the possibility of a united Germany the forty-eighters mostly mirrored the stance of the German diaspora at large. Readers, advertisers, and editors alike were swept up in a newfound nationalistic fervor, fueled in the forty-eighters case by a distance both in time and space.<sup>7</sup> Historian Bruce Levine depicts this dynamic within the forty-eighter group as a turn towards generally more conservative positions. This shift was caused—among other things—by the American experience and the social and cultural climate in the United States, that made the once-radical immigrants regard middle-class, establishment living conditions as ideal, and resulted in a general turn towards social conservatism. Combined with a strong sense of patriotism, national pride and achievement, the former revolutionaries now openly forgave Wilhelm for his actions

---

<sup>7</sup> Carl Friedrich Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution; the German Forty-Eighters in America*, (Westport, Conn, Greenwood Press, 1970), 164.



during the revolutions, and embraced him as representative of the one, true German homeland.<sup>8</sup>

But this position was not shared by all forty-eighters. Some of the former radicals still found issues to criticize—even if the long dreamed of national unity was now finally a reality. Friedrich Hecker biographer Sabine Freitag states that the Civil War veteran and hero of the revolution was initially also seized by the wave of patriotism that seemingly gripped all of Germandom. Like many of his former brothers-in-arms, he, too, saw the war as an almost inevitable clash between the forces of Germanic and Romantic peoples. After the initial enthusiasm was spent, Hecker succumbed to worries: he feared the new Reich would lack liberty. Hecker was especially suspicious that the Prussians' militarization of society would prevent the emergence of a sufficiently free Germany. As to the contradiction of the former revolutionaries now cheering on the efforts of the aristocrats who once massacred their comrades, Hecker remarked in a letter to Franz Sigel that the German people now knew their strength, and that this knowledge could eventually lead to an overthrow of the Prussian emperor. Further, he began to develop an understanding of the 1848 revolutionaries as midwives of German unity. Hecker saw a direct line from the revolutionary mindset to the foundation of the German Empire, with or without the republic realized. Sigel for his part never forgave Wilhelm for his crackdown on the revolution.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Bruce C. Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 264.

<sup>9</sup> Sabine Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker: Two Lives for Liberty* (St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 320.

In this outlook, Sigel was joined by radical firebrand Carl Heinzen, who regarded the change of heart among the bulk of former revolutionaries as proof that they never really were the radicals they portrayed themselves as. Historian Eitel Dobert found that Heinzen also shared Hecker's fear that with Prussia now in command of Germany, Prussian bureaucracy and militarism would rule supreme and suppress any republican notions. He went as far as publicly admonishing the American immigration authorities to be vigilant of German monarchist immigrants, who he feared could come to the U.S. with the goal of undermining the—American—republic.<sup>10</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* reported on the war in minute detail. The paper broke down the biographies of the leaders of the opposing armies, introducing each general with a short paragraph, reporting on their military careers, where they were born, what political affiliation they held and what battles they fought in previously—not dissimilar to what one would expect out of report on rival professional sports teams today. Further, the paper also ran a report written by German-American hero of the Civil War, Franz Sigel, who laid out the strategic implications of the war, armaments, troop strength and projected battle sites. This allowed the German-American readership a vicarious participation in the faraway war, and in many ways built upon the way the newspaper had reported on the Civil War five years prior. However, the most important function of this kind of war reporting was one of furthering a German transnational nationalist unity. Every German-American was called on to pitch in both in spirit and in action. The

---

<sup>10</sup> Eitel W. Dobert, "The Radicals," in *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 176.

paper called upon its readership to imitate the example of the Turner society, which immediately pledged to donate \$250 (\$4,000 in today's currency) to the war effort.<sup>11</sup>

These charitable collections established a material connection between the German diaspora and Germany proper, where a call to patriotic donations for the former homeland served to further a national unity that truly went above and beyond any nation-state borders.<sup>12</sup> The *Chicago Tribune* reported that the war had an unprecedented unifying effect on the German-American Chicagoans at the outbreak of the war, which the editors saw as a reflection of the overall German reaction: "If it had been the express desire of Napoleon to bring about German unity, he could have scarcely hit upon a better plan."<sup>13</sup> The German community of Chicago appeared significantly more united behind the war than it was before. Regardless of what state any German-speaking inhabitant of the North Side came from originally, after the war had broken out, the *Tribune* reported, they identified as German and saw the war as one between France and Germany, not France and Prussia.

The war highlighted some new developments in the field of foreign correspondence, national sympathies, and foreign relations. Raster both bemoaned the uselessness of European reports on troop movements on both sides, but also reminded

---

<sup>11</sup> Officialdata.org, "\$200 in 1870 → 2021 | Inflation Calculator," Inflation Calculator, accessed June 9, 2021, <https://www.in2013dollars.com/us/inflation/1870?amount=200>.

<sup>12</sup> "Prämien Für Deutsche Soldaten," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 22, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>13</sup> "THE EUROPEAN WAR: How the Great Struggle Is Regarded in This City. The German Confident of Prussia's Success---Committee Meeting. Despatch from 'Billy' Rex, King of Prussia. AMONG THE GERMANS IN THE COUNTRY," *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*, July 19, 1870.

the readers that accurate news reporting on such things—as it had been done during the Civil War—was an American anomaly compared to how this kind of reporting was done in Europe. European armies and military commands were strongly opposed to having reporters in the field before a battle was fought. “As long as the rebels could get the latest edition of the *New York Times* for a few hands full of tobacco from one of our vedettes, they did not need any spies,” wrote Raster.<sup>14</sup> He noted further that the European agents of the Associated Press were stationed in France and sympathized with the French, which, to his eyes, made their reporting less reliable and ostensibly biased. The German-Americans were in a peculiar spot here, their national loyalties tied on the one hand to their homeland, while the officials of their new and current country of residence sympathized with their former country’s enemies. This was a difficult spot to navigate, and it put into the spotlight the difficulties inherent in the loyalties of a hyphenated identity such as German-American.

The articles published in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* around the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war featured many details and insights into a newly blossoming sense of nationalist pride within the German-American element. The war served to galvanize a certain nationalist fervor, at least for the *Staats-Zeitung* editors, which they attempted to pass on to their readership. The editors laid out a context for the conflict that placed it as the finale of a series of triumphs for the “Germanic or Teutonic family of peoples”—in which the author (possibly again Raster) portrayed the wars of the English against the

---

<sup>14</sup> “Mosel Und Rhein,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

Spanish and the French as episodes in a long series of conflicts of Romance language speaking peoples against those people speaking Germanic tongues. Even the attempt by Napoleon III to establish a French imperial project in Mexico was put into this series. The conflict between France and Prussia was portrayed as an almost inevitable culmination of an age-long struggle between peoples, in which specific ethnic nationalities clashed with one another. Here “nation” was employed more in the sense of describing people of the same ethnic origin rather than citizens of a nation-state. Raster concluded that to secure the rightful supremacy of the Germanic peoples over others in Europe and the world, Germany needed to be unified. And more than just guaranteeing rightful Germanic supremacy, “A united Germany is just as much the guarantee for peace in Europe as the France of Napoleon is a constant threat to it.”<sup>15</sup> This invocation of a nationalistic unity of Germanic peoples was, of course, a fantasy.

Raster himself famously hated the English with a hot passion all his life. England and the various incarnations of the German Confederacy had their own spats over pieces of land in Europe over the course of the nineteenth century—such as the Schleswig Wars. But still, invoking a Germanic spirit that transcended contemporary nation-states served to integrate nationalistic, patriotic fervors into a larger picture, a bigger project, of which German-America was a part as well, as Raster put it: “The feeling of this global importance has replaced the initially superficial understanding of this fight, the insightful among the American papers as well as all of the German-American ones

---

<sup>15</sup> “Die Bedeutung Des Kampfes,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

openly sides with Prussia as the banner-bearer of civilization's highest interest."<sup>16</sup> Raster further elaborated on a split in the American press, which he portrayed as occurring along party lines. Republican papers were siding with Prussia and Germany, while papers loyal to the Democratic Party—which the editor reminded his readership suffered a decisive defeat in the Civil War thanks to German-American involvement—fielded wild arguments as to why they had to side with Napoleon III.

The German-American element that coalesced around the *Staats-Zeitung* in general viewed England quite unfavorably throughout, so it is a noteworthy change in evaluation when the English were at this point positioned within the praiseworthy family of Germanic peoples, and not just presented as the enemy. This antipathy was, at least for Hermann Raster, born out of the hyphenated identity on the one hand, and out of deep-seated prejudice on the other. "I hate everything that is England, and I would feel more comfortable at the North Pole than among that damn peddler people."<sup>17</sup> On another occasion, Raster wrote: "In regards to me, I hate England to my death, and all Englishmen with it, at least the living ones. It is the most accursed, perfidious, brutal nation of cutthroats."<sup>18</sup> In Raster's case, his dislike of everything English was based less on his personal understanding of English national character, and more to some degree on his self-identification as American. As such he perceived the English as a sort of

---

<sup>16</sup> "Die Bedeutung Des Kampfes."

<sup>17</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," April 6, 1862, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>18</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," August 19, 1864, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

traditional, hereditary enemy to the American nation—an enmity borne out of the American Revolution. He segued into talking about German issues in the same letter quoted above by stating, “And now the American in me will shut up and let the Dessauer talk.”<sup>19</sup> Raster was not alone in this view on England. Years before his arrival at the *Staats-Zeitung*, during the Civil War, the Chicago paper published a lengthy review of a biography of Robert E. Lee. The editor—possibly Rapp—wrote in the lead that, “this biography is especially noticeable, because it was written by the enemy.”<sup>20</sup> Describing England as the enemy here, too, was based on the idea that in the 1860s still, decades after the end of the War of 1812, England was to be regarded as a hostile nation, and that as good, new Americans, the German immigrants had to follow suit and join the Anglo-Americans in their perceived antagonism towards the former colonial motherland.

But at the outset of the Franco-Prussian war, the German-American element had found a much more worthy and much more tangible enemy in France than the Germans ever had understood England to be. The forty-eighters saw in Louis Napoleon Bonaparte everything that was wrong with France, both as a nation-state and a people. The French people failed—or worse, refused—to rise up against him, which meant the English people made for more reliable allies against Bonaparte. The war had a uniting effect, as conflicts with a clearly defined outside enemy often do, on the German-Americans, and

---

<sup>19</sup> Raster, “Raster Letter to Elze, New York,” August 19, 1864.”

<sup>20</sup> “Biographie Des Rebellen Generalissimus Robert E. Lee,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, September 18, 1862, Newberry Library (my translation).

the *Staats-Zeitung* was quick to demonstrate the unity of their larger immigrant sphere in the U.S. On July 17, 1870, a large group of German Americans convened in New York to hold council on and proclaim support for Prussia in the war. Among the speakers were former Wisconsin governor Eduard Salomon, Missouri Senator and Civil War general Carl Schurz, and fellow Civil War hero Franz Sigel. The long speeches of each were reprinted.

As with the publication of speeches given in other American locations than Chicago during the Civil War, the publicized speeches in this instance, too, served several functions. First and foremost, they demonstrated to the readership how strongly the German-American element across the nations was closing ranks behind Prussia and Germany in the war. But they also served to demonstrate a broader unity of the German speaking immigrant community at large. The publicized speeches further delivered meditations on the nature of patriotic, nationalist loyalties, and how to best understand these. The German-Americans fought in the Civil War as Americans, and now, five years after that war's end, they gathered as Germans to cheer on their old homeland. Solomon said: "Faithfully devoted to the NEW we still have kept our love for the OLD fatherland. AMERICA IS TO US THE BRIDE. EUROPE IS THE MOTHER, and our heartbeat should belong to this mother during this hour of her besetment!"<sup>21</sup> That the Missouri Senator specified Europe in this instance, not Germany, mirroring the idea from an

---

<sup>21</sup> "Ed. Salomon, Carl Schurz," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).



earlier article that posited a unified Germany as a guarantor for peace on the entire continent. In a later passage Solomon also spoke to German unity:

It was Germany, not Prussia, who France threw down the gauntlet at, in the hopes that Germany would fall back into its state of disunion and weakness. Thus the entirety of Germany has to pick it up now. France does not want Germany united, and in its hubris it has sought to castigate Germany for daring a willingness for unity.<sup>22</sup>

The differentiation between Prussia, Germany and Europe were important here. Prussia was at the time the strongest kingdom in the Northern-German Confederacy, but it was not equal in a *pars-pro-toto* way with Germany as a whole. Solomon made it appear as if Napoleon III had declared war on a united Germany, which at this point did not quite exist yet, but whose existence was required, if France was to be beaten in this war. The war promised to serve as the long wished for catalyst to bring about German unity only mere weeks after its beginning.

Carl Schurz made more historical connections that placed the current war in a line with previous, historical hostile encounters between France and Germany. The Napoleonic Wars especially proved a recurring point of reference. Not only had they left long lasting consequences on the nation-state landscape of Europe, they had also caused a rise of a German nationalist sentiment in the first place, and provided a long lasting boogeyman to the non-French speaking parts of Europe. France in the meantime had experienced a line of rulers who consciously called back to the image of Napoleon as the French strongman who put the country back on the map. As Schurz put it: “The French will not forget that they are the grandsons of those who fought at Jena. The Germans on

---

<sup>22</sup> “Ed. Salomon, Carl Schurz.”

the other hand will not forget that they are the very same who were victorious at Sadowa.”<sup>23</sup> Schurz conjured up several historically significant battles here, firstly the battle of Jena and Auerstädt in 1806 in which the French under Napoleon beat the Prussian armies decisively, and secondly the Battle of Sadowa, or Königgrätz, the decisive battle of the Austro-Prussian war, which was fought just four years before the Franco Prussian war broke out. Lining up and inviting comparisons between battles in this way was meaningful to contemporary German-Americans, most of whom had very likely grown up with tales about the Battle of Jena and were familiar with the Battle of Sadowa.

The third speaker, Hermann Eduard von Holst, a German historian, then went even deeper into not just national history but national legend, by bringing up the German folk tale of the mythical Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa, another story that most of the German-born audience would have known well. According to the legend, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I. (nicknamed Barbarossa or “Redbeard”) did not die in the Third Crusade, but lived on, forever asleep beneath the mountain Kyffhäuser in Thuringia, waiting to awake one day to unite the German people again. Ravens circling the mountain allude to his continued presence. The legend was re-popularized by the Brothers Grimm in the nineteenth century, and subsequently taken up by the German nationalist movement. That Sigel would invoke the Barbarossa legend here was not surprising, since both speaker and audience would ostensibly be familiar with the tale of

---

<sup>23</sup> “Ed. Salomon, Carl Schurz.”

the sleeping emperor and with the implications it had for a unified Germany. Von Holst was not a forty-eighter, as he was born only in 1841, but he nonetheless invoked the spirit of 1848 in connection with the Kyffhäuser legend. “The venerable redbear opened his eyes wider than ever before in 1848 and never again found the deepest of sleeps in which even dreams slumber.”<sup>24</sup> He thus told the audience that the forty-eighter revolution was just a first step towards a unified Germany, that the mythical German spirit had awakened and would now break through in this war against the hated third Napoleon.

Behind the publication of these rousing speeches, the same issue of the *Staats-Zeitung* also ran a large appeal to both German women and girls, as well as to German organizations and associations, to gather in meetings to discuss how to best support the homeland from afar. These calls to action served as striking evidence of how deeply the German-American community was invested in the war, and how completely these events an ocean away enraptured the German-born population. The German women were called to “dry tears, console widows and raise children, and pour oil on burning wounds. . . . Chicago’s Germandom must stand first in its practical expression of sympathy for the fatherland.”<sup>25</sup> Here too, the war functioned as a catalyst that brought German-America and Germany proper closer together, an act that required sympathy, loyalty and nationalist, patriotic pride. But this was not portrayed as the German-

---

<sup>24</sup> “Ed. Salomon, Carl Schurz.”

<sup>25</sup> “An Die Deutschen Frauen Und Jungfrauen Chicagos,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

Americans having to shed one national allegiance for another. Rather, the editor stressed in the same appeal that German-American women just a few years prior helped ease the pains of the American Civil War, and that now it would just be proper for them to also extend the same services to the war in the fatherland. This demonstrated the duality of the German-American patriotic experience and expression, and the truly trans-national nature of the German-American community.

Another appeal made to German associations, businesses and organizations called for more tangible and material support. During a mass gathering a few days prior to the appeal's publication, a financial committee formed to coordinate the collection of donations to support German soldiers and their families. This too revealed how closely connected the German-American element was to Germany proper. There existed an eagerness by the community to get involved, show support, and contribute to the war effort--an effort that was seen as a project to create a united German homeland. But this particular appeal went further and demonstrated several things. Firstly, the request was addressed not only to German-American associations (*Vereine*) like the Turner and singing societies, but also to all businesses and factories that employed more than twenty-five German workers. By doing this, the appeal went to show how the community leaders aimed to include any and all organizations that were owned by, engaged with or employed Germans, for business or leisure, under the umbrella of German-America. The appeal aimed to widen the community itself and by that broadened the base of possible donors. And beyond this local organizing effort, the appeal showed the trans-national aspirations of the community leaders, to make the

Chicago German-American community a noteworthy source of charitable giving towards the German national project.

The pleas for charitable support were successful, too. At the end of the war in early 1871 the secretary of the German Patriotic Aid Society Fritz Anneke, forty-eight and spouse of German-American newspaperwoman Mathilde Franziska Anneke, wrote an open letter to the editorship of the *Staats-Zeitung*, thanking the newspaper and its readership profusely in the name of the German people and the Queen of Prussia for the donations the Chicago Germans made to wounded soldiers and war widows. The German diasporic community of North America had, according to the charitable associations quoted in the open letter, sent 660,000 Prussian Thalers worth of aid to Germany by late 1870, roughly \$21.6 million in today's currency.<sup>26</sup>

Lastly, a small article printed at the beginning of the war in July 1870 spoke to the truly transnational nature of the immigrant community and some of the odder dynamics it could bear out. The contributor reported on the settlement of Chicagoans—most of German descent—in a small village in Switzerland, and the troubles this handful of double-hyphenated German-American-Swiss had in procuring and eventually producing an American flag for their 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. This event and the reporting on it are emblematic of just how widespread the Chicago German-American community had become, but it also shows the primacy that American patriotism and its rituals had

---

<sup>26</sup> “Die Beiträge Für Die Verwundeten Und Die Waisen Im Kriege,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 28, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation). Source for the currency conversion: <https://www.bundesbank.de/resource/blob/615162/d55a20f8a4ecedd6d1b53e01b89f11c4/mL/kaufkraft-aequivalente-historischer-betraege-in-deutschen-waehrungen-data.pdf>, accessed 3/16/21.

taken in the lives of these people who, twice transplanted, held onto the American national signifiers, hyphenated or not.<sup>27</sup>

In the wake of the Civil War, the German-American element had successfully integrated into American society at large, but neither Americans nor German-Americans forgot about the hyphen. The persistence of this dual national identity indicated to both native-born and foreign-born that any German-Americans could never be truly American. The position of hyphenated Americans was constantly challenged by mainstream Anglo-American society, sometimes more, sometimes less, and this led to the editorship of the *Staats-Zeitung* in particular keeping a watchful eye on the American press for anglophone reactions and evaluations of the situation in Europe. The paper quoted articles from the *Chicago Republican* and the *Chicago Tribune* reacting to the war. The *Republican* raised the question of which European country the belligerent Americans should side with, concluding that it had to be the Germans, due to “being able to trace back their lineage to the Saxons is the biggest pride of English nobility, while us Americans can trace our lineage through English bloodlines back to this ancient, great Germanic race ourselves.”<sup>28</sup> The line of argument then also dismissed the Norman Invasion as one with few lasting impacts on both English and American national spirits, while ignoring that the Normans themselves were of Germanic origin—a

---

<sup>27</sup> “Chicagoer in Der Schweiz,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>28</sup> “Die Amerikanische Presse Über Den Krieg,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 26, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

claim that other Anglo-Saxonists often made to prove how the English were the least “mixed” of the Germanic peoples of Europe.<sup>29</sup>

The *Tribune* article also concluded that Americans should support the German cause in this war, since it was the French who started the conflict, and that the worst outcome for them would be the defeat of Napoleon III. The *Tribune* then also reminded readers of the achievements that German military leaders Steuben and DeKalb contributed to the American War of Independence. Both publications appealed to a sense of racialized nationalism to rationalize support for the Germans. Given the positions that Germanic people and “Latin” peoples occupied at various points throughout American history, the argument could have just as well been made for the exact opposite position. The Norman Invasion could be evaluated differently, as bringing a higher form of culture to England, while the Hessian mercenaries in the American War for Independence, fighting for the British Crown, could have been played up, as well as the French contributions against British colonial rule.

A subsequent article from the *Tribune* addressed this exact charge, that apparently came out of the Irish-American camp. This article then elaborated that the Hessian troops in the Revolutionary War were pressed into service by their noble lords, and that they all came from just one small duchy, while many more Irish fought voluntarily and for money in the war on the British side. Anglo-Saxonism—the belief that Anglo-Saxons as Germanic people were superior to other nations—won the hour in

---

<sup>29</sup> Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Harvard University Press, 1981), 11.

this particular instance, leading to a dismissal of anything that was not Germanic in origin. The same article quoted from the *Tribune* also dismissed the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its exit from the German Confederacy after the Austro-Prussian war as “Slavic” in opposition to the Germanic Prussians.<sup>30</sup> Such conflation of nation-state level nationality and ethnic nationality were quite common at the time, and many evaluations like the one quoted attributed successes and failures in battle and nation-state-building to ethnic and racial characteristics wherever the respective authors saw fit. Overall, the *Tribune* championed the cause of German unity against French oppression. As the editor laid out the reasons for the war, it was when “...Prussia expelled Slavonic Austria from the dictatorship of the German Bund on the field of Sadowa, and reorganized three-fourths of the Fatherland into the North German Confederation, without paying territorial tribute to France,” what drove France to declare war, and to deny German unity.<sup>31</sup>

Portraying the war in these essentialist, ethnic and proto racist manners was not unique to American or German-American newspapers at the time, neither was referring back to the Napoleonic Wars for comparisons and justifications. The *Provincial Correspondenz* (“Provincial Correspondence”) out of Berlin was one of several Prussian state publications, and among the Prussian-published newspapers with the largest circulation. In many ways this newspaper represented the official positions of the

---

<sup>30</sup> “Die Hessen Und Die Irländer,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 26, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>31</sup> “True Cause of the French War.,” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*, July 25, 1870.



Prussian state, and acted as a semi-official Prussian news agency, with an extremely heavy bias towards the positions of chancellor Otto von Bismarck. In the June 20, 1870 issue, published only a few days after the war broke out, the *Provincial Correspondenz* published the transcript of an address of the parliament of the North German Confederation, given in response to the speech from the throne King Wilhelm of Prussia gave after declaring war with France. In the address, parliament referenced the German Campaign of 1813, which in German is known as the “Befreiungskriege”—the “Wars of Liberation.” The address stated that, “just as in those glorious days of the Wars of Liberation, another Napoleon is forcing us into another holy fight for our rights and our freedom.” Further, parliament proclaimed that now the old, wizened Prussian king would “put an end to what he began as a boy”—referring to King Wilhelm accompanying his father Friedrich Wilhelm IV. during the Campaign of 1813 against Napoleon I.<sup>32</sup> That the German press at large made connections of this kind between the Napoleonic Wars and the now-erupting conflict was not surprising, after all the then-current French emperor Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte styled himself consciously after his infamous uncle, so that it was quite easy to paint him as “another Napoleon” the way the Northern German parliament did.

The war was not, however, evaluated in homogenous ways by all organizations or ethnicities, as the different positions towards the conflict held by many Irish and other Catholic groups demonstrated. Some Irish groups, especially those in New York,

---

<sup>32</sup> “Adresse des Reichstages des Norddeutschen Bundes auf die Thronrede Sr. Majestät des Königs,” *Provincial-Correspondenz*, June 20, 1870.

enthusiastically supported France due to a perceived fraternity between fellow Catholic nations. But this bond through faith was by no means universal, although Prussia was indeed a staunchly Protestant part of Germany and France still steadfastly Roman Catholic. The *Staats-Zeitung* found an article in the newspaper *Western Catholic* that laid the fault of the war squarely with France. The same article then proceeded to detail how German Catholics from various predominantly Catholic German states and kingdoms still retained their German national fervor, and that a strong German Catholic element would in fact be beneficial for the church itself. The anti-clerical sentiment of the forty-eighters writers of the *Staats-Zeitung* came to the fore here. They praised the German conference of bishops in their dismissal of the then-recent declaration of the dogma Papal infallibility.<sup>33</sup> The *Chicago Tribune* joined the *Staats-Zeitung* in this analysis, stating that “wherever you can strike a man a Democrat, a rebel, a Catholic and a Fenian, all in one, he is pretty sure to go with the French in this contest.”<sup>34</sup> The *Tribune* made several arguments that the Irish sided with the French for various reasons, since the French were an enemy of England, but also that Napoleon had sided with the Confederacy in the Civil War. And since the Irish-American element was predominantly a Democratic Party voting bloc that, “the Democratic party of this country hate [sic] the Germans, because the latter, as a class, are Republicans.”<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> “Die Katholiken Und Der Krieg,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 27, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>34</sup> “Siding with the French” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*, July 22, 1870.

<sup>35</sup> “The Irish and the War in Europe” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*, July 28, 1870.

The prevalent attitude of the forty-eighters towards organized, state-sponsored religious institutions was in general one of skepticism at best and open derision at worst. So, the *Staats-Zeitung* editors being unable to resist reporting less than favorably on the religious connotations employed by both belligerents when both France and Prussia held official days of repentance and prayer for—respective—blessings of God for good fortunes in the battles to come. “If and up to here this praying now gives the soldiers greater confidence and greater courage, so be it,” claimed the editors in a late July article, “But what a great satire is this on the whole ‘religion of love’! . . . What light does this show Christianity in, the supposed teachings of loving one’s enemy?”<sup>36</sup> The main contention of the article was the dichotomy of Christian teachings—both on Catholic and Protestant sides—and how those teachings were then put into practice. Or rather, how the practice of those ostensibly acting in God’s will and asking for God’s favor ran directly counter to Christian teachings of loving one’s enemy and forgiveness. The editor took special umbrage at the fact that both France and Germany held officially state-mandated days of prayer for their troops, since both sides ostensibly prayed to the same god. He then elaborated on this thought by stating that Christian nations, counter to the core tenet of forgiveness, kept on warring among each other to no smaller degree than nations of other faiths or even Roman heathens.

This critique of religious double standards, dichotomies and hypocrisies was a core issue among forty-eighters. The intermixing of church and state affairs as was

---

<sup>36</sup> “Vor Der Schlacht,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 29, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

custom in Germany at the time offended them in particular. After all, the lack of boundary between church and state had been the main cause for their anti-clericalism during the revolutions to begin with. The German clergy was still quite powerful and influential at the time of the forty-eighters' political awakening, as was the idea of the divine right of kings. King Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia rejected the idea of becoming elected Emperor of Germany based on his idea that the title of emperor should be based on divine election rather than popular vote, which only furthered the anti-clerical sentiments among the revolutionists.

Due to the sheer size of the *Staats-Zeitung's* circulation, the paper inhabited a position as an official mouthpiece of German-American Chicago and beyond. As such, the paper often published reports and articles that served as official announcements of importance. The most important of such reports regarded trans-national affairs such as shipping connections between German Europe and the United States, bureaucratic immigration issues and official business that concerned all German-born living abroad. Many of the men who recently migrated to the U.S. in 1870, and who had not yet been naturalized as American citizens, were still required by law to serve in the military of the Northern-German Confederation. With the outbreak of the war, many of these men saw military service as their patriotic duty towards the fatherland. However, how any German-born man should go about this was far from clear, as reporting for military duty required plenty of paperwork and logistical planning, a trip from Chicago to New York, and from there a voyage back to Europe. A sizable number of these men inquired with the *Staats-Zeitung* on how to best follow the call to arms and how to facilitate their

passage back home, which the paper responded to with an article that addressed these issues, including the address of the consulate, as well as who to contact in New York and exactly what documents to bring. The newspaper provided a vital trans-national link that enabled German immigrants to connect back with their home country. The editors also provided an avenue for fulfilling patriotic duties towards the homeland—if the German-born readers felt so inclined. The editors also mentioned that if enough men came together, the railway company might be able to provide cheaper tickets from Chicago to New York, suggesting a further strengthening of the communal bonds between those seeking to serve.<sup>37</sup>

As the war proceeded, the postal connection between America and Germany was partially interrupted. The northern German shipping companies that connected the United States with the German ports at Bremerhaven and Hamburg suspended the service of their steamships for the duration of the hostilities. The postmaster of Chicago wrote a proclamation printed in the *Staats-Zeitung* regarding the United States Post Office Department detailing how letters would still reach Germany by passing through England instead.<sup>38</sup> By printing this proclamation, the paper again served as a mouthpiece of its community. Through publishing this announcement, the newspaper and the postal service sought to make sure that letters sent through the postal service would carry the necessary postage to actually reach their intended destination without

---

<sup>37</sup> “Für Militärflichtige,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 2, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>38</sup> “Der Postverkehr Mit Deutschland,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 26, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

incident. Ensuring the continued connection between Germany and German-America guaranteed an uninterrupted existence of the German transnational ethnoscape, and the *Staats-Zeitung* was a prime facilitator here. Even though the fatherland was at war, information still needed to continue flowing.

German-Americans across the country, from New York to San Francisco, held large mass gatherings as early as July 19, the day the war was officially declared. Many immigrants began organizing relief efforts to send money to German soldiers and their families. The war overseas served as a catalyst that brought both German-Americans in the United States across the country closer together, while also promoting a closer unity between German America as a whole and the German homeland. The German-American relief effort collected monies and posted rewards for soldiers akin to the one mentioned above for whoever captured the first French flag on the battlefield, whoever captured the most French flags and the like. The New York Executive Committee of the German Patriotic Help Delegation, which consisted among others of Franz Sigel and Eduard Salomon, declared:

The Germans of America have not forgotten that their fathers, too, sleep on the plains of Leipzig. Thus they offer the fruits of their labor with open hands, they offer to bind the wounds of their brothers, whose blood is saving Germany's honor, and to make the tears of their sisters flow more slowly, whose bread-winners are buying Germany's unity and freedom with their lives.<sup>39</sup>

This passage, like other articles in the *Staats-Zeitung* before it, referred back to the Napoleonic Wars in Germany and the climactic Battle of Leipzig, the so-called 'Battle of

---

<sup>39</sup> "Vermischtes [Hilfsvereine in Mehreren US Staaten Fuer Deutschland]," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 28, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

Nations,' which ended in Napoleon's defeat at the hands of Germans, Austrians, Russians and Swedes, a battle which can be assumed all German-Americans were familiar with to some degree. Also this declaration attempted not to rally support for just the Kingdom of Prussia in the war, but for the entirety of Germany.

The declaration also appealed to all Germans in America, regardless from where in Germany they originally immigrated. They should come together in German associations and support the fatherland collectively—invoking the hyphenated identity specifically—by proclaiming that German-Americans should make the United States' motto *E Pluribus Unum* their own. The war furthered the cohesion of the German-American transnational cultural sphere that existed at that particular moment in the 1870s. The official reaction to the conflict was enthusiastic and provoked an increasing erasure of distances between individual German-American communities on the one hand, but also of German-Americans and their friends and relatives in Germany on the other. And this held true not just for German-Americans in America, but also for those who had since physically moved on, but still carried with them the distinct German-American self-identification.

This identity, and especially the harkening back to the Napoleonic Wars and the family members embroiled in them, was a recurring element throughout German-American publications and speeches given at the outset of the war. A forty-eighter editor of the *Philadelphia Democrat* spoke to a gathering of German-Americans in Philadelphia, saying that, "The German people stand up as one! 1815 has returned!" This notion of referring back to the Napoleonic Wars literally and figuratively sounded

throughout German-America.<sup>40</sup> The speakers and writers who made these connections were often—as in the case quoted above—forty-eighters, whose intellectual, academic background made them more prone to find historical connections in the current political affairs. Kellner continued by saying that, “Military despotism has raised its ugly head again, the one that the French people had to bow to and let it cheat them out of and betray the fruits of their great revolutions before.”<sup>41</sup> Here the forty-eighter spirit conjured up the ghosts of the French Revolution and how Napoleon I turned post-revolutionary France into a military empire. This focus on France as a people wronged by their despotic leaders instead of France as a nation of bumbling, foppish traitors, was very much a forty-eighter line of thought. The leaders of France were to blame, especially those calling themselves Napoleons, since they alone were to blame for bringing this war upon their nation. The French populace was innocent in this matter. The German-American element’s public opinion on the war was across the country a relatively positive, even enthusiastic one, as those many reports on money collected, on rousing speeches by thought leaders at mass gatherings and the like indicate.

Anglo-American public opinion meanwhile was generally favorable to the German cause in the war. This particular attitude however was not universal. The *Staats-Zeitung* pointed out that the same voices who championed the French were the very same who during the Civil War had favored the South.

---

<sup>40</sup> Gottlieb Kellner, “Eine Rede G. Kellner’s,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 2, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>41</sup> Gottlieb Kellner, “Eine Rede G. Kellner’s.”



The simple fact that most infamous, most honor- and shameless rebel rag of the north, that the same *Chicago Times* that called John Wilkes Booth a martyr and Abraham Lincoln a tyrant who was rightfully murdered, steps up in favor of the slaughterer [Napoleon III], should put the sympathies France enjoys in the United States in the right light. *Birds of a feather flock together*.<sup>42</sup>

Here the *Staats-Zeitung* made a connection between the Southern insurgency and the French emperor, pointing out that Napoleon III had tried and failed to turn Mexico into a French colony and supported the Confederacy during the Civil War, putting France firmly on the wrong side of American history for those loyal to the Union. This perspective brought the transnational nature of the German-American element to the fore. Here the forty-eighter editors connected contemporary American history with European history and recent developments, showing the entanglements of hostile European powers with enemies of their chosen homeland, while arguing for a sympathetic connection between the chosen country of residence in the U.S. and the old homeland at war in Europe. The networks of allegiance, sympathy and loyalty were far from simple, and far from homogenous, but they did transcend nation-state boundaries on many levels, just like the people that made up those networks.

### **A United Germany**

At the time of the Franco-Prussian war Lorenz Brentano lived in Switzerland, where he worked in official capacity for the United States government in Zurich. The erstwhile owner and publisher of the *Staats-Zeitung*, kept in contact with both his friends and family in Chicago but also with various contacts in Germany, including the

---

<sup>42</sup> "Amerikanische Sympathien," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 1, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

long-time mayor of the city of Karlsruhe in Baden, Jakob Malsch. An exchange of letters between the two men chronicled Brentano's self-identification, as well as his feelings towards the war. Like the German-Americans of Chicago, he also sent monetary aid along with his letters to support the German war effort. He bemoaned the loss of his German citizenship but declared also that he felt along with his former countrymen. "My innate love for the fatherland lives on with all its old strength in my heart, I feel all the pain and suffering but I also feel your joy over the glorious feats of arms . . . just as if I still was one of yours."<sup>43</sup>

Brentano was forced to forsake his German citizenship rights after the revolution. He regarded himself no longer bound to Germany. His chosen allegiance was neither with Germany or the Duchy of Baden, but rather with the United States. However, he did not quite feel American either, but somewhere in between. "May there be a reckoning that secures a lasting peace, that secures Germany's greatness and unity 'as far as the German tongue sounds.'" Brentano wrote. "May a peace be made of the kind that the practical Americans would make it."<sup>44</sup> He did not write of the Americans as if he was one of them, but simply as one who knew them well. He also did not refer to himself as a German. He had firmly embraced what he acquired and cultivated through exile and diaspora: a hyphenated identity, a German-American, but one who was still deeply emotionally connected to the original fatherland.

---

<sup>43</sup> Lorenz Brentano, "Brentano Letter to Malsch, Zurich," August 22, 1870, Brentano Family Papers, Chicago History Museum (my translation).

<sup>44</sup> "Brentano Letter to Malsch, Zurich."

Jakob Malsch was an old brother-in-arms of Brentano from the days of the Baden revolution in the 1840s. In his reply to Brentano's letter, Malsch wrote of the war as "the fulfillment of the dream of our youth, the struggle of our age of manhood, to see Germany as a large, unified and free German empire; a thought that animated you as well for a long time, old friend."<sup>45</sup> This sentiment ran across the board with many of the old forty-eighters around the time of the Franco-Prussian war and the founding of the German Empire.

At first glance this appears paradoxical. The war did unite the German statelets under one, single banner, and promised one, strong, independent German nation-state. But unlike the strong, independent, unified nation state for which the revolutionists fought for in 1848, the one that emerged out of the Northern German Confederacy was not a federal, democratic republic. What emerged instead, was a monarchical empire, overseen by the King of Prussia, who was to don the mantle of Kaiser of all Germans. However, not even the revolutionary parliament of 1848 had not tried to do away with the idea of an emperor themselves. They had after all offered the emperor's crown to then King of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, with the intention of turning Germany into a constitutional monarchy—which was the shape the German Empire was taking now. Therefore, this line of political ideology had a stronger continuity than a superficial first glance might indicate. Many of the erstwhile revolutionaries were firstly committed to turning the disparate German nation-states into a single political entity. While the

---

<sup>45</sup> Jakob Malsch, "Brentano Letter from Malsch, Karlsruhe," August 26, 1870, Brentano Family Papers, Chicago History Museum (my translation).

commitment to this resulting nation-state being one that was truly democratically governed was strong, but only a secondary concern.

The way forty-eighters understood and wrote about the conflict showed how they conceived of both Germany as a political entity and of Germans as a people. Their focus lay on the conflict between the people of France and Germany and their respective traditions more so than on the conflict between two nation-state entities—at least that was how many of the opinion pieces published in the *Staats-Zeitung* portrayed this position. The editor stressed that,

This is NOT a fight between and ‘old despot’ and a republic that is taking place in Europe, but a ringing between a NATIONALITY which steps up for mannered soberness, upright work, foundational knowledge, a pure sense for rights and an upright love of peace on the one side, and a half-barbaric, pugnacious, morally rotted and spoiled, shallow, vain, the rights of others trampling NATIONALITY on the other.<sup>46</sup>

Understanding the war as such, as a conflict between peoples, not differing forms of government, that the war was about national character, as in the character of a people, not the character of a nation-state, more so than about differences between rulers was the position for which the *Staats-Zeitung* editor argued. France still had a veneer of republican spirit, which was rising after German troops had captured Louis Napoleon on September 2, 1870 during the Battle of Sedan. With the French emperor in captivity and shipped off into exile at Wilhelmshöhe, with his main troop contingents bound in the siege of Metz and Sedan, the Second French Empire collapsed. In its place, the Third

---

<sup>46</sup> “Die Hunde Und Der Mond,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, September 24, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

French Republic arose.<sup>47</sup> The forty-eighter position on this development was not entirely coherent, since they could have just as well painted King Wilhelm of Prussia as a despotic monarch. But patriotism won out over political principles, and so the men and women who had in their youth fought for a democratically unified Germany now cheered for the prospect of a—constitutional—monarchy, beating out a democratically ruled republic instead.

The call for a united Germany came from all parts of the German ethnosphere, abroad as well as at home. The *Staats-Zeitung* made a concerted effort to ensure that its readership was aware of these calls for a unified homeland coming from all ends of both the United States and the German states respectively. The editors republished several resolutions out of a handful of German cities, especially Mannheim, Augsburg and Berlin. The German National Party's gathering in Mannheim from September 4 put forth three resolutions, which did mirror the aspirations of the old forty-eighter revolutionaries: the primary call was for a union between northern and southern Germany into one federally organized political entity with popular representation and the King of Prussia as head of state. Further, the resolution asked for the re-drawing of national borders to include Alsace and Lorraine as spoils of war—or rather that the inclusion of those parts should be put forward as a condition for peace with France. And lastly it included a call to all Germans to not allow foreign interference to spoil the victory. The magistrate of Augsburg addressed the King of Bavaria, asking for a firm

---

<sup>47</sup> David Wetzel, *A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 25.

alliance of all German states so that “it will never again be in question whether Germany’s cause is the cause of all Germans.”<sup>48</sup> Meanwhile the citizens’ council out of the Bavarian capital of Munich asked the King of Bavaria to join other German rulers and the German people in unifying the country, and rejecting any foreign influence on the peace negotiations. In Berlin during a public mass of thanksgiving for the capture of Napoleon, a resolution was given that proclaimed that “Kaiser and people are resolute to make good for what was kept from us in 1815: a free, unified realm and protected borders.”<sup>49</sup>

All these calls and resolutions cited by the *Staats-Zeitung* mirrored in some way the forty-eighter aspirations for their country, which they had fought for 22 years before the Franco-Prussian war. Lining them up in the way that the newspaper did here, and thereby covering almost all reaches of Germany (especially Bavaria, Prussia and Baden), served to demonstrate how calls for unification, a representative parliament and secure borders came from all parts of the country. This reinforced a call not just for national unity, but also for unity between Germans in Germany and those living abroad – and also unity among the various diasporic German groups.

Meanwhile, on the diasporic home front in the United States, the German-Americans’ national loyalty was put to the test when the United States’ arms sales to the French were revealed. Agents of Napoleon III had bought large contingencies of

---

<sup>48</sup> “Deutschland Nach Dem 2ten September,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, September 26, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>49</sup> Unknown, „Deutschland Nach Dem 2ten Septemer.“

weapons—especially rifles from the Civil War—and shipped them to France, with knowledge and tacit blessing of President Ulysses S. Grant.<sup>50</sup> The Chicago editors compared the American behavior in this regard to the behavior of the British in the American Civil War and their pledges to neutrality. The editors stated that the U.S. in this case acted even more despicably than the British did during the 1860s, since at least the latter did not—directly or indirectly—sell arms to the rebels. The editor cited a report by the *New York Staatszeitung* that listed the total number of ships and a rough estimate of the worth of the weapons sold to France through New York. Further remarks detailed how German ambassadors sought and received approval from the American government that the latter would remain in a position of neutrality in the war. The *Staats-Zeitung* clearly laid the blame for the lack of neutral behavior on the United States' part on the doorstep of the "Irish Democrats."<sup>51</sup> The issue of American neutrality remained in the headlines for the remainder of the war and increased in harshness as the conflict in Europe eventually wound down.

The relationship of the *Staats-Zeitung* with the new homeland was occasionally strained, which during the Franco-Prussian war became more clearly noticeable than at other times. But that relationship never quite deteriorated to a point where the paper openly derided the country as such or broke with the overarching American ideals. And as Germany was consolidating into a political entity that brought Bavarians, Swabs,

---

<sup>50</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 280.

<sup>51</sup> "Amerikanische Neutralität," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 21, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

Badensians, Prussians and others back into the political category of “Germans,” the *Staats-Zeitung* mused what characteristics defined Americans. Why American did citizens identify as Americans as opposed to New Yorkers or Illinoisans when it came to the question of national belonging? The cause of this particular article was an upcoming national convention on immigration that was to be held in Indianapolis in late November of 1870. The governor of Indiana had invited representatives of the *Staats-Zeitung* to the convention. However, the article claimed that none of the editors had any time for such a thing. Instead the newspaper published an article in which the editors laid out their ideas on various issues regarding immigration. They bemoaned that the United States legislation left the issue of immigration to individual states instead of managing it on the federal level, leading to grievances with the “commutation money” New York charged every immigrant upon arrival to offset the cost caused by other immigrants.

The editor then elaborated that this fact was one of the most important aspects that led to the development of a unifying national sentiment among Americans of all backgrounds. The article revealed a strongly expressed preference for a nationalized immigration system, in which commutation fees were collected by the federal government instead of individual states. The editors argued that immigrants did not land in New York and adopted the nationality of New Yorker, or that of any individual state. Instead, immigrants became Americans. The newspaper made this argument at this time in German history, where the many smaller states were finally in the process of coming together to form a new whole, which gave a more rooted meaning to a German



rather than a Prussian or Hessian nationality. These issues overlapped. The *Staats-Zeitung* saw Germans as Germans regardless of which part of Germany they called home, and in the same vein saw themselves—in their immigrant identity—as Americans regardless of where they arrived or eventually ended up living within the United States.<sup>52</sup>

The developments in Europe gave the forty-eighter staff of the *Staats-Zeitung* ample cause to reflect on the causes they championed in their youth, which led to their exile and inexorably formed and informed their political identities and morals. The general tenor was that the revolutions had been well intended but ultimately could not possibly have succeeded, at least in hindsight. “After twenty-two years that which the Frankfurt parliament thought able to reach with just the passing of a constitution has come to pass: - Germany [...] is a unified, federal state under Prussian leadership.”<sup>53</sup> Here the forty-eighter editor—in all likelihood Hermann Raster himself—took inventory on how the 1848 revolution compared in scope, aspiration and chances for lasting success with the turn of events as they were unfolding in 1870. He derided the Frankfurt Parliament for its foggy idealism that failed to account for the various political realities of the time. Raster adopted a distanced voice, which, given the writer’s involvement in the revolutions, was understandable insofar as that the piece was addressed to a broader general audience than just the small group of former revolutionists.

---

<sup>52</sup> “Einwanderung,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 23, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>53</sup> “Deutschland,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 28, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

One political reality the article touched upon was that the other European powers in 1848 were not amicable towards a unified Germany. Powers within the German Confederation were not amicable to this idea either, especially Austria. More important was the conclusion that the idea and ideal of national unity was only something aspired to by a relatively small part of the population in 1848.

Even those who rose under the black-red-gold flag for a constitution did not struggle for the kind of REAL unity as it has been achieved now, but for a fantastic foggy picture which for some was a reconstituted, medieval glory of the emperors, for others a German federal republic and for the thirds as a centralized republic after Romanesque examples.<sup>54</sup>

This passage judged the forty-eighters and their ideals harshly. But this judgement was also fitting, as the revolutionaries were indeed political idealists who were blinded by their aspirations and lacked understanding of just how difficult a process the unification of the country into a single nation-state was. The entirety of Germany was not ready to be a whole in 1848. But what, in the view of the editor, had changed in the meantime? The unifying spirit fermented and spread through various political associations, the Turner, the Singing Societies and university student fraternities that disseminated the understanding of what a unified country could be among the population at large, especially among the bourgeoisie. This proliferation then provided the necessary groundwork for a unification resting on the shoulders of the larger part of society, not just on those of a select few revolutionaries.

In terms of its European neighbors, Germany could not count on any assistance from abroad with a unification process. “[Germany] could never rely on the goodwill of

---

<sup>54</sup> “Deutschland.”

its neighbors to foment unification, but only on the INABILITY of them to prevent unification.”<sup>55</sup> This realization led into a discussion of Bismarck’s politics of the 1860s, especially in regard to how the other European powers did not understand those as efforts towards unification and thus failed to intervene. The *Staats-Zeitung* continued lionizing Bismarck’s “blood and iron” stance, concluding that this statement described the blood of German soldiers on the French battlefields and iron the French were forced to throw to the ground after defeat that created a unified Germany.

In the articles’ final paragraph, the forty-eighter editor took into account his own ideals from a twenty-two year distance, and in a wistful manner juxtaposed the ideals of old with the realities of the present. The ideal of national unity that the forty-eighters sought was just that, an ideal, a dream, a fancy, a youthful, romantic folly. The unification that became reality in 1870 in comparison was firmly grounded, a work of compromise, not an ideal—but then the author posited himself as politically matured enough to understand that uncompromising positions were not useful. Without calling it by name, the editor described Bismarck’s ideal of *realpolitik*, the politics that are based on real life issues and only interested in actual results, not driven by principles. As historian Christopher Clark notes, this concept was in turn originally developed by Ludwig Rochau, who himself was a forty-eighter. Bismarck’s approach to politics as grounded in fundamental forces that shape the state was a direct parallel to that of Rochau.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> “Deutschland.”

<sup>56</sup> Christopher Clark, *Time and Power: Visions of History in German Politics, from the Thirty Years’ War to the Third Reich* (Princeton: University Press, 2019), 146.

A final consolation for the old revolutionary spirit with the idea of re-introducing the title of Kaiser closed the long elaboration on political growth. The return of the emperor's crown would however only be a title, the editor noted, not a return to the days of Barbarossa. The article delivered a detailed breakdown of how the forty-eighters' political attitudes had evolved over time and eventually found enough common ground with Bismarck and the Prussians to freely and enthusiastically support this unification of Germany. The *Staats-Zeitung* also laid out how and why the unification process in 1870 was different, and how and why it was both successful and by that characteristic alone, agreeable to the forty-eighters.

As the various German states worked on their unification under Prussian leadership, the forty-eighter newspapermen of Chicago mused about parallels and differences between their attempted revolution from below and the current revolution from above. Apparently, more agreeable parallels emerged as more time passed: a nation-state level unification of all German states not part of the Austrian Empire, a position of president of the Confederacy that was to use the title of Kaiser and an internally federal state organization of the newly founded political entity. Raster then went to compare the emerging German state in terms of political makeup to the United States, and found the latter actually lacking:

All of these things [a number of issues pertaining to inter-state transportation and defense] were withdrawn from the aegis of the federal government in America; SADLY withdrawn! This 'sadly' finds new

expressions everyday in the bitter experiences made in the arbitrary and frayed lawmaking of the individual states.<sup>57</sup>

However, he also continued praising the United States for the constitution, which still served as a model for other countries around the world. The editor closed the article with musings on the title of “Kaiser”—which explained how an old, anti-nobility forty-eighter could agree to a nationally united Germany ruled by one—detailing how in this instance, the “Kaiser” would simply be the political equivalent to the American president. Also, while the 1848 revolution was fueled by anti-monarchical fervor, the revolutionary parliament still attempted to transform the country into one overseen by a “caesarean” president, in the form of the King of Prussia wearing the crown and title of Emperor of all Germans. The editor admitted that at the surface the stance of the forty-eighters seemed paradoxical in their enthusiastic support for German unity. But, he continued, when taking the facts and details of the actual shape of the German Empire to come into account, the enthusiasm lost its contradictory qualities quickly, since, “the development of Germany in the next thirty years alone will show, that the spirit of the lawful unity of a striving cultural nation is more important than the title wielded by its highest executive officer.”<sup>58</sup>

Telegraphic messages crossed the Atlantic within minutes and brought the German-speaking world closer together, but the technology was still new and came with strict limitations that only allowed for very curt messages. Other methods of

---

<sup>57</sup> “Frankreich’s Niedergang, Deutschland’s Aufgang,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 13, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>58</sup> “Frankreich’s Niedergang, Deutschland’s Aufgang.”

communications had to employed for more verbose exchanges between the continents. One of those were travel letters, which many German-Americans wrote back to the U.S. when they journeyed back to the old country. None other than A.C. Hesing himself undertook such a journey in November 1870, with the intention of visiting a besieged Paris and reporting back to Chicago about his experience. In a meandering and verbose letter, Hesing detailed his voyage across wartime Germany into occupied French territories, his encounters with various military figures and even the Kaiser and Crown Prince himself before moving into Paris to observe the situation on the ground. The letters were spread across several issues of the paper. They were introduced with praise for Hesing as a “completely impartial man, whose observations are not, like those of other German correspondents, colored by the opinions won through frequent contact with military officers.”<sup>59</sup> Hesing’s observations, then, illustrated how the villages in Alsace were increasingly depopulated, the people he still found there desperate, and food scarce due to the war. This allowed for a closer impression of what the war was like for the men fighting it. Hesing almost operated like a modern-day embedded journalist, following along with various military units until he arrived at Versailles, where he then tried to get an audience with Otto von Bismarck.

Hesing was assumedly known to the Prussian chancellor at this point. Earlier in the year, he had offered \$200 to the man who would capture the first French flag. In terms of connecting German-America and Germany, Hesing’s journey worked on

---

<sup>59</sup> Anton C. Hesing, “Ein Liebesgaben-Transport Nach Verssailles,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 7, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

several levels. First, his excursion brought a political boss, a public figure and the owner of one of German-America's most important newspapers to the site of one of the most important events of the German-speaking world. Secondly, Hesing's observations were printed for public consumption by the *Staats-Zeitung's* readership, in an effort to bring the old home country and the current developments closer to the new. His letters from Europe also reaffirmed Hesing's standing as a crucial member of the German-American community, that he would in a death-defying way strut into the warzone to deliver first-hand, unbiased reporting on what was happening with France. By inserting himself in that way, and by commenting on his chance meeting with relatives of Chicago Germans, he re-integrated and provided validation for the German-American community in the German homeland.

The *Staats-Zeitung* published Hesing's travel letter in two parts. He opened the second part with an enumeration of the various dukes, barons and princes that he encountered at the German army command headquarters' hotel breakfast tables. For a moment this enumeration appeared to serve a certain sightseeing function, a presentation of the best and brightest that came together here to facilitate an all-German victory. However, Hesing did not surround himself with forty-eighters for nothing—the concluding remarks revealed that this enumeration was less for the admiration of braving nobles showing themselves at the front, than for their condemnation, stating, “Upon this sight I thought to myself, how lucky is the country

that does not have to feed such bloodsuckers.”<sup>60</sup> He then pivoted towards a longer elaboration on his stance towards pompous nobles and the common soldiers’ suffering in fighting the actual war.

The soldiers Hesing met on his way to the front were on the side of the victors—yet they were under-equipped and not well cared for by their superiors. The men lacked adequate clothing for the weather they encountered and begged passing coaches and carriages for food. Wounded and sick soldiers were cast aside with even less consideration. Hesing made his position clear; he put the blame for these circumstances upon the aristocratic leadership of the Prussian military: “Is it not a shame that a country as rich as this lets its brave warriors perish out of pure avarice?”<sup>61</sup> He described the way in which provisions and much needed cold weather clothing were distributed among the soldiers: an order came through from Berlin to hand out 426 warm jackets to the royal bodyguards, which came out of a contingent of clothing that Hesing donated with American funds. Hesing was irate that the “healthy men who slept in warm, dry quarters” received these jackets while “the poor sick and wounded common soldiers who have to be transported in uncovered manure wagons won’t receive anything.”<sup>62</sup>

Among the article’s eponymous “Liebesgaben” (“gifts of love”) that he brought along to donate to the war effort were also medical instruments, he handed to the German army’s medical personnel, commenting: “The soldiers are equipped with

---

<sup>60</sup> Hesing.

<sup>61</sup> Hesing.

<sup>62</sup> Hesing.



MUSKETS, but they let American workers GIFT medical instruments to the DOCTORS while the nobility feasts.”<sup>63</sup> For all the excitement and enthusiasm Hesing and his paper fielded towards the war and unification of the country, he was dismayed by the means this goal was accomplished with by the Prussian army leadership. Also, while such an elaboration on shortcomings in the context of charitable giving could read as if this explanation was published to elicit more gifts and donations from the audience, such a reading would have been inaccurate, since Hesing went on to deride how poorly the central administration in Berlin dispersed the donations they received.

Hesing’s letter closed with a retelling of his experiences in Strasbourg. There, he lodged with a family who had returned from Cincinnati to Alsace, firmly planting him back in the German-American experience and ethnoscape. Not everyone who emigrated from Germany to the Americas (or elsewhere) stayed behind in their newly chosen countries; many immigrants did not even plan on doing so from the outset, as historian Mark Wyman details in *Round Trip to America* (1993).<sup>64</sup> The period that Wyman studied began a few years later, however the dynamics he described were already at play in 1870. The people Hesing encountered in this episode of his journey, served as a link between old world and new, they could provide shelter, company, understanding and connection to émigrés visiting the old country. Migrants of this sort were vital in keeping the transnational cultural sphere alive, as they moved both ideas and goods

---

<sup>63</sup> Anton C. Hesing, “Ein Liebesgaben-Transport Nach Versailles (Schluss),” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 8, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>64</sup> Mark. Wyman, *Round-Trip to America : The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 6.

acquired abroad back into the homeland. Hesing concluded by promising to return the next summer and leaving a message to their “many friends in Cincinnati that they are doing quite well and have kept up their attachment to America, as everyone does who has lived over there for some time.”<sup>65</sup>

The process of German unification proceeded over the course of the war and kept the newspapers abuzz with commentary, especially in regard to the planned handling of declarations of war. The new constitution made it necessary for the federal president—who would wield the title of Kaiser—to seek approval by the Bundesrat (the German federal parliament), before engaging in acts of war, except in the case of Germany being under attack. This measure was put into the new constitution to prevent the Kaiser from unilaterally engaging the country in new wars of conquest.

On the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung* this ruling found warm reception, unlike many of the special exemptions the individual states that were supposed to constitute Germany in the future received. The kingdoms of southern Germany, Bavaria, Baden and Württemberg all managed to tie their entry into a new political entity to special concessions regarding taxes, transportation and their militaries. All of this made it easier to rein in all the disparate states into the German Empire, but, as the *Staats-Zeitung* wrote, with this catalog of compromises the promised unity of the country seemed tenuous.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> Hesing, “Ein Liebesgaben-Transport Nach Verssailles (Schluss).”

<sup>66</sup> “Das Deutsche Einigungs (Stück-) Werk,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 17, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

When the Bavarian parliament rejected the contract to join a unified Germany in late 1870 and instead attempted to persuade the leadership of the Grand Duchy of Baden to join them in a southern German confederation, German correspondents around the world feared this could jeopardize the long-sought unity. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors hoped that this rejection of German unity by the Bavarian parliament was merely an expression of a governing body that was elected before German unity was possible in the way that it was now. The editors expressed hope that the Bavarian's rejection represented a will of the people that at this point no longer reflected the new realities of a Germany on the brink of unification. The forty-eighters' positions regarding the role of monarchical heads of state was peculiar in this case. The newspaper expressly wished for the Bavarian king to dissolve parliament and call for new elections, to better reflect the change in the will of the people due to the new possibilities of a unified Germany.<sup>67</sup>

At first glance, that the anti-nobility forty-eighters would openly express hope for a king to dissolve a democratically-elected political body seemed counterintuitive. However, the former revolutionists' desire for a unified homeland overrode their antipathy towards royal decrees. The reasoning from the Munich parliament was that the contractual regulations for a unified country were too strict. The *Staats-Zeitung* countered this allegation, bemoaning that Bavaria was one of the odd parts of Germany where the noble prince stood on the side of unification, while the elected popular

---

<sup>67</sup> "Deutschland Und Bayern," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 30, 1870, Newberry Library (my translation).

representatives stood against it: “Not to make the federal constitution more free spirited, but to receive bigger concessions to kleinstaaterei [the proliferation of small states] did the representatives of these people reject the union with the confederation.”<sup>68</sup>

While the forty-eighters strongly favored democracy, their sense of nationalism ultimately prevailed. They saw turning Germany into one, cohesive political unit as a monumental task, one made all the harder by the long history of the country being broken up into all the small states, and the reluctance by rulers and people to embrace unity. Due to the unique nature of this task, and due to the expected outcome of completing it, a country that was united, free and more democratic than the stifling collection of statelets and kingdoms before, the forty-eighters did not consider monarchical intervention that would further this goal to be anathema.

The unification of Germany was a long time coming. By late 1870 those involved in the process consciously connected what was happening now as the latest entry into a long history of nationalist struggle. The Turners, whose efforts towards German unification went back to the days of the Napoleonic Wars, were a constant part of that history. Their founder Friedrich Ludwig Jahn was a venerated, almost legendary figure of nineteenth-century German nationalism. Jahn was a hero of the Napoleonic Wars, and his efforts against the French conqueror included the foundation of the Turner movement, earning him the endearing nickname *Turnvater Jahn*—Father of Gymnastics. Recalling Jahn’s heroic antics and public speeches both at the tail end of

---

<sup>68</sup> “Deutschland Und Bayern.”

the Napoleonic Wars and before the revolutionary Frankfurt Parliament as a part of the long prelude to the Franco-Prussian War and eventual German Unification was a way for those who had followed in his footsteps to historicize the events of their own times. Jahn himself declared in 1815 that, “Germany needs a war with the Frenchdom on its own terms [meaning, without a coalition of other powers like during the Napoleonic Wars] if the German people and the German realm are to be reborn, and that time will not fail to materialize!”<sup>69</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* ran this article detailing the involvement of Jahn in the German nationalist and unification movement across the earlier nineteenth century. The editor explicitly connected the efforts of this proto-nationalist and the movement he helmed with the current efforts at unification and subjugation of the French. The title of the article, “Vater Jahn” [Father Jahn] emits the prefix “Turn“-, which foreshadowed crediting Jahn not just with the foundation of the *Turnverein*, but with the idea of engaging in a struggle for a unified country in the first place: “he was forced under police supervision with mandatory place of residence for another 15 years, since he, as the Mainz Bureau of Investigation liked to put it, ‘had been the first to bring up the highly dangerous teachings of the unification of Germany’.”<sup>70</sup>

Jahn was portrayed as more than just a revolutionary or the founder of a gymnastics association—besides that the *Turnverein* was much more than just that. Here he was the father of a movement of national unity who the established powers put under closest scrutiny for founding the Turners alone. The editor further quoted Jahn’s

---

<sup>69</sup> O.H. Jäger, “Vater Jahn,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 4, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>70</sup> O.H. Jäger.

speech in front the Frankfurt Parliament, in which he called for a united Germany under the leadership of a Prussian Kaiser, which again put the then-current efforts to unify the country thusly into a longer historical context, while also reconciling any anti-monarchical notions with the revolutionary ideals that the old forty-eighters still had: if Jahn, one of the earliest and best known German nationalists, called for a German republic to be ruled by a Hohenzollern Kaiser, first in 1815 and then in 1848. Therefore, any German nationalists in 1871 should be comfortable with the idea of just this coming to pass.

The German Americans who participated in the American Civil War just five years earlier used their experience of this conflict as another historical marker through which to better understand the developments in Europe in 1870 and 1871. Just as the Civil War seemed at its bleakest in 1864, the northern cause almost lost, so too, the newspaper wrote, did the Franco-Prussian war seem the harshest and most painful at the then-present point in early 1871. Letters were arriving from Germany that detailed a change in mood in the old country, that, following several blunders by the military leadership, a war weariness was setting in. Germans were no longer enthusiastically following every single event in the war; they were no longer chanting German national songs. The *Staats-Zeitung* editor bemoaned that, “the sacrifices the war asks of all are no longer greeted with joyful sense of community but with a dark surrender to the inevitable, it no longer the fiery tunes of *Die Wacht am Rhein* that is sounding through

the minds of the people but rather *When This Cruel War is Over*.”<sup>71</sup> Conjuring up the image of war-weary Americans for comparison with the war-weary Germans in 1871 was truly a transnational moment. That a readership in Germany would have understood this particular reference was unlikely, and even more unlikely was that a German newspaper out of the old country would have made such a comparison in the first place.

For German Americans however drawing this comparison with the American Civil War made perfect sense. After all, many German Americans had fought in that war and the memory of those battles was still fresh on the minds of many of the readers. Participation in the American Civil War shaped and impacted the German-American identity and community as such strongly. The editors compared the end of the Civil War with the current situation between France and Germany in particular—the recent blunders may have made the war seem like a never-ending ordeal for the soldiers and their families, but victory and peace lay around the corner.

Comparisons between the Franco-Prussian War and the American Civil War, especially comparisons between France and the Confederate States of America, came up with relative frequency during the conflict. The *Chicago Tribune* commented that one of the reasons that Irish Americans supported the French in the war was due to their loyalty to the Democratic Party and France’s supposed political support for the Confederacy.<sup>72</sup> In an editorial published on January 30, 1871 titled *Richmond, - Paris*, the *Staats-Zeitung* editors drew further parallels between the two conflicts. The editor

---

<sup>71</sup> “Durch Nacht Zum Licht,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 9, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>72</sup> “The Irish and the War in Europe.”

argued that the fall of Paris in 1871 was analogous in importance to the Franco-Prussian War as the fall of Richmond, capital of the Confederacy, had been to the American Civil War in 1865. The editor expressed hopes that,

“if Paris had the same importance in the current war for France that Richmond had for the Confederates [...] if that means that the armed hordes of Chancy, Bourbati and Faidherbe fall apart like those of Johnston, Dick Taylor and Kirby Smith the day after Appomatox, then there is a reason for victorious jubilations the likes of which the German people have never in their history had the good fortune of witnessing.”<sup>73</sup>

The fall of Paris signaled the end of the war, which the editor in turn took for the final defeat of France. This defeat however would not be akin to the defeat of the Confederacy. The German Empire had no intention to take over the entirety of the French territory, and the editor made no allusions that such a takeover should happen. But a German victory in 1871 meant revenge at long last for the shame that Napoleon I. brought over Germany at the beginning of the century.

The *Staats-Zeitung* clearly occupied the same space in this regard. German-Americans inhabited two national identities. But as immigrants they also had their very own, unique position as a hyphenated, hybrid identity that was both German and American at the same time. The editors drew a comparison between the fall and surrender of Paris now at the end of the Franco-Prussian war to the fall of Richmond, Virginia, which ended the American Civil War six years earlier. Hermann Raster, whose idiosyncratic writing shone through this article, wrote that he hoped the fall of Paris would be followed by a similar collapse of military morale as after the fall of Richmond,

---

<sup>73</sup> “Richmond, - Paris,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 31, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).



and thus that Paris falling was a signal for a quick end of the war. The essentialist and ethnocentric nationalism of the time too shone through here. “Because this is a millennia old outstanding, unsettled score between the Celtic-Roman and Germanic peoples, that has now come to a final conclusion at which the latter stands like Hercules, all his hard labors brought to end.”<sup>74</sup>

In this case the newspaper again united the very European, very German nationalist tendencies and viewpoints with very strongly American ones. The latter clearly came out of collective experience of the Civil War and its prominent position in the popular memory of most German-American readers. The readership of the *Staats-Zeitung* was much more likely than any German audience to appreciate or even understand the parallels this article made between the Civil War and the Franco-Prussian one. But the article also fielded the time-honored German points of reference for the war by referring to the Napoleonic Wars and the connected trauma of Germans being conquered by a foreign power imposed on country and people.

Now that Germany was unified politically and essentially in a new, different nation-state than the Northern German Confederacy, the German-American press had an obligation to explain those changes and their implications to the German-American community at large. A declaration by President Ulysses S. Grant to raise the wage for the American counselor in Berlin to the same level as those of Paris and London served the *Staats-Zeitung* as a jumping-off point to talk about how the German Empire’s standing

---

<sup>74</sup> “Kapitulation von Paris,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 31, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

in the world was now different than the Northern German Confederacy's had been before. The United States regarded Germany as a new, regional power—as the raising of the consular's wages indicated—and President Grant lauded the German Empire as now being almost as free as the United States. The American president proclaimed in his address to Congress on February 7, 1871, that “the American people see an attempt to reproduce in Europe some of the best features of our own Constitution, with such modifications as the history and condition of Germany seem to require.”<sup>75</sup> But how exactly did Germany and its new constitution compare to the United States constitution that delivered the blueprint for what the forty-eighters once dreamed a united Germany could become?

In regards to the relationship between the individual states and the federal – or in this case now Reichs-level the comparison is not that simple. In some cases the German states are more independent from the central authority than are the American states from the federal government, in other cases their authorities are more limited.<sup>76</sup>

The editor then proceeded to elaborate on the reasons for these commonalities and differences. He explained that the German states were less independent in issues that were best handled through a central authority, like railroads and telegraphs. American states had more authority in these matters, since these new technologies only emerged as such in the decades after the United States' founding. This comparison informed the

---

<sup>75</sup> Ulysses S. Grant, “Message Regarding Unification of Germany” (1871), <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/february-7-1871-message-regarding-unification-germany>.

<sup>76</sup> “Die Vereinigten Staaten Und Deutschland,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 14, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

German-American readership on what to make of the concrete political developments in Germany.

One of the most important comparisons made in this article was that between the office of the President of the United States and the German Kaiser. The editor wrote that, "The German Emperor has . . . not as many and not as extensive an authority to exert power as does the President of the United States."<sup>77</sup> The Kaiser held a hereditary title, yet his position was basically that of a federal president. He enjoyed fewer powers than the American president, and the German kingdoms and other statelets essentially became akin to the states of the U.S.—those comparisons were meaningful to the German-American readership as they provided the necessary and transnational context for this evaluation and comparison. The title of the new German head of state was the source of much condemnation and suspicion from the American press, especially those publications that were loyal to the Democratic Party, which had favored France in the war. This caused much consternation among the German-American newspapermen, their perspective and outlook upon the situation was understandably quite different. They felt the American press misunderstood and misrepresented the situation, since they did not understand the position that Wilhelm of Prussia now inhabited. "Kaiser," as the *Staats-Zeitung* stressed time and again, was a title, and in 1871 this title meant different things than it had in the past.

If the title Kaiser displeases them [the American press], which they have no associations with [...], they should stick to the SECOND title. Which

---

<sup>77</sup> "Die Vereinigten Staaten Und Deutschland."

is ‘Schirmherr,’ which even the least informed American writer will not imagine as an umbrella-master but more correctly as a Lord Protector.<sup>78</sup>

This elaboration on the title of Lord Protector served the German-American editors to compare Kaiser Wilhelm with Oliver Cromwell and the British Republic, which, in their view, would make Wilhelm more amicable to Americans. After all, what was the president of the United States if not a Lord Protector? President Grant himself lauded the new institution of the German head of state, saying that, “the power conferred upon the chief imparts strength for the purposes of self-defense, without authority to enter upon wars of conquest and ambition.”<sup>79</sup> The German Kaiser had, as the *Staats-Zeitung* editor stressed, the command over land and sea forces, but “neither one nor the other has the power to DECLARE war. Only if there is an attack on Germany from the outside can he DEFLECT it—conditionally on him retroactively asking parliament for approval.”<sup>80</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung*’s elaborations on the title of Germany’s new ruler served several functions. First and foremost, the editors explained the new political realities of the homeland to their readership, who would not necessarily have had the political insight to understand the implications of the new developments. They also sought to provide meaningful comparisons that German-Americans could understand easily. Then, the newspaper defended the newly formed homeland against American nativists

---

<sup>78</sup> “Kaiser Und Schirmherr,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 10, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>79</sup> Grant, Message Regarding Unification of Germany.

<sup>80</sup> “Kaiser Und Schirmherr.”

and French sympathizers. This defense served to create a higher sense of cohesion among the German-American element against outside agitation. To some degree, the forty-eighters also saw a need to justify their championing of the new homeland and its monarchical character against their own republican hopes. Germany was united—but not as a republic, even if the newly formed nation state bore some similarities with the United States, as the forty-eighters had fought for in their youth.

Meanwhile, the United States was still engaged in arms sales to France, much to the ongoing chagrin of the German-Americans in Chicago and elsewhere. While the war was clearly drawing to an end, the Chicago Germans believed it still necessary to voice their strong disagreement with the United States' policy on supporting France in this way while staying ostensibly neutral in the war. To do this, the *Staats-Zeitung* worked once more as a community catalyst, not just inviting but urging its readership to attend a meeting at the North Side Turner Hall: “we must stress that such a gathering held at this late an hour into the war can only have any impact if it becomes an imposing demonstration, making a strong participation of the Germans all the more necessary.”<sup>81</sup> The paper here again worked as an instrument that facilitated the continued existence of the German cultural sphere. This mass gathering was clearly organized with a political goal in mind, to enact pressure on American foreign policy and possibly change it. The newspaper was an extension and facilitator of this transnational community, providing the organizational backbone to keep the community itself together and aligned behind

---

<sup>81</sup> “Die Heutige Massenversammlung in Der Turnhalle - Gegen Den Waffenschacher,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 19, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

this political goal. The ethnoscape as a non-state actor functioned here to influence the nation-state in which it currently resided in. The editor closed with a wish for strong participation – and stressed that German women were explicitly welcome at this gathering, which hinted at the audience of previous mass gatherings at the time being overwhelmingly male.

Not just the Chicago German-Americans were angered by the American weapon sales to France. Most of German-America reacted with confusion, disappointment and strong words directed at the State Department at public gatherings. Historian Sabine Freitag notes that protests against the American weapon sales erupted in St. Louis, Chicago and Cincinnati. In a Chicago meeting, former *Staats-Zeitung* publisher Georg Schneider condemned the Grant administration's actions as an "intellectual assassination of the German people," especially since the guns sold to France had been used before by Union soldiers in the Civil War. Schneider also laid blame on Carl Schurz, who was at the time the first German born U.S. senator. Schurz had failed, Schneider concluded, as a German, as a representative of German-Americans who fought for the Union in the Civil War and he had also failed as a forty-eighter in allowing these actions against the German homeland to take place.<sup>82</sup> Historian of German America Carl Wittke found however, that after the war Schurz took the criticism to heart. He charged President Grant's Secretary of War William Belknap with breaching the United States' legislation on neutrality. The scandal caused many German-language

---

<sup>82</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 280.

publications around the country as well as numerous forty-eighter intellectuals to condemn President Grant, with a widespread call to refuse him the vote in the 1872 presidential elections.<sup>83</sup>

In another gathering occurred in Cincinnati and the *Staats-Zeitung* printed the main speech given at this gathering by Judge Johann Stallo, a long-time friend of Friedrich Hecker, again weaving their readership into a German America that transcended the borders of a single municipality.

We protest this [the weapon sales] as American citizens, as Germans and as Republicans. But we especially protest against this as AMERICAN CITIZENS, as citizens of a state which in the recent past had more than once had the opportunity to insist that the neutrality of a country at peace with two warring nations is not just kept for appearances sake, but in truth and practice!<sup>84</sup>

The war and the diplomatic implications for American citizens of German descent brought up questions of national loyalties. Before the war and the unification, German-Americans could identify as ethnic Germans, but this identification lacked the connection to a cohesive nation-state. Now that Germany was emerging as a united empire, this changed, which also created fissures in the self-identification of German immigrants in the United States. And with Americans selling weapons to the newfound object of nationalist ire of the German immigrants, these fissures worsened. “We protest AS GERMANS against the guns with which our brave tribesmen defended the American Union with are now put into the hands of the French with the order to shoot down the

---

<sup>83</sup> Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution; the German Forty-Eighters in America*, 252.

<sup>84</sup> “Die Waffenlieferungen an Frankreich,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 28, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

brothers of those who fell by the thousand fighting for our unity and freedom over here.”<sup>85</sup>

The German immigrant community was in a difficult spot. During the Civil War they proved their loyalty to the United States, yet the United States seemed to withhold loyalty to them and their families and friends in the old country in return. The reasoning behind the American support for France in this way was that France helped the nascent United States during the Revolutionary War—which the Cincinnati speaker denied as a false interpretation of history. “[...] France as such did not fight for America but against England. The American colonies simply represented a part of that chess board upon which England and France played for global supremacy.”<sup>86</sup> Stallo elaborated further that this was not a selfless act of France, and that as such America should not betray its own citizens of German descent in such a way. The self-identification the speaker put on display here demonstrated the position German Americans found themselves in at this point. They were accepted as American citizens, and firmly regarded themselves as such, yet they were still also Germans with sympathies and national loyalties towards their old homeland.

The Turners and the *Staats-Zeitung* worked in tandem to keep the German-American community informed and tightly bound together, both within itself on the ground in the United States and within the transnational German cultural sphere at large. As the war drew closer to an end, the Turners kept holding gatherings and

---

<sup>85</sup> “Die Waffenlieferungen an Frankreich.”

<sup>86</sup> “Die Waffenlieferungen an Frankreich.”



charitable events to allow the German-American element a place to air grievances and to celebrate their newly formed homeland and those whose sacrifice made this homeland possible. “The Turners will be holding a big evening of entertainment and a ball for the benefit of those wounded in the war. During this time of overwhelming enthusiasm this will hopefully lead to a remembrance of those who we have to thank for making this enthusiasm possible in the first place.”<sup>87</sup> The German Patriotic Aid Society, which worked in close cooperation with the Chicago Turners, asked the German-American citizenry of Chicago to prepare themselves for the victory celebration “once the news of the fall of Paris reaches us.”<sup>88</sup>

Three days later the long-awaited declarations finally arrived. The *Staats-Zeitung* opened with a dispatch Kaiser Wilhelm sent from Versailles to Berlin, declaring a three-week truce and the city of Paris officially fallen. The celebration committee in the meantime announced that the victory celebrations required now careful planning and deliberations, while also waiting for a declaration of peace to go beyond a potentially short-lived truce. After the circumstances became clearer and the actual peace negotiations were foreseen to take considerably longer than a few days, the planning committee went ahead and invited German Chicago to a victory celebration at the North Side Turner Hall, accompanied by a repeated call towards the German community to donate funds to aid the wounded soldiers, widows and orphans of the war.

---

<sup>87</sup> “Die Turngemeinde,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 27, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>88</sup> “Zur Feier Der Einnahme von Paris,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 28, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

The celebration was a stunning success. The event was one of the largest German-American public outings in the city's history according to the *Staats-Zeitung*. The *Chicago Tribune* reported:

If Turner Hall was not in its element, it was not because members of the German element were not in Turner Hall; for the auditorium was crowded with human beings so that the tobacco smoke, which might have stowed itself away upon the chairs had there been any unoccupied seats in the building, if there had been any, was forced to find a resting-place in the atmosphere, which grew dim under its influence.<sup>89</sup>

In general, the *Tribune's* sympathies in the war at least appeared much more aligned with the French than they were with the Germans, however the reporting on the meeting at Turner Hall was not hostile—rather the reporter pointed out the German-American standpoint on the war: the German people had not desired to fight the war, but the French leadership under Napoleon who had left them no other choice.

The *Staats-Zeitung's* reporting on the celebrations was much more enthusiastic, stressing the joy and celebratory mood of the crowd and praising the various reminiscences by orators and organizations. The heraldic emblems on display during the celebration served to stress the newly forged unity of the disparate German states—and included the associations of German-Chicago in that, too, since the Turner Hall displayed the German Empire's flag in the center, surrounded by flags of the German states and those then surrounded by the flags of German-American Chicago's clubs and associations. "That was it, what the things achieved were supposed to demonstrate: from

---

<sup>89</sup> "GERMAN REJOICING: Celebration of the Return of Peace to Europe. Eloquent Speeches by Eminent Orators---Contributions of Money," *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, February 3, 1871.

fragmentation to a whole, from being torn apart to one, from partition to solidarity.”<sup>90</sup>

This was a visual representation of the German speaking ethnoscape. The organizers of this meeting very consciously invoked a unified Germany that included a claim by German-American Chicago to belong into this ethnic entity, unified at last, across borders and oceans.

Wilhelm, King of Prussia, proclaimed himself Kaiser on January 18, 1871 in Versailles. The Prussian monarch had until the day of the proclamation hesitated with this step—he thought the Prussian crown and title “King of Prussia” more important to him personally than that of German Kaiser—after all, the title itself came with relatively little actual political power. The *Staats-Zeitung* correctly pointed this out repeatedly over the course of the war and the ongoing unification process. “Kaiser” was, after all, in essence only the title of the German president. The biggest difference to democratically-elected presidents was that that the title was hereditary. The newspaper commented on the proclamation a week later. Berlin, the capital of Prussia and now capital of the German Empire, saw a number of celebrations of the new emperor and the unity of the country—however with little enthusiasm by the capital’s jaded citizenry, who long since had dubbed King Wilhelm “König Lehmann,” a title reflecting a typically Berliner style of belittling affection for their king, “Lehmann” being a common German surname of the region. The column then continued an elaboration on the similarities and differences in Germany and in world politics between 1871 and 1848, since in both of

---

<sup>90</sup> “Grosse Massenversammlung in Der Turnhalle Der Nordseite,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 3, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

those years the idea was put forward to unify Germany under a constitutionally bound Prussian Kaiser.

The forty-eighters continued to have a torn relationship with the Hohenzollern Kaiser. When Wilhelm was the crown prince of Prussia, he had personally led the Prussian armies to quash the revolutionary parliaments in Baden. A long-lasting rumor made the rounds among the population that it was his initiative that led to the bloody crackdown on the uprisings in Berlin in 1848. And now this man was Kaiser. “Well, now we have him.” Raster concluded. “The same man who bombarded the defenders of the German Reich with canister shot has been declared Emperor.”<sup>91</sup> Wilhelm’s history and reputation among the forty-eighters seemed hard to reconcile with the strong surge of nationalism and nationalist fervor that bubbled up at the time, even among themselves. “Two decades separate the spirited fancying for a Kaiser in 1848 and today, during which the real developments of things have swept away the romantic delusions and imaginations like gossamer. Little is left of the Barbarossa- and Kyffhäuser poetry.”<sup>92</sup> The forty-eighter author of this piece--again the style indicated that this too was Hermann Raster’s wordsmithing—looked back upon the long past time of revolution with some wistfulness, but at the same time he acknowledged that the revolutionaries were young and full of romantic ideals that had little chance of ever materializing into real, actual change. Back in the day, they did not read the geopolitical context correctly

---

<sup>91</sup> “Kaiser Lehmann,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 23, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>92</sup> “Kaiser Lehmann.”

they held views and positions that were more informed by romantic ideas of Germany, and all of these delusions became their revolution's undoing.

Raster proceeded with an elaboration on this and how the current political landscape and climate of Germany in reaction to Wilhelm's proclamation were much less romantically tinged. Instead they were sober, clear eyed, unexcited and realistic. Unlike the ideals of the 1848 revolutions that were still informed by a more mythical idea of a Kaiser that could unify Germany, the then-current movement did without such fancies. "The foreign nations would, if Lehmann had not become Kaiser now, continue regarding Germany as a purely geographical term, or, worse, as a Prussian vassal state."<sup>93</sup> One of the biggest mistakes the forty-eighters made, according to Raster, was to disregard how the other nation states of Europe would have reacted to an attempt at a unified Germany at the time. This was a running theme with this particular kind of commentary that compared the situations of the 1848 revolutions with that of the 1871 unification. Now that Germany was united after defeating France and previously Austria, the situation was different. Fewer opponents of a unified German country waited in the wings to deny and possibly prevent this unity. With Wilhelm as Kaiser, other nations around the world were now presented with a nation state that was altogether easier to grasp and understand as such than the patchwork of kingdoms, statelets and alliances like the Northern German Confederacy was before.

---

<sup>93</sup> "Kaiser Lehmann."

The future shape of France equally puzzled the sphere of political commentary. France rededicated itself as a republic after the Battle of Sedan on September 2, 1870, and was bound to maintain this form of government after the surrender of Paris. The meaning of these republican proclamations and openly-stated intentions however, caused ripples across the transnational political landscape. Especially the American reactions towards the outcome of the war—the victory of a monarchical empire over an ostensibly democratic republic—irritated many commenters. However, the leadership of the German Empire now demanded France constitute a democratically-elected national assembly as the first of the conditions for peace. The *Staats-Zeitung* pointed out this paradox by writing that, “the first thing, then, that the German ‘despot’ demands of the defeated enemy is that the will of the people is found through free, general election.”<sup>94</sup> Meanwhile, the French themselves proved reluctant to implement these demands, to which the editor replied:

As long as it [France] does not try to negate any debts incurred to its neighboring people who they assaulted like a wild animal before getting smitten to the ground, the French people can choose any form of government which the French people want. Do they want a republic with all modern amenities? All right. Do they want a Kaiser? Well, Lehman will not be jealous. Do they want a regency and some respite to come to an agreement what the people want? Also well.<sup>95</sup>

The particularly German forty-eighter spirit greatly informed this analysis too. Should the French people choose to return to a monarchy, that was their choice and theirs alone, if that consensus was reached. The outcome did not matter here, what

---

<sup>94</sup> “Friede & Freiheit,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 1, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>95</sup> “Friede & Freiheit.”

mattered was that the outcome was decided by consensus. In that, a peculiar rift occurred between the emerging social democrats and the mindset that coalesced around the *Staats-Zeitung* and that of forty-eighters elsewhere. French forty-eighter Louis Blanc was himself also a former revolutionary, he had been exiled for his involvement in the uprisings and just recently returned to France. Unlike the German forty-eighters, he went into exile in London. He was also much further to the left on the political spectrum than the *Staats-Zeitung* editors, supporting various socialist and social democratic causes. LeBlanc also strongly believed that the only form of government for the French people going forward should be the republic, without any compromises. He rejected that the people should even have a choice in the matter, lest they vote for the wrong form of non-republican government. As such, Blanc demonstrated the growing rift among the forty-eighter generation, where the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship represented a more conservative, republican ideology, while people like Blanc and other social democrats were embodying further radicalization and a refusal to settle into a new status quo.<sup>96</sup>

As peace negotiations between the German Empire and France progressed and the German unification proceeded, political commentary out of the English-language American press grew colder towards the Germans and German unification. This put the German-American community under increased pressure. After all the sacrifices and work they had put into acceptance and partial assimilation, this new geopolitical development appeared to threaten the progress made by this immigrant community.

---

<sup>96</sup> "Friede & Freiheit."

The editors commented that, “it is true that at the outset of the war [...] many voices could be found in the American press in favor of Germany; however it is no less true that those voices have become fewer and weaker, and that the swift growth of the unified power of Germany has not caused amicable but spiteful and hostile sentiments.”<sup>97</sup>

Not only was this change in sentiment an insult to the blossoming German-American nationalism, this change in attitude also directly threatened the achievements of the community and the ongoing effort of being accepted into mainstream American society. The *Staats-Zeitung* countered that Germany was not in a process of brutally conquering Europe, but only in a process of re-acquiring territories that other nations had stolen from it, which were in fact German—like Schleswig and Holstein, but also Alsace and Lorraine. The forty-eighters editors also compared these territorial re-acquisitions under the aegis of Prussia and the reactions by the American press to them with the way the Piedmontite royalty of Italy had acquired various Italian territories to form a unified Italy and found the American reaction to the latter curiously lacking in condemnation.

As enthusiastically as the *Staats-Zeitung* reacted to the unification of Germany and as strongly as they defended the Kaiser against outside criticism time and again, the old forty-eighters were yet cautious towards the Prussian leadership.

Yes, the *Wacht an der Spree* [literally: The Watch on the River Spree, a play on the German patriotic anthem *Die Wacht am Rhein* which celebrated the watchmen guarding against French intrusion] will now be the password for all those elements of the German people, which are warned from earlier, bitter experiences should guard against that the

---

<sup>97</sup> “Aschenbrödel,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 4, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).



victory in war should now not become the defeat of popular freedom. This time the quill drivers have not botched the peace that the German sword conquered as they did in 1815, but there is a danger that the hopes on the internal developments of the state that are entwined with the peace will be betrayed.<sup>98</sup>

The fear that the newspaper expressed here was one of an undue influence of Prussia's military state within the German Empire, which mirrored the fears Friedrich Hecker voiced earlier in the conflict. The editors were worried that the Prussian military apparatus would use the triumphs of the war as a cudgel to gain more power and influence within the state to the detriment of civil liberties. As jubilant as the forty-eighters at the *Staats-Zeitung* were about the unification and victory over France in the war, now that the victory celebrations were over and the ink on the peace contracts dry, their ambivalence towards Prussian monarchy and the Prussian military and their general suspicion of the nobility came back to the fore.

Prussia's military and the leading Junker class were now emboldened by the victory. The next danger to the wellbeing of the German Empire that the forty-eighters saw came not from abroad, but from within. Hence the "Watch on the Spree," the river running through Berlin and past the Kaiser Palace, and no longer the "Watch on the Rhine" against French incursions. The wordplay here suggested that Germans all around the world should now employ watchfulness towards the Hohenzollern Kaiser, just as they employed watchfulness towards the Napoleons in the past. The *Staats-Zeitung* hoped that the southern German states, especially Bavaria, who possessed a

---

<sup>98</sup> "Die Wacht an Der Spree," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 27, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

long held, strong suspicion of Prussia, could provide an internal counterbalance within the Empire.

Meanwhile the German-American element across the United States prepared for peace and victory celebrations. The *Staats-Zeitung* remarked that prohibiting the people to celebrate the peace without also celebrating the victory over France would be wrong, since, as the editors remarked, “blood is thicker than water, and it would be against human nature if the sons of Germany—even those who by their own free will chose a different nationality—were not rejoicing over the victory of the German weapons!”<sup>99</sup> Some voices within the community decried the message a victory celebration would send, as it could be seen by the American public at large as an act of public *schadenfreude*, stating that the celebrations should instead commemorate the end of bloodshed and hostilities. These calls irritated the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship. The defeat of France was a victory worth celebrating to the old forty-eighters, for the sake of the newly founded country as much as for the sake of the fallen soldiers’ memory. Further, the editor found that victory parades would be improper to be held by the German-American community. Such things were not German in nature but American, and as such it did not be appropriate for the German population to organize one. Historian Mary Ryan notes that parades as urban, public, performative spectacle were indeed an American invention of the nineteenth century.<sup>100</sup> The discourse surrounding the victory

---

<sup>99</sup> “Friedensfeste,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 4, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>100</sup> Mary P. Ryan, “The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order,” in *The New Cultural History: Essays*, by Lynn Hunt, vol. 6, Studies on the History of Society and Culture (University of California Press, 1989), 132.

celebrations revealed the limits of German-American assimilation. The group was at this point a part of the broader American status quo. But even so still, the German Americans were still conscious and proud enough of their own national idiosyncrasies—especially in the wake of the wave of nationalism that swept over during the foundation of the German Empire. They would rather not engage in a behavior that would appear too culturally American.

An anonymous reader commented on the peace celebrations in a letter to the editor, pointing out that while American parades were somber and overly serious affairs, this did not need to be true of a German-American torchlight procession. The paper published this letter without comment; therefore, the editorship likely agreed at least in part with the words of the unnamed subscriber. He suggested the procession be a celebration of all things German of German heroes of old until the present and culminate in a celebratory laying of wreaths in a public square. Besides those ruminations on the actual celebratory parade, the reader closed with the comment:

Maybe it will be decided to hold the celebration on Sunday, March 19, the anniversary of the revolution of 1848 which has now found – even if not in the way that what was intended in those days – its conclusion in the restoration of a unified realm of the German nation. This way the peace celebration would mark also the reconciliation of all parties of Germany, the settling of a long quarrel and a reconciliation with the past.<sup>101</sup>

Once more, the forty-eighters made the connection between their present, living in the United States, where they were about to celebrate the victory of their newly formed unified homeland and various histories: the history of the German people, but also the

---

<sup>101</sup> “Friedrich Kapp Über Die Auswanderung, Zur Friedens-Feier,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 6, 1871, Newberry Library (my translation).

very personal history of those who for a big part of their lifetimes were involved with or lived with the consequences of the involvement with a struggle to create a unified homeland. Now that process was finished, the homeland had united, which gave the German-American forty-eighters an opportunity to reflect on what Germanness even meant, both to them personally and to the German people as a whole, and how the events of the past year changed that.

The answer was a celebration of national history accompanied by patriotic plays and tunes chosen by a democratically elected committee, eventually held on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1871. The organizers sent out invitations to most prominent figures of German-America, and reverted to calling the occasion a *Friedensfest* [peace celebration], not a *Siegesfest* [victory celebration]. The attempt at having more nationally-celebrated German celebrities present hinted again at the size and scope of the German diaspora in the United States. Also, as Mary Ryan states, while this German-American parade was inherently more German than American, as a public display of national pride the celebration also fulfilled a function of claiming a sizable piece of American public space.<sup>102</sup> In a letter to former *Staats-Zeitung* editor George Schneider, former Civil War hero Franz Sigel bemoaned his inability to attend the celebrations to which Schneider invited him.<sup>103</sup> This indicated that Sigel and Schneider, both of whom were important

---

<sup>102</sup> Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century*, Reprint 2019 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 85, <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520922082>.

<sup>103</sup> Franz Sigel, "Schneider Letter from Sigel," May 26, 1871, George Schneider Papers, Chicago History Museum (my translation).

German-American Civil War heroes, knew each other personally and stayed in contact after the war. Sigel's letter also proved that the Chicago Germans were part of a much wider and dispersed German-America, an ethnoscape which existed through the means of personal letters, telegrams and newspapers.

With the German Empire established, the German Americans now had a united homeland. The *Staats-Zeitung* provided its readership with the necessary commentary and connections to understand the processes that eventually resulted in German unification. The Franco-Prussian war and the patriotic fervor it conjured up among the German Americans also laid bare their shifting self-identification as well as their emergent hybrid national belonging. The immigrants were no longer German, but they also did not quite identify purely as American, and instead adopted an understanding of themselves in the world that situated them in between, part German and part American, but also as part of a somewhat coherent group. As the German Empire took shape, the German-American diaspora produced a collective of people who began to inhabit their own, hyphenated identity, who merged aspects of German with aspects of American into a mostly cohesive new whole. The *Staats-Zeitung* and similar newspapers across the United States' German diaspora then furthered, cultivated, coordinated and defended this identity, serving as architects of it for all of German America.

## CHAPTER 6

### FIRE AT HOME

#### **The Conflagration of 1871 and its Aftermath**

The Great Chicago Fire of October 9, 1871 devastated the city, and with it the blaze also brought ruin to German-American Chicago, the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and the people who worked for the newspaper. All but “One member of the editorial staff, one type-setter, and one porter” lost their worldly belongings during that fateful night.<sup>1</sup> The newspaper’s building on 160 West Randolph Street in the heart of Chicago’s Loop burnt to the ground hours after midnight when the fire jumped the Chicago River eastward and ate through the heart of the city. With the building, the newspaper lost all printing presses and all types—a heavy loss that made publication very difficult going forward. Editor-in-Chief Hermann Raster wrote to his daughter Mathilde who was living in Germany with her aunt at the time that “All of your friends on the north side lost their homes so it isn’t necessary to name individuals.”<sup>2</sup> The fire had surprised the employees and editors of the *Staats-Zeitung*, like everyone else in the city, as the editors described it: “On the morning of October 9, 1871, the Illinois Staats-Zeitung shared the fate of thousands of its readers. They made a quick exit out of their building and forgot

---

<sup>1</sup> Hermann Raster, “[Our Losses Caused by the Fire],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 12, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_8\\_0644](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_8_0644).

<sup>2</sup> Hermann Raster, “Raster Letter to Mathilde,” October 15, 1871, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

to take their possessions along. Everything was destroyed and nothing remained but the name.”<sup>3</sup> The German-American neighborhood on the north side, too, was completely devastated. Raster’s daughter in law Gertrud Oppenheim, who lived with the editor’s family in 1871 wrote down her impressions in a diary: “here and there a ruin, a chimney, or part of a wall stood like ghosts. . . . Our house had also vanished, except for the foundation; framed in the burned-out dining room window was the skeleton of our sewing machine.”<sup>4</sup>

The fire and its aftermath fanned the flames of nativist sentiments against Germans and other immigrant groups as residents searched for someone to blame for the destruction. But the Great Fire also furthered the cohesion of the German-American element against the anti-immigrant trends, contributing to a stronger sense of self-identification and a new claim by German Americans to be part of the broader category of Americans. As such, the devastation wrought by the fire heightened a process of active identity building that sociologists Rogers Brubaker Frederick and Cooper describe as “identification”—since it brought to the scene palpable actors such as local German-American leaders who contributed to the process.<sup>5</sup> Anti-German sentiment resurfaced in the political discussions on how to rebuild the city, a conflict revolving around spatial practice. These tensions provided the German immigrants with an opportunity to

---

<sup>3</sup> “The Staats Zeitung, Its History and New Building,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 8, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_8\\_0625](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_8_0625).

<sup>4</sup> Gertrud Oppenheim, “Tante Gertruds Letter,” April 18, 1937, Chicago fire of 1871 collection : Raster, Chicago History Museum.

<sup>5</sup> Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, “Beyond ‘Identity,’” *Theory and Society* 29, no. 1 (2000): 14, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1007068714468>.

consider their place in American society and what good citizenship meant to them as a somewhat cohesive group, while also providing a moment of reflection on their different identities: Germans, German-Americans and Americans. The Great Fire also served as a demonstration of the power of the German ethnoscape, as the German-Americans successfully appealed for material support from the German homeland, while maintaining close communications with family and friends both abroad and in other German-American locales across the United States.<sup>6</sup> This process was facilitated by formal and informal methods and processes alike. The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and its editorial staff played a vital role in organizing aid from Germany for German-American Chicago. Further, the political conflicts that emerged after the fire forced the German-Americans to reconsider reflect upon their own national self-identification. Were they good Americans? Were they a perpetually alien, immigrant element? Could they change the way Anglo-America perceived of them? And did they even want that?

### **The City Aflame – The Chicago Fire, October 8 – 9, 1871**

With the German Empire established earlier in 1871, the remainder of the year passed relatively quietly for the German-American community in Chicago. Some individuals of other European origins grumbled about the losses and damages the German Empire had inflicted upon France in the war, and anti-German sentiment smoldered.<sup>7</sup> Occasional fires of intimidating sizes plagued the city at the tail end of the long, hot and particularly arid summer of 1871. In early October strong winds rose,

---

<sup>6</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Public Worlds ; v. 1 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 52.

<sup>7</sup> Rudolf Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago* (Champaign, Ill.: Stipes Pub. Co., 1976), 58.



persisting for days, which made a quick quelling of any fires in the city all the more vital for Chicago's fire department, lest airborne embers spread. The night before the fateful October 8 fire, the Chicago Fire Department put out a large blaze on the city's west side that had exhausted men and resources alike. Historian Carl Smith notes that about a third of Chicago's firefighters were incapacitated by the fires of the previous days. Much of their equipment was damaged and in need of repairs. And many of the still fit enough to respond to new incidents were still suffering from the aftereffects of the blazes of the preceding days.<sup>8</sup> The part of the west side that burned housed many industrial yards that worked in wood or coal, providing the fire with plenty of fuel that kept on smoldering even after the fire department successfully put out the main blaze after half a day of exhausting work.<sup>9</sup>

In what represented a prime example how the movement of people across national borders created a trans-national community, German-American newspaperman Hermann Raster's sister-in-law Gertrud came to the United States from Dessau for a long visit in the summer of 1871. She was to help out in the household, since her sister Margarethe, Raster's third wife, who had just recently given birth to a son, Edwin Otto Stanton Raster. In exchange, Raster's oldest daughter Mathilde traveled to Dessau, where she was to receive a good, German education, while living with her father's sister. Gertrud remarked in her diary that she was astounded that men

---

<sup>8</sup> Carl Smith, *Chicago's Great Fire: The Destruction and Resurrection of an Iconic American City* (Newburyport, UNITED STATES: Grove Atlantic, 2020), 15, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=6184525>.

<sup>9</sup> Bessie Louise Pierce, *A History of Chicago Vol. I: The Beginning of a City, 1673-1848* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 476.

of significant societal standing were out and about in the city's grocery stores and markets, running their own errands even though her brother in law addressed them as judge, doctor or even general. That men of such high social status conducted their own shopping was unheard of back in Dessau. On Sunday October 9, 1871 Raster took his guest along to an event at a German social club on the North Side of Chicago where he was to give a speech. She later wrote in her diary that during the event at, "About ten o'clock a report was circulated that a new fire had broken out on the west side – there had been a fire on the previous night – and all the west-siders immediately left. But the rest of us who lived on the North Side, far from the fire, stayed until almost midnight."<sup>10</sup>

The DeKoven Street fire that eventually became known as the Great Chicago Fire broke out at about nine o'clock that night. It allegedly originated in the Irish immigrant O'Leary family's barn. This assumption would later fan the flames of anti-Irish sentiment in particular and anti-immigrant sentiment in general as the city rebuilt. Many different explanations and interpretations of the fire's true source have since circulated, with various people trying to pin the exact point of ignition on a wide assortment of human, animal or entirely inanimate culprits: Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicking over a lantern, a group of Irishmen gambling and drinking in or around the barn, a nearby group of youngsters breaking in trying to steal milk. Mrs. O'Leary's husband James offered a bundle of green hay in the barn as the culprit, suggesting that it spontaneously combusted, as green hay is known to do sometimes.<sup>11</sup> Legend settled the

---

<sup>10</sup> Oppenheim, "Tante Gertruds Letter," April 18, 1937.

<sup>11</sup> Richard F Bales, *The Great Chicago Fire and the Myth of Mrs. O'Leary's Cow* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013), 79, <https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=2198130>.

blame on the O’Leary’s cow and an unsupervised lantern for the longest time. Ultimately the search for the real culprit was fruitless, the cow and Mrs. O’Leary were exonerated in 1997 and nobody else could be blamed conclusively.<sup>12</sup> Historian Richard F. Bales suggested that an acquaintance of the O’Leary family, Daniel “Peg-Leg” O’Sullivan, who was seen at the barn that night, was ultimately the most likely culprit for starting the Chicago Fire, but his involvement was never decisively proven. The legend of the cow kicking the lantern proved much more convincing to the general public since this version of the story added a lot of color to the grim disaster of the Great Fire, regardless of its ultimate lack of veracity.<sup>13</sup>

The Raster family went to bed after returning home from the night’s event at the social club, only to be roused again in the middle of the night. Gertrude wrote in her diary that at “about three o’clock the front doorbell rang violently. When my brother opened the door one of his editors stood there with a box under his arm and said he was bringing the list of subscribers.”<sup>14</sup> This unnamed editor contributed a great deal by saving the subscriber list from the flames, since this was one of the *Staats-Zeitung’s* most important assets, which the staff could not easily reproduce once destroyed. The rest of the newspaper’s properties did not fare so well. “At my brother-in-law’s question whether the newspaper building was in danger, the man replied: “There isn’t a stone left

---

<sup>12</sup> Karen Sawislak, *Smoldering City: Chicagoans and the Great Fire, 1871-1874* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 27.

<sup>13</sup> Bales, *The Great Chicago Fire and the Myth of Mrs. O’Leary’s Cow*, 123.

<sup>14</sup> Oppenheim, “Tante Gertruds Letter,” April 18, 1937.

of the building since about an hour ago.”<sup>15</sup> The fire destroyed the newspaper’s physical properties, its archives, back catalog, account books and printing presses. The presses were the biggest loss, since German letter type printing presses were difficult to come by in the U.S. at the time.

While the flames initially spared Raster’s house on Dearborn Street, on the edge of the cemetery that later became Lincoln Park, the strong winds that drove the fire into the city during the night pushed the blaze northward in the morning hours of October 9. Raster, his sick wife and the other members of the household frantically carried the ailing Margarete Raster and her infant son down the stairs on a chair put her in a carriage that they loaded with anything they could grab from the house, and fled out of the way of the approaching flames. Just a few days prior, Raster had painted his house front, so, “our last sight of our home was of flames mirrored in the fresh paint.”<sup>16</sup> Initially the family fled to Wilhelm “William” Vocke’s house further north, on Grant Place, who in years prior worked as a newsboy for the *Staats-Zeitung* before becoming a lawyer in the 1850s.<sup>17</sup> But the Vockes’ home, too, was not spared by the flames, and so after a brief rest, the two families gathered all belongings a carriage could carry and fled to the cottage of the Vockes’ carpenter who lived outside the city on the prairie.<sup>18</sup> This unnamed carpenter’s cottage became the refuge for a numerous Chicagoans, who

---

<sup>15</sup> Oppenheim.

<sup>16</sup> Oppenheim.

<sup>17</sup> “William Vocke Dead,” *Abendpost*, May 14, 1907, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_11\\_1500](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_11_1500).

<sup>18</sup> Oppenheim, “Tante Gertruds Letter,” April 18, 1937.

crammed their belongings into it before finding places around the property to try and catch some sleep.

The next day, Raster borrowed an express carriage from a brewer with whom he was acquainted through his activity as the Cook County Collector of Revenue, an office Raster held between 1869 and 1872. The family headed for the home of another *Staats-Zeitung* staff member on the west side of the city. Gertrud wrote that the trip took them quite some time. Chicago had become hard to navigate: streets were impassable, bridges had collapsed, and Chicagoans milled about, suddenly homeless and trying to find loved ones or salvaging whatever they could find. When the Rasters arrived at the unnamed *Staats-Zeitung* staffer's home, which was already filled with whole host of burnt out refugees, the most significant problem was a lack of fresh water. Early on during the catastrophe, the fire had destroyed the city's water pumping station, which greatly contributed to the fire's spread. The refugees helped themselves out with bottled seltzer water, cold tea and collected rainwater for the time being.<sup>19</sup>

After settling down, Raster and his family's first priority was to reach out to their German relatives in the old homeland to let them know of their well-being and survival of the disaster. "A post office had already been opened – that is the post office officials were working in a room with a wash basket under a broken window, through which letters were deposited."<sup>20</sup> Raster's sister-in-law, whose immediate relatives lived in Germany, as she was Raster's guest that year, especially needed to inform her family of her survival. This situation demonstrates the close ties between German-American

---

<sup>19</sup> Oppenheim.

<sup>20</sup> Oppenheim.

Chicago and Germany proper. Raster sent the very first notes of their survival to Germany, not to other German-American population centers. He had multiple reasons for doing so, not all of which were connected to the greater German ethnoscape: letters sent to overseas destinations still took significantly longer to arrive than items addressed to American ones. Telegrams sent to Germany also took longer than telegrams to American destinations, since Germany's telegraphic infrastructure was still in its infancy. Still, Gertrud's presence in Chicago at this time on the one hand and Hermann Raster sending proof of life to Germany first thing after the smoke cleared prove the strong connection that existed for these people between German America and Germany, and how people and information flowed through it.

After sending off the letters, Raster quickly wrote a report on the fire and the destruction of Chicago. This report became the main entry in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* issue published on October 12, 1871. After Raster finished writing, he handed the account to one of his reporters to have it printed—no easy task, as all their German-type printing presses were destroyed. The types were a big issue, as German-American papers throughout the U.S. kept using fraktur lettering instead of the then prevalent Antiqua types employed by American papers. The reporters came up with a solution that again demonstrates the close connectedness of German America beyond local boundaries: they went north to Milwaukee, a city with a large German population and a lively German-American newspaper landscape. Because of the sizable number of Milwaukee German newspapers, the *Staats-Zeitung* men quickly located a German-type printing press. Due to this collaboration, the *Staats-Zeitung* quickly resumed publication, printing a single-sheet issue on October 12, 1871. The paper made inquiries

along with several Milwaukee papers for a new German-type press, but to no immediate avail. As a result, the editorship decided to print the newspaper in Milwaukee with the printing press of the *Germania Herold* and ship the finished product to Chicago until the *Staats-Zeitung* could re-establish itself. Raster wrote of these circumstances in the newspaper “No press, no types, no printing paper, no place and no money; under such circumstances it is difficult to resuscitate a newspaper from its ashes, and no reader will be surprised if its first beginnings appear meager.”<sup>21</sup> And while the *Chicago Tribune* received a box of types to replace their lost ones from the *Cincinnati Commercial*, the *Staats-Zeitung’s* pleas for relief in form of a new printing press were met with silence, at least in the immediate aftermath of the fire.<sup>22</sup>

The fire devastated German Chicago on the north side of the river. The Germans had turned this part of town into their own. Some rambunctious Chicagoans called the German-American neighborhood the *Nord Seite*, and it was the center of German-American life in the city. Now it was all in ruins. Gertrud lamented the destruction in her diary: “Where formerly there had been rows of well-built up streets, there was now nothing between us and the lake; here and there a ruin, a chimney, a part of a wall stood like ghosts.”<sup>23</sup> The fire had rendered about fifty thousand members of the community homeless overnight. It had berefted the German-American community of its built environment. Erstwhile *Staats-Zeitung* writer and local historian Eugen Seeger wrote of

---

<sup>21</sup> Raster, “[Our Losses Caused by the Fire].”

<sup>22</sup> Hermann Raster, “(After the Destruction of Chicago No 3 Printed in the Office of the ‘Herold’ in Milwaukee),” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 13, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1140](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1140).

<sup>23</sup> Oppenheim, “Tante Gertruds Letter,” April 18, 1937.

the aftermath that “Walking down North Clark Street one would barely know that they was walking through an American city. Here lived those unfortunate ones hit hardest by damage [of the fire].”<sup>24</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* was quickly on hand to catalogue losses in both life and material property, informing the community on both the extent of the damage and on the veracity of rumors of exactly who did and did not survive. Most of the news was grim, but among the reports of death and destruction were morsels that offered some hope to the readership. The tales of survival and determination to rebuild already surfaced by the October 13 issue:

Mr. Henry Hochbaum and L. and R. Berlitzheimer whose shops on the North Side were burned, have, with their characteristic energy, already reopened their shops on Milwaukee Avenue. Henry Schollkopf, Groceries; Bauer and Company, Music Instruments; Gale & Blocki; Knauer Brothers and many other Germans are feverishly busy with the arrangement of their new shops. The Germans don't take second place after the Americans as to energy.<sup>25</sup>

Just three days after the city burned, the efforts to rebuild and resume business were already well underway. The German element certainly suffered a heavy blow, but they refused to let this setback keep them down. Rebuilding their own space in the city however would take a lot of time and organization. It would also take a lot of money.

The heavy financial losses incurred by the German-American community caused the *Staats-Zeitung* to appeal to the sense of ethnic cohesion beyond national borders. In the second issue after the fire, Raster pleaded that Germany itself must now help its far-

---

<sup>24</sup> Eugen Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt* (Chicago: The George Gregory Printing Company, 1892), 215.

<sup>25</sup> Hermann Raster, “[The Great Fire],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 13, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1142](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1142).



flung members in this hour of despair, just as German-America was immediately willing to help Germany the year before:

[The] Germans of America collected a million [dollars] and sent it to Germany. . . Here is a calamity infinitely worse for tens of thousands of German families than the victorious war was for an equal number of families in Germany. Now it is time that rich Germany that is receiving 1200 millions of thalers from France, and whose capitalists own at least 600 millions of thalers of American securities, opens its hand.<sup>26</sup>

Raster's plea once more demonstrates how closely tied to Germany the German-Americans perceived themselves, and how the German ethnoscape functioned. German-Americans were American citizens, but they still possessed a strong claim to the German-speaking world at large. The emphasis here was on a reciprocal relationship: German-America did its part in helping the distant fatherland in an hour of need without being asked, so now that German-America was in need, it was only fair to expect that Germany would come to her diasporic nationals' aid.

What German-American Chicago currently lacked in financial resources, the immigrant community made up for in ingenuity and organization. The *Staats-Zeitung* was at the center of the whole process. In his reports on fire survivors, Raster also printed desperate inquiries from families looking for information on missing family members. Many of the displaced found refuge at Aurora Turner Hall, which served as a makeshift hospital, once more showing the vital importance of the institution of the Turnverein for German-American public life. It also continued its function as a community gathering spot, and on October 13, a committee was elected there to distribute aid to its disaster-stricken members. The *Staats-Zeitung* editorship

---

<sup>26</sup> Raster, "(After the Destruction of Chicago No 3 Printed in the Office of the 'Herold' in Milwaukee)."

meanwhile took it upon itself to provide at least some semblance of coordination between the various efforts of relief, cleanup and rebuilding, with Raster imploring the North Siders to help each other.

Anybody who has had a house on the North Side, with a brick basement, and does not intend to rebuild it before next Summer should put his lot unconditionally at the disposal of those fire victims who would like to erect a hut on it. Basement walls are always better than none at all. - The editor of this paper, Mr. H. Raster, offers for use the ruins of his house, 600 N. Dearborn Street, until May 1 (but not longer, because he hopes then to be able to build himself). He who comes first today, can get a certificate of permission.<sup>27</sup>

This call for inter-German-American solidarity showed the coordination efforts to aid the community in which the newspaper was involved. After all, this happened in mid-October, with the harsh Chicago winter on the horizon. So, in order to preserve the community, it was vital to offer housing for the many individuals and families, even if this housing would only last a few months before proper rebuilding could begin. Efforts like this ensured a continued existence of German Chicago as the German-American community did not disband, with its members fleeing the site of the disaster for other Midwestern cities. They had the necessary shelter and resources to remain and rebuild.

Rebuilding the *Staats-Zeitung* took precedence for Raster, for once because the newspaper was his source of income and pride but also because the newspaper was such a vital part of the now-imperiled local German-American community. This was not an easy task: "The whole staff has deserted; Mr. Pietsch fled to Indianapolis with his family; Schläger didn't appear. The only ones I had to help me were little Grünhart and Mr.

---

<sup>27</sup> Hermann Raster, "[The Great Fire]," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 14, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1135](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1135).

Cohn.”<sup>28</sup> With this drastically reduced staff, Raster still managed to publish a steady flow of papers in the coming days: “On Thursday [October 13] I was already able to publish a paper printed on two sides, Friday and Yesterday it had expanded to four pages, five columns each, and tomorrow I will be able to publish one of four pages, six columns each.”<sup>29</sup> The paper was indeed in a sorry state, the staff scattered across the city and the country - and in the case of owner A.C. Hesing, across the world since he was still on his tour of Europe. Raster managed to keep the ship afloat, however, renting a temporary office in an old plumber’s shop and telegraphing newspaper manuscripts to the Milwaukee printer. And even when regular editions circulated once more, the newspaper still required funds, a building, and most importantly printing equipment.

When the editors eventually managed to resume regular operations after about fifty days of hardship and adverse circumstances, they elaborated on the process stating that, “Those items, of which even the seemingly unnecessary ones must not be amiss as not to halt the entire process of printing, are hard to come by under regular circumstances. . . . Type had to be brought in from Philadelphia, a printing press from Boston, while the typecases and iron frames had to be manufactured locally.”<sup>30</sup> The difficulty was that most of the local producers that could have provided the newspaper with these items suffered from the same destruction as the newspaper itself. The city’s transportation infrastructure was also so badly damaged that bringing these much-

---

<sup>28</sup> Raster, “Raster Letter to Mathilde,” October 15, 1871.

<sup>29</sup> “Raster Letter to Mathilde,” October 15, 1871.

<sup>30</sup> “Fuenfzig Tage,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 5, 1871, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

needed goods in from the outside proved an equally problematic endeavor. But in spite of the roadblocks in proper manpower and equipment, Raster managed to keep publishing new *Staats-Zeitung* issues, crucially linking the community together.

### **Embers in the Ashes – Rebuilding the Community, the Newspaper, and the Political Fallout**

This period of printing in Milwaukee and general insecurity for the *Staats-Zeitung* did not last long and while the city began the process of rebuilding, the newspaper continued its regular publication. On the pages of these issues a new, dominant inner-city conflict between the German Americans and the rest of Chicago dawned. What should be done with the burnt-out districts? Should the city just rebuild the way it had been before the fateful night of October 8? Railroad magnate William B. Ogden floated his long-proposed project of “New Chicago” again, much to the chagrin of Raster and his now-restored row of reporters. Ogden proposed that the city center of Chicago should be re-located further south of the city courthouse on the corner of Lake and Clark street, while also proposing to turn the near north side along the lake - the heart of German-American Chicago - into a large-scale industrial district with extensive ship- and railyards. The *Staats-Zeitung* could not let even the distant possibility of this proposal stand without scathing commentary:

Where up until now German tradesmen, craftsmen, and workers found their comfortable homes, countless steam trains would rush up and down day and night on hundreds of railroad tracks, billowing machine shops, factories and lumber yards would take up the space of little homes surrounded by flowerbeds, and while the millionaires, the stock market of

Chicago would MAYBE benefit from this, it would CERTAINLY mean the death knell for German Chicago.<sup>31</sup>

Raster implored his readers to be watchful for developments like this. The newspaper proclaimed that Chicago's status as a world metropolis was tightly intertwined with its diversity, including its German population. The newspapermen feared that "New Chicago" would become a second New York in the truest meaning of the word—a city in which the English-speaking populace looks down upon German-speaking one as a subordinate class of people."<sup>32</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* editors perceived plans like Ogden's as a course of action squarely aimed against the German-American community, and therefore loudly and publicly decried them. They saw the danger that after a decade of successfully integrating themselves into American society at all levels, the German-American element would have to be on the defensive again.

On top of the issues regarding territory, now the city's official relief efforts seemed to be skipping over the German-American community. The *Staats-Zeitung* made this out to be a problem that arose mainly because the official relief committee and its sub-committees relied strongly on churches and religious organizations to distribute aid to the victims of the fire. Most Germans were themselves not members of these dominant congregations, which Raster bemoaned, since, "for Americans the church parishes are the alpha and omega of charitable relief, and the recommendation of a cleric or a church member works wonders of the members of the committee, while a

---

<sup>31</sup> "Neu-Chicago," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 24, 1871, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>32</sup> "Neu-Chicago." "Neu-Chicago."

German lacking such a recommendation is met with great suspicion from the beginning.<sup>33</sup>

To remedy this situation, the newspaper supported the solution put forth by the *Deutscher Hilfsverein* (German Relief Society), pleading for the inclusion of more German-born Americans into the Chicago relief committees. If this integration of the relief committees did not happen, Raster wrote in the newspaper, German donations to the relief for Chicago should be separated out from the bulk of contributions and directly given to dedicated German-American relief efforts. Their integration efforts singled out the Relief and Aid Society—the preeminent secular charitable organization that in the past helped ‘worthy’ poor Chicagoans getting back on their feet. But the Society’s leadership remained steadfast in its principles that only those ‘worthy’ of aid should receive it, as to not invite what they deemed idleness and anarchy. The ethnic makeup of the Society was almost entirely native-born Americans. As such, they were neither able nor willing to communicate with Chicago’s non-English speaking minority populations.<sup>34</sup> Raster was incensed: “This disregard for the Germans is a shame and proof that the committees contain a number of people whose narrow-heartedness could not be undone even by the terrible hardship endured by their fellow citizens of German descent.”<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> “Die Unterstützung Und Die Deutschen,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 24, 1871, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>34</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 98.

<sup>35</sup> Hermann Raster, “[The Great Fire],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 18, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1129](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1129).

The devastation of German-American Chicago in the Great Fire effected the ethnoscape in more ways than just the destruction of physical property and the dwellings of its members on the north side. It served as an impetus for the German Americans to re-establish or otherwise strengthen connections with their European countrymen in the newly founded German Empire, or at least publicly clamor for relief from abroad. The cause for this was not just the destruction of the city itself but a specific related issue. The major concern was that many Germans bought insurance for their property through local insurers, many of whom were themselves either burned out or forced to shut down their businesses, since they were simply incapable of honoring all of their clients' claims at once.<sup>36</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* appealed to Germans abroad for support. The editors proclaimed that would in fact be beneficial for the prospective German lenders—because the German-Americans did not desire charitable donations. Loans would suffice. And due to the then-current American interest rates, these loans would result in a tidy net profit for German lenders.<sup>37</sup> The German Aid Society, too, called for relief from abroad, albeit without the promise of returns. They asked for: “money, clothing, building materials and fuel, beds and groceries and we are convinced that the current philanthropic fervor will not last forever.”<sup>38</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* printed the plea of the Aid Society, with the note that the same appeal was sent to various other German and German-American newspapers.

---

<sup>36</sup> Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*, 231.

<sup>37</sup> “Neu-Chicago.”

<sup>38</sup> “Deutscher Hilfsverein,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 24, 1871, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

This widespread effort was ultimately very successful; German-American entrepreneurs and businessmen who had maintained professional and financial ties to Germany threw their weight behind these pleas, and in the end German cities like Hamburg and Munich eventually provided more monetary relief to the devastated Chicagoans than most American ones.<sup>39</sup> This proves that the greater Germany did indeed care for its countrymen and women, that the German ethnoscape operated in more than one direction across the Atlantic. Money did not just flow one way, as most historiography of immigration finds it, away from the diasporic communities in the target country. In most cases this was true, due to the higher wages immigrants could earn in the United States. What also often happened was, as historian John Bodnar describes for the case of many Italian immigrants, that established groups in the United States aided new or prospective immigrants from their home country if not from their own village. Established Italian-Americans would give money to people from their home villages to help these newcomers establish themselves.<sup>40</sup> But here it was the German homeland that sent money to its own diaspora, which due to the nature of German immigration laws was officially cut off from the German state, meaning that these moneys were more informal in nature—a true expression of an ethnoscape. By law, any German citizen that emigrated out of the country forfeited their entitlements to help from the German state. This meant that German-Americans could not appeal to the German state for help if they fell on hard times in their new home countries. This in turn

---

<sup>39</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 116.

<sup>40</sup> John E Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 136.



means that the support that flowed from the German homeland into Chicago in 1871 was not support that came from official, nation-state level sources, but exclusively from the initiative of private persons and companies.<sup>41</sup>

In terms of money flowing between the homeland and an immigrant—or emigrant—diaspora, the fact that in this case Germany sent aid to German-America was quite an anomaly in United States immigrant history. Among migrating ethnicities, it was usually the case that those who made it to the United States earned money freer and easier than those people who remained in the home country. At the time of the Chicago Fire this resulted in the widespread practice of immigrants sending remittances back to their relatives and countrymen back in Europe. The Irish Americans who fled the potato famine in the 1840s, most of them already relatively successful, middle-class members of Irish society, found lucrative employment in America, which allowed for a sizable flow of funds back to Europe.<sup>42</sup> European migrants could earn substantially higher wages in the United States than was possible working in similar jobs in the old countries, with American wages often double that of European ones. Many immigrants—permanent or temporary—came to the United States specifically to send remittances back to their home countries.<sup>43</sup> This dynamic is still strong even in contemporary immigration to the

---

<sup>41</sup> Bodnar, 60.

<sup>42</sup> Tyler Anbinder, Cormac Ó Gráda, and Simone A. Wegge, “Networks and Opportunities: A Digital History of Ireland’s Great Famine Refugees in New York,” *The American Historical Review* 124, no. 5 (2019): 1627, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhz1023>.

<sup>43</sup> Mark. Wyman, *Round-Trip to America : The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 34.

United States from Mexico, where Mexican workers earn money north of the border, and send it back to their home towns, where these remittances fuel entire industries.<sup>44</sup>

The number of individuals and organizations donating to disaster relief for German Chicago illustrates the wide reach of inter-German solidarity. For example, an individual merchant from northern Germany donated a thousand dollars, while the merchant organizations of Frankfurt am Main and Vienna got together to collect money for German Chicago. The *Staats-Zeitung* editorial board thought this was a good use of these monies, since “In both cities live sufficient amounts of millionaires who made substantial amounts of their wealth through American trade.”<sup>45</sup> The newspaper went on to stress that many Germans, not just millionaires, became rich by trading with or working in the U.S., and that these Germans therefore felt an obligation to help their former countrymen living in that country. That substantial amounts of donations already made their way to German-Chicago by that point further proved that the German-Americans could count on help from the old country, and also reinforced the claim that more help would come. And more help came, as

Charity drives for those suffering on the shores of Lake Michigan took place not only in the big cities of factories and trade, which stand in close trading connections to America, but also in the quiet oases of small residence and country towns, in which the good messenger woman with the large basket on her back still outcompetes the telegraph pole, and yielded DECENT results.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Sarah Lynn Lopez, *The Remittance House: Dream Homes at a Distance, The Remittance Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 59, accessed September 29, 2020, <https://chicago-universitypressscholarship-com.flagship.luc.edu/view/10.7208/chicago/9780226202952.001.0001/upso-9780226105130-chapter-2>.

<sup>45</sup> “Neu-Chicago.”

<sup>46</sup> “Hilfe von Deutschland,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 24, 1871, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

Germans all over the country collected charitable relief for their far-flung former countrymen in Chicago. The *Staats-Zeitung* reminded its readers that Chicago German-Americans had on the day of the declaration of war with France a year earlier sent the very first charitable donations towards the Prussian war effort. This, the newspaper declared, meant that the charitable donations from Germany to Chicago were something of a reciprocal effort to make up for the debt incurred a year earlier. The fact that so many different cities, towns, organizations and people across Germany made donations to German-American Chicago was indicative of another dynamic: Germany itself was doing better now, enabling its citizens to donate to charity more freely than before—if not quite as freely as was possible in America. A month later, the American Consul to Berlin reported that the citizens of the German capital sent another twenty-five thousand dollars to Chicago, collected from Berliners across all walks of life.<sup>47</sup>

Other German-American communities outside of Chicago pitched in as well as Raster was happy to report on: “The Germans of St. Louis and surroundings hope to raise about a million dollars for the support of Chicago. [Various German St. Louis establishments] have been commandeered to serve as shelter for incoming Chicagoans.”<sup>48</sup> Those same St. Louis Germans also chartered trains specifically to provide safe passage for Chicago refugees to their city. The wake of the disaster truly exhibited how well German Chicago was embedded into a wider network of German and German-American communities and institutions, that it was part of a greater cultural

---

<sup>47</sup> “The Relief Work,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 30, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1115](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1115).

<sup>48</sup> “The Relief Work.”

and ethnic sphere which came to the aid of its fire-stricken members in need. In early November the newspaper reported that a representative of the German National Bank of Chicago, of which forty-eight-year-old Henry Greenebaum was the founder, traveled to Germany to secure funds for rebuilding the city, further proving the deep connectedness of German-American Chicago into the wider German-speaking world.<sup>49</sup> But German-Chicago was also part of a larger, English-speaking country, that was just about to re-discover enmities many Germans had hoped overcome.

An early indicator for the re-emergent anti-German-American sentiment arose in late October. The School Board of Chicago decided that Chicago school could no longer operate on the level of municipal schools. They would henceforth only operate on the level of village schools, since most of the city's schools burned down and a sizable number of students had dispersed across the country in the aftermath. As such, they needed to ensure only the teaching of the most essential subjects. And instruction in the German language was not something the Board considered essential, and consequently they dismissed all German teachers in the city. The *Staats-Zeitung* was outraged: "This action of the School Board is a symptom that the impudent nationalism will use the common misfortune to deal the Germans a heavy blow. The primarily German city districts lie in ashes, the German votes are dispersed - what better chance could the Germanophobes wish for?"<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> "[The Great Fire]," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 1, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1121](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1121).

<sup>50</sup> "[Teachers of German Dismissed]," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 31, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0942](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0942).

The editors were incensed with good reason. German Americans painstakingly lobbied for the inclusion of German language lessons in Chicago schools successfully in the 1860s, when former *Staats-Zeitung* owner and editor-in-chief Lorenz Brentano was head of the Chicago Board of Education. Brentano was instrumental in making German a part of Chicago's regular curriculum, so for the School Board to now attack this institution reeked of political opportunism. Eugen Seeger wrote about this in *History of a Wonder City* in 1893: "May the Germans never forget that the question of German lessons in public schools never was a question of sentimentality or pedagogy, but a question of POWER."<sup>51</sup> Seeger mirrored the stance the *Staats-Zeitung* held on this issue twenty-two years prior.

The dismissal of German language instructors was one blow against German-American Chicago on the field of education, another was that the fire destroyed the school houses on the north side at which German-American children previously received instruction in the mother tongue of their parents. The editors saw their own group's cultural survival threatened and fumed: "The scoundrelly and arbitrary action of the school board in banishing after the fire German instruction from the free schools, hits the north side painfully because there are settlements that are purely German where English is hardly understood in the homes."<sup>52</sup> This was a function of the way immigrant settlements worked – and still works in the present. Non-English speaking people moved in and established their own neighborhoods and infrastructures, to a point where

---

<sup>51</sup> Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*, 410.

<sup>52</sup> "(From a Reporter's Article Describing the Progress of the Reconstruction of the North Side.)," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 7, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_1\\_0287](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_1_0287).

newcomers no longer needed to learn the lingua franca of the surrounding peoples, but could live their lives in their ethnic neighborhood entirely relying on their own—foreign—mother tongue.<sup>53</sup> The subject of German lessons remained a hotly contested political issue in the grander scheme of Chicago's policies towards immigrants, and in that it was only the beginning.

During the time of rebuilding, the *Staats-Zeitung* resumed its function as a fulcrum of organization for the various parts of the German community. The newspaper steered German-American butchers who incurred damages in the fire towards meetings on how to get their businesses back in order for example, and continued advertising mass meetings of parts or even the whole of the German-American community. The fire and the rebuilding efforts, the editors wrote, were a chance for the community to bury old animosities between individuals and German sub-groups, and face the task as one, cohesive whole. But more than that, rebuilding presented the opportunity of not just restoring German-Chicago, but a possibility for improving the German parts of Chicago bigger and better than before, and ensuring that German Chicago would remain as influential on the city itself as it had been before, if not more so. "To represent it [Germandom] according to the most honest insight and with all our strength, and to look to it that it shall not occupy in the new Chicago a less influential position than it has in the one that burnt down; that will be the contribution of the *Illinois Staats Zeitung* to the reconstruction."<sup>54</sup> The editors understood that they could at this point easily present

---

<sup>53</sup> Bodnar, *The Transplanted*, 186.

<sup>54</sup> "[Our Newspaper And the Great Fire]," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, accessed February 6, 2020, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_8\\_0639](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_8_0639).

the newspaper as a pillar of the community, a vital source of information for all things German Chicago. And as such, the newspaper pleaded for a unified German-American community, one that could stand up to the challenges of the day. “Whatever existed before the ninth of October in the way of small frictions, cavils, and animosities among the Germans should be buried with so many other things under the giant heap of debris. Whoever wants to, may dig it out from under there - we won’t.”<sup>55</sup>

### **The Mayoral Election of 1871 and the Union-Fireproof Ticket**

After the smoke and soot settled, Chicago began to debate how the restoration process should take place. How to rebuild the city, and how to ensure that a calamity of this magnitude could not be repeated? The *Chicago Tribune* implored readers, “the plan of the new Chicago must include a thorough reconstruction of certain remaining parts of the old. Chicago having been much more intently occupied with its work than most cities are, required a louder call to secure her attention.”<sup>56</sup> The city grew too fast and too hurriedly. Its builders and boosters paid too little attention to the way new buildings were erected. They barely took note of the many ways in which the balloon frame wooden buildings, wooden sidewalks, wooden or tar shingle roofs - on vital pieces of infrastructure like the city’s pump works no less - as well as the numerous lumberyards and other places of industry within the city provided plenty of fuel for the apocalyptic conflagration that enthusiastically ate through all that readily available flammable material on those fateful nights and days in October. To rectify this, the *Tribune* suggested an expansion of the city’s fire boundaries – the part of the city within

---

<sup>55</sup> “[Our Newspaper And the Great Fire].”

<sup>56</sup> “How We Brought It On.,” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872); Chicago, Ill.*, November 1, 1871.

which all buildings regardless of who owned and built them had to be constructed with non-flammable materials like stone, brick and metal – to make these boundaries congruent with the city limits. This would present a serious issue for the less affluent owners of real estate, since building in this ‘fire-proof’ way was significantly more expensive than building in wood. As such, the fire boundary debate presented a political tinderbox, waiting to ignite.<sup>57</sup>

But the fire border ordinance took a backseat in city politics, for on November 7, 1871 Chicago was to hold a mayoral election. The *Staats-Zeitung* favored German-Jewish banker Jacob Greenebaum for a brief moment. Greenebaum was already deeply involved with the rebuilding and relief effort and had proven that he was able and willing to put his principles over party loyalties when he switched his political affiliation at the beginning of the Civil War from Democrat to Republican. But while much of the city’s newspaper editors initially favored the banker, nobody was sure if he was even willing to run for the mayor’s office in the first place. His potential candidacy was also fraught with opposition from the side of the *Chicago Times*.<sup>58</sup> Eventually the editors as well as the city’s political establishment put their weight behind the former managing editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, Joseph Medill. The newspaperman-turned-politician ran on the “Union-Fireproof” ticket. This ticket was a slapdash assortment of public figures of different backgrounds, not all of them politicians, who gathered in the aftermath of the fire, which had not only destroyed the city’s voter rolls, but also scattered both politicians and their regular voting population.

---

<sup>57</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 126.

<sup>58</sup> Smith, *Chicago’s Great Fire*, 166.



The *Staats-Zeitung* reasoned that Medill was in fact amicable to the German-American cause. After all, before his name came up as the Union-Fireproof frontrunner, he had championed Henry Greenebaum's candidacy for the mayoral office himself. And Medill did not actively seek the nomination, which further made him a desirable candidate in the eyes of the newspaper. "Medill is a man of honor whose highest ambition is to see his name connected with the reconstruction of Chicago, and just as he in good faith proposed the name of the German Henry Greenebaum, so Greenebaum and all good Germans will stand by him faithfully."<sup>59</sup> Indeed, the men of the Union-Fireproof ticket were less interested in regular political party politics. Instead the ticket was singularly focused on the issue of rebuilding the city, and, as the name of the party indicated, in ensuring a similar catastrophe could never happen again.

In public, the Union-Fireproof candidates derided the prior Chicago politicians, who allowed for the city's unchecked growth and paltry enforcement of an already lax fire code. The candidates blamed political failure for the Great Fire, while stating that keeping these same politicians in power would mean that a repetition of the catastrophe would possibly not be prevented, while their corruption would eat up the relief efforts necessary for a fast rebuilding of the city. They appealed to businessmen especially to vote for them, arguing that, "The immediate revival of business depends on the spirit shown to-day by the business men of the city."<sup>60</sup> A vote for the Union-Fireproof ticket was also portrayed as a vote for proof that Chicago was credit worthy, so that creditors

---

<sup>59</sup> "The Illinois Staats Zeitung Publishes the List of Candidates on Whom Both Parties Have Agreed, and Comments:," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 31, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0045](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0045).

<sup>60</sup> "Go to the Polls.," *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, November 7, 1871.

from the outside world would not hesitate to extend more credit for rebuilding the city.

A political win for the Fireproof Ticket would demonstrate to the outside world that Chicago learned its lessons from the calamity, and that investments in the city, its businesses and infrastructure, were sound and profitable decisions.

The *Staats-Zeitung* largely echoed these sentiments, adding some choice characterizations of the then-current office holders in city hall, naming them as, “bums and scoundrels who have remained on the property of the city like leeches are put into discard.”<sup>61</sup> But beyond that, the newspaper compared the way that mayor Roswell B. Mason ran Chicago with New York, which at the time was still reeling from the scandal surrounding the massive corruption in city politics facilitated by political machine of Boss William Tweed: “Shall our police and our fire department (the impotence and inefficiency of which four weeks ago has been so glaringly exposed) remain an Irish Democratic organization, worse than the disreputable New York municipal police? If this should happen, it would be a terrible blow for the honor, the good name, and the credit of Chicago.”<sup>62</sup>

The ongoing worries of the *Staats-Zeitung* editors showed in this paragraph. The German publication joined the *Tribune* in fretting about the credit worthiness of Chicago and its inhabitants, as credit was sorely needed to fund the reconstruction of the city. The article’s phrasing also revealed the ongoing anti-Irish sentiment that the German Americans shared with the rest of the country. Germans and Irish often saw the sharp end of the stick of anti-immigrant resentment at the same time. Both groups faced

---

<sup>61</sup> “[Political Matters],” November 6, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0043](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0043).

<sup>62</sup> “[Political Matters].”

similar accusations of drunkenness, corruption, and suspicions of their national allegiance due to large parts of both populations being Catholic. But these shared animosities from the American mainstream did not serve to elicit much solidarity between the two groups, at least not at this moment.

When *Staats-Zeitung* owner Anton C. Hesing returned to Chicago on November 6, 1871, a day before the mayoral election, his first public statements printed by his paper were words of unity and truce between political parties in the face of such a massive rebuilding project. He was cited holding an impromptu speech at the Union-Fireproof offices, which he visited first thing after his arrival back in the city, stating, “My desire is that local politics may remain banished from Chicago as long as a single house that burnt down is not rebuilt. I am with all my heart and soul fire proof and hope for an overwhelming and brilliant victory of the truly fire proof ticket.”<sup>63</sup> Hesing implored his readership and the German-American community to let party politics rest and to bestow the mayoral powers upon his fellow newspaperman Joseph Medill, who in his eyes proved himself a worthy ally to the German-Americans. After all, Medill was reluctant to even run for office in the first place, which served Hesing as proof that he was not a power-hungry politician. Also, Medill had previously supported German-American candidate Greenebaum. Allowing partisan politics to enter the rebuilding process was dangerous, Hesing proclaimed. If political parties entered the field at this fraught moment, rebuilding the city would devolve into corruption and chaos, and therefore anyone in favor of a continuation of those politics was endangering the

---

<sup>63</sup> “[The Great Fire],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 7, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0701](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0701).

continued prosperity of the city. One scenario Hesing foresaw was that “If [C.P. Holden] becomes mayor, he will subordinate the will [sic] being of Chicago to the special interests of the I. C. R. R. [Illinois Central Railroad] company.”<sup>64</sup> Hesing stressed that he always voted Republican in the past, but that now in this election and given these special circumstances, he would put his weight behind Medill and the nonpartisan Union-Fireproof ticket. His emphasizing Holden’s connection to the Illinois Central Railroad Company mirrored the fears the *Staats-Zeitung* expressed earlier about Ogden’s plans to turn the north side of the city into a big railyard, effectively displacing the German-American community, sacrificing it to the enduring prosperity of Anglo-American industry.

The efforts the *Staats-Zeitung* and other boosters of the Union-Fireproof ticket paid off, Joseph Medill was elected mayor of Chicago with 72.92 percent of the vote. The *Staats-Zeitung* celebrated that, “Mr. Hesing has received through this victory the most brilliant of welcomes ... more than any other individual man would be justified in regarding the victory of the “fire-proof” as his own.”<sup>65</sup> Hesing immediately went back to work, writing editorials for his newspaper commenting on the city’s post-fire developments which he – and by extension the newspaper – wanted to see. Bemoaning the sorry state of the hastily rebuilt German-American settlement on the north side, the *Staats-Zeitung* owner, at this time, welcomed the proposed expansion of the fire boundaries, which would spell doom for the “the thousands of huts and little houses,

---

<sup>64</sup> “[The Great Fire].”

<sup>65</sup> “[The Fire-Proof Ticket],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 8, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0700](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0700).

hastily nailed together from boards.”<sup>66</sup> In order to not only rebuild the German part of Chicago, but to improve it beyond what it had been before the fire, Hesing suggested two things: relocating the breweries away from the lakeshore further inland, and the building of a passenger train terminal to better connect the neighborhood to the city and country. The breweries with their unsightly smokestacks and smells drove down the property values on the North Side, while also representing something of a visible, noxious and social stain on the overall respectability of the German neighborhood. Rebuilding them was a perfect opportunity for their relocation. The railway station on the other hand would attract new businesses, which would also contribute to a rise in property values and respectability. Hesing’s dual focus on real estate value and respectability was emblematic of the man, as he was in many ways more practical than his forty-eighter peers. He was a businessman, but also a proud German, and this matter demonstrated how these two issues—profit and the acceptance of German Americans by their English-speaking countrymen—intertwined with his vision of German-American Chicago.

### **Re-Tempered Temperance – An Interlude**

Meanwhile in the state capital, a new and yet familiar front in the cultural conflict between Germans and Americans re-appeared in the form of a new temperance law before the Illinois state senate. The senate adopted this law without raising much attention, possibly because the state’s most populous city was absorbed with plans for rebuilding. To the *Staats-Zeitung* this reeked of political opportunism: “In Chicago,

---

<sup>66</sup> Anton C. Hesing, “[The Great Fire],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 9, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0697](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0697).

where one had to expect the strongest resistance, everybody had to think of other things, and so the contemptible workers found it easy to attain their ends in the Senate.”<sup>67</sup> The newspaper found that this temperance law, which the Illinois state senate had adopted from an Ohio temperance law, would unnecessarily burden innkeepers and owners of buildings in which alcohol was sold, since it opened those groups up to easily abusable lawsuits: “The husband goes to a saloon, buys a glass of beer, or whiskey, and his wife then sues the saloonkeeper for indemnification. She is granted a few hundred dollars by the court, the family has a good time until the money gives out, and the same trick is repeated on another barkeep.”<sup>68</sup> But unfortunately the German element of Chicago had been too busy with rebuilding their homes and workplaces to pay much attention to state politics.

The *Staats-Zeitung* was quick to note that Chicago’s Germans were a very influential political element at this time, one that could have prevented the state senate from adopting this bill. “What results the apathy of the Chicago Germans has had, one can see from the fact that all of the Senators of Cook County have dared to vote for the Bill.”<sup>69</sup> This temperance bill may not have been exclusively aimed at German-Americans, however the overwhelming amount of politicians in the bill’s favor were native born Anglo-Americans.<sup>70</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* implored its readership to protest

---

<sup>67</sup> “[A Temperance Law],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 20, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0760](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0760).

<sup>68</sup> “[A Temperance Law].”

<sup>69</sup> “[The Temperance Question],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 22, 1871, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0758](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0758).

<sup>70</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 225.

these new temperance laws—again wielding the political power of the German ethnoscape and the influence it could enact on state politics—if it was not caught in the midst of rebuilding. The *Staats-Zeitung* saw this temperance question at the state level and the resurgence of the temperance movement at the national level as a direct threat to German-American political clout. One aspect of the newly floated temperance laws were city ordinances, which mandated each city to put liquor licenses to an annual yes-or-no vote. If such a law passed, the editors feared, it would bear the danger of reducing the urban element to one solely beholden to the liquor licenses, since, “All other questions would be pushed aside, and the Germans especially [...] will lose plenty of their current political influence, insofar the same was dependent on their decisive position between the two big political parties.”<sup>71</sup> The newspaper foresaw that this would lead to a consolidation of the city into “wet” and “dry” wards which then could be easily played against one another politically, with the German-Americans’ hard-won political influence bearing the brunt of this political re-alignment.

The temperance issue stirred up German Chicagoan’s old fears, reminding them of the days of the Know-Nothing Party. After all, communal beer consumption was still a highly important German cultural trait. An Illinois wine grower wrote a letter to the editor, complaining about the Illinois Growers’ Association, which on the first day of their 1871 gathering decided to curb all discussions of wine and wine growing, “well aware that the members living further away had not arrived yet.”<sup>72</sup> The growers’

---

<sup>71</sup> “Temperenzbestrebungen,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 9, 1872, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>72</sup> Dr. H. Schröder, “Obstbau Und Temperenz,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 9, 1872, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

association pursued this pro-temperance stance publicly as a gesture to placate the Illinois state legislature. In return for the votes from the association, members of the legislature would then gift the association two thousand dollars, a case of outright corruption, Dr. Schröder, the letter's author, found. Dr. Schröder also raised a point about the temperance movement and its larger societal entanglement, namely that of pro-temperance clergymen. The Illinois wine grower found it somewhat hypocritical that a clergyman would rally openly against wine, since traditionally wine is used in mass to represent the blood of Jesus Christ. So how could these priests and ministers now turn around and condemn this substance as evil? This new temperance movement reeked of political opportunism, nativism and open corruption to the German Chicagoans.

### **Burning Bridges – The Fire Ordinance Controversy**

While the resurgent temperance debate was certainly rattling German-American minds, it provided merely a backdrop to the fire boundary controversy that began to crystalize as the next big point of contention between German Chicago and everyone else. The editors implored their readership to pay close attention to the deliberations at City Hall: "Next Monday city council will decide WHETHER OR NOT THE GERMAN PART OF CHICAGO SHOULD BE REBUILT OR NOT. This and nothing less is the conclusion of the so-called fire boundary ordinance debate."<sup>73</sup> The new fire ordinance up for adoption by the city would require all new construction within Chicago's city limits use stone or brick, outlawing wooding buildings altogether. The *Staats-Zeitung* saw this

---

<sup>73</sup> "Die Feuergrenzen," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 10, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).



as an affront to the German-American community in particular and against Chicago's worker population in general. The editors suspected that city council, in a move to increase the city's prestige, would attempt to make Chicago more like other American big cities like New York, where the rich lived in big mansions while the workers and poorer strata of society were forced to dwell far from downtown in lightless and suffocating tenement apartments they rented instead of living in houses they owned themselves, bereft of the kind of space-making that the same parts of society were granted in Chicago. While Mayor Medill was elected with German assistance, it was not so clear now where his sympathies in this particular issue would lie, since as the mayor he would be beholden to the will of city council at least as much as to the immigrant group that aided in his election. The newspaper soon began to organize resistance against the new fire boundary ordinance, advertising a mass gathering at the house of alderman Thomas Carney, to protest the planned ordinance.<sup>74</sup>

No other Chicago newspaper reported on this upcoming event, yet a large group of concerned citizens appeared to air their grievances and suggest to the alderman how to vote on the issue. Irish members of the crowd reportedly complained about the *Chicago Times's* lack of reporting on this gathering beforehand. The *Staats-Zeitung* took this as an opportunity to rail against the dominating Anglo-American newspapers like the *Times* and *Tribune*, who as they claimed barely ever mentioned the north side in their reporting on the fire ordinance. The *Staats-Zeitung* accused other newspapers and city politicians of playing favorites for the south side, since that was where many of the

---

<sup>74</sup> "Eine Massenversammlung," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 13, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

city's Anglo-American upper-class members owned land and real estate. These same members, the newspaper's editors speculated, would see an increase in their property value if the new ordinance passed. Hesing himself appeared at this gathering, giving a rousing and impassioned speech in which he laid out his – and by extension the *Staats-Zeitung's*—reasoning in the controversy. City council would be imprudent to impose the fire boundaries mandating brick or stone buildings on the entire city, he stated, since a broadly applied ordinance of this sort would hit many poor citizens hard, who could not afford building in stone. Hesing suggested that those owning land worth \$300 per foot of street front could be required to build in brick or stone, since if they found that too expensive they would easily find a buyer and receive enough money to relocate or take up a mortgage on the land to finance a more expensive building style. But those with smaller and cheaper plots of land should not be required to build in stone. This requirement would put these citizens under undue duress, unable to acquire sufficient funds even with a mortgage on their real estate. Also, mandating fire-proof buildings would possibly force these landowners to sell their properties, which would in turn also see a loss of ethnic cohesion on the German dominated North Side.<sup>75</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* then called for a yet bigger and more public protest march on City Hall, asking all its readers to attend: “Not just everyone with a direct interest in these matters should take part in the demonstration, but also everyone with a vested interest in his fellow citizen's rights not being violated!”<sup>76</sup> The editors painted the

---

<sup>75</sup> “Die Feuergrenzen - Demonstration Angekündigt,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 15, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>76</sup> “Deutsche Heraus!,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 15, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

conflict as one of class interest that transcended nationalities and argued that it was class and occupation that unified the disparate immigrant groups. “What the English [language] newspapers . . . said about the demonstrations of the Germans, Irish and Scandinavians on the North Side is thoroughly filled with toxic spite against those immigrant craftsmen and workers.”<sup>77</sup> And this was a correct observation, the people who had the most to lose from a rigorous redrawing of the fire boundaries were indeed those craftsmen and workers who could just afford a plot of land big enough for a small worker’s cottage, as the *Staats-Zeitung* argued. These men had built Chicago, not the rich and powerful who required the workers’ and craftsmen’s labor to get to where they were in the first place. The newspaper saw rank nativism in the attempted push for the fire boundaries by the city’s leaders, an attempt to expel the immigrant element—not just the Germans—out of the city by political means. It was up to the American workers, who were more independent and less blindly obedient than European workers, the newspaper argued, to make sure city council heard their collective voices.

These voices then rang out in the protest march the *Staats-Zeitung* advertised for. While the English language press of Chicago continued to portray the aggrieved northsiders as drunken rabble lacking any substantial or justified grievances, the tone struck by Raster and Hesing highlighted the various issues brought forth by the protestors. “The following banners were seen: Home for the People – No Barracks – No Tenement Houses – The Fire Border No Further West than Wells Street! – Leave the

---

<sup>77</sup> “Stein Und Holz,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 16, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

Worker His Home! – No Combination of Aldermen and other corruptions.”<sup>78</sup> The newspaper claimed that more than ten thousand people took part in this demonstration, and that this was the calmest and least rowdy mass gathering the city had ever seen, without a single incidence of drunken rowdy behavior. The march eventually made it to city hall, where the masses demanded that city council heed their demands. But they were told that city council had adjourned their meeting, so the masses eventually dispersed. The *Chicago Tribune* reported on this gathering unfavorably, depicting it as a rowdy mob of louts and troublemakers: “Of course there were a number of respectable of German and Irishmen among the crowd – men who really do own lots. But the majority of the ‘procession’ was composed of men who do not own a foot of ground and never will if they do not spend less money on beer and whiskey.”<sup>79</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* could not let this slander stand, re-iterating that, “One feels transported back to the dark days of know-nothingism reading the reports of these papers.”<sup>80</sup> The English language press kept depicting the march on City Hall as a rowdy mob that looted everything in the governmental building they could find and threatened the city council members still on the premises with death, which Hesing’s paper vehemently denied. None of these accusations were remotely correct, the *Staats-Zeitung* insisted. The Chicago City Council finished the running session and then left the

---

<sup>78</sup> “Der Starke Wille Des Volkes,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 16, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>79</sup> “COMMUNISM: The Anti-Fire Ordinance Demonstration Last Evening,” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, January 16, 1872.

<sup>80</sup> “Die Vorgänge von Montag Abend,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 17, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

chambers undisturbed, and then the people aired their grievances with dignity and without any of the rowdy chaos most of the Anglo-American papers described. The *Staats-Zeitung* insisted that, “The naturalized citizens are the BETTER AMERICANS because they insist that Chicago remain a city in which even the simple workman can live in his own little house, unlike those rude fat cats who demand that our workingmen be confined to dark barracks and demoted to the level of the European proletariat.” Both the proclamation that naturalized citizens made for the better, truer Americans due to their more social mindedness regarding the rights of the little people as well as the newspaper unfavorably comparing the conditions of the European working classes to those of America showcase the self-perception of the German Americans in this context. The editors admitted that things could have gone smoother and that the newspaper would have preferred a calm, unexcited passing of a signed resolution by the north side property owners to city council over the big protest march that occurred.

Meanwhile, Hesing wrote a lengthy explanation on his stance and role in the demonstration as a letter to the editor of the *Chicago Evening Post*, the original, German version of which appeared in the *Staats-Zeitung*. Several English language newspapers would reprint the letter as well.<sup>81</sup> In the letter, Hesing elaborated his stance on the fire boundaries issue, as well as the events of the protest and his role in them. He admitted and expressed regret about the protest turning riotous at some point, but also laid out in minute detail why the north siders would react as violently as they did to the proposed legislation. One issue was the cost differential between building in brick and

---

<sup>81</sup> Anton C. Hesing, “MR. A. C. HESING: He Makes an Explanation,” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, January 18, 1872.

stone compared with building in wood, especially on the north side lots. Due to the lots themselves being several feet below the street level, a brick building would require the erection of an elaborate foundation, which would “alone cost as much as an entire cottage built upon [wooden] posts.”<sup>82</sup> Hesing postulated that a brick house would incur about three times the cost of a wooden worker’s cottage, while the north side workers could not find buyers to sell these plots of lands at a margin that would allow them to buy land at a place somewhere around Chicago where they could then build in wood. The people felt trapped, burnt out by a force of nature and now thrown to the wolves by their elected officials with no way out. Hesing, ever the polemicist, saw himself as the voice of these people, which he portrayed as a coalition of “not just the *Dutch* and the *Irelanders*, but also such prominent American citizens such as Wm. B. Ogden, P. W. Gates, Gen. I. D. Webster, S. S. Hayes, C. Garfield, B.F. Winston and many others.”<sup>83</sup>

Another issue Hesing bemoaned in this letter was the unequal treatment of rich and poor, since richer Chicagoans, and especially richer Anglo-American Chicagoans had easier access to special exception waivers that still allowed them to build in wood. The *Chicago Times* had just recently erected a wooden building to house their printing presses, yet it was this very same newspaper that decried as fire starters those northsiders protesting the new fire boundaries. Hesing closed his letter with an appeal to patriotic spirit, which the *Staats-Zeitung* had put forth in similar ways already; one of the main reasons for Chicago’s growth and prosperity as a city, he argued, was that

---

<sup>82</sup> Anton C. Hesing, “Die Feuer-Verordnung Und Herr A.C. Hesing,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 18, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>83</sup> Hesing, “Die Feuer-Verordnung Und Herr A.C. Hesing,”

unlike in the big American cities on the Atlantic, a worker in Chicago could easily afford land and their own homes. This led to a rapid growth of the city and subsequent prosperity of which Chicagoans were indeed proud of. Therefore, outlawing the practices that had empowered workers in such a way would be detrimental to the city itself and its local patriotism.

The protest at city hall kept the city council and the *Staats-Zeitung* busy, both throwing accusations in different directions, while accusing the other side of lying. Mayor Medill, much to the German-Americans chagrin, ordered the fire ordinance passed: it established the city limits of Chicago as congruent with the fire boundaries within which no wooden buildings were allowed for the future, while all existing buildings were to be restored only with brick, stone, cement or metal.<sup>84</sup> Medill argued that the city council must not let itself be bullied into submission by an unruly mob. This the *Staats-Zeitung* countered, again, with an even more detailed breakdown of the events at the city hall protest. The editors explained that the actual riotous activities only lasted a few short minutes. The crowd had not forced its way into City Hall, indeed the sergeant at arms had allowed them in, and the entrance of the protesters was not, as it was reported in the *Times* and the *Tribune*, tumultuous and rowdy, but instead orderly and civilized. As the protesters were about to leave, the crowd mixed with the regular audience of the city council meeting, which quickly bottlenecked the exit and slowed the protesters' departure. And ultimately it was the police force itself who turned the protest into a riot, by pushing protestors down the stairs of city hall, insulting the German

---

<sup>84</sup> "Die Feuergrenzen-Ordinanzsitzung Des Stadtraths," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 18, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

element with harsh language and in general treating the -supposedly up to this point peaceful - crowd quite roughly—“like livestock.”<sup>85</sup> Therefore, the police in their eagerness to demonstrate their superiority to the immigrant element had been the ones who provoked a brick thrown at a policeman, it had been the police who were the true cause of the commotion, which was then in turn painted as a riot by the Anglo newspapers.

However, the tide would turn in favor of the north side Germans. On January 18, 1872 city council decided on a first draft of the fire boundary ordinance, excluding large parts of the north side from the requirement of building solely in non-flammable materials. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors contended that, “The infamous nativist rabble was called to help against the justified demands of small landowners and workers in vain by the aristocratic bigwigs.”<sup>86</sup> The newspaper continued to frame the debate on the fire boundaries as one of nativist agitation against immigrant communities. The editors frequently and very prominently invoked the past dread of know-nothingism against those voices that demanded the coexistent fire boundaries, and generally maintained the line that nativist Americans sought to gain an unfair advantage through city politics over those immigrant groups they despised. But now the immigrant interests had apparently won their first victory. City Council adopted what the *Staats-Zeitung* had suggested as a compromise on the fire boundaries, turning Chicago Avenue, Wells Street and North Street into the new fire boundaries for the time being. The newspaper stressed the

---

<sup>85</sup> “Die Große Demonstration,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 18, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>86</sup> “Die Feuer Verordnung,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 19, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).



important distinction between the fire boundaries on South- and West Sides and the regulations for the North Side: The former two covered areas of the city where no houses stood before the fire, therefore the fire boundaries in those parts of the city would only cover all new construction. On the north side meanwhile, the initially proposed coexistent fire and city boundaries would have covered large parts of town where people already lived, and where they were now in the process of rebuilding their lives.<sup>87</sup>

Alderman Thomas Carney laid out in the same city council meeting that decided on these fire boundaries, that the reporting by *Chicago Times* and *Tribune* on the purported riot that emanated from his ward was by no means accurate. The alderman explained that he indeed was initially against the now passed resolution of the fire ordinance, but that since his constituents were strongly opposed to their ward being included in the fire boundary, and since he had to stay accountable to the people who elected him, he saw no other proper action than to vote for the exclusion of his ward. He also defended Hesing from the various accusations leveled against him by the English language press: “to the best of my knowledge the actions of Mr. Hesing have nothing in common with the descriptions in the ‘Tribune’ and the ‘Times,’ those are also made up lies from beginning to end.”<sup>88</sup> Carney kept defending his constituents, especially the immigrants among them, against the English language press, which also fielded attacks against his own person and his participation in the demonstration that originated from his grocery store. During that night, the crowd had voted the alderman as the leader of

---

<sup>87</sup> “Die Feuer Verordnung.”

<sup>88</sup> “Der Erste Paragraph Der Feuergrenz-Ordinanz,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 19, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

the procession, without him even putting his hat in the ring. The German element was strong in Alderman Carney's ward, so he had an incentive to play towards the German-Americans' desires and to listen to their demands, which brought himself into the crosshairs of the English language press. But this also demonstrated again the influence the German ethnoscape had on politics of the state in a time of crisis.

The fire boundary dispute laid bare fault lines of not just nationalism and American nativism, but also of class. And the *Staats-Zeitung* was quick and eager to point this out. Wilbur Storey, the owner of the *Chicago Times*, used his paper during this time to continuously fan the flames of nativism against Chicago's immigrants, branding them as lawless rowdies in the wake of the protest at city hall, and printing vocal opposition to new fire boundaries that excluded the north side. Storey's publication strongly supported the coexistent fire boundaries. At the same time, however, Storey successfully lobbied city hall for a personal exemption that would allow himself the rebuilding the *Times* printing facilities in a wooden building. The *Staats-Zeitung* was outraged at this display of class privilege and hypocrisy, since the proposed, new wooden building was situated not just inside the new fire boundaries, but also inside the fire boundaries as they existed before the Great Fire.

This man uses his influence to enforce a privilege for himself to build what he himself calls "a tinderbox" in a place where wooden structures were forbidden long before October 8, 1871. And this same man wants to deny the poor German lot owners, whom the fire has left nothing but their construction sites the rebuilding of their cottages, far away from the city's commercial center.<sup>89</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> "Wilbur F. Storey Als Mordbrenner," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 19, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

He was still a rich man. The fire had damaged Storey's wealth but had not ruined him by any means. That the same man who riled his readership up against the German-American northsiders' efforts of rebuilding within their means was now seeking a personal exemption from the rules he himself lobbied for was certainly a bridge too far for the *Staats-Zeitung* and its editorship. The newspaper suggested Storey should receive another, "dose of Lydia Thompson"<sup>90</sup> referring to a February 1870 incident in which burlesque star Thompson, together with her husband and other members of her troupe, ambushed and whipped the *Times* owner and editor at gunpoint, after the *Times* printed insulting remarks about the dancers.<sup>91</sup> The suggestion alone contained a trace of class critique. Storey's paper had derided the dancers and questioned the moral integrity of the troupe leader, questioning whether the troupe's popularity with the people was due to low moral character of the masses.

Thompson was a widely known celebrity at the time, with the event taking place at the tail end of a tour of the eastern states. Her troupe—the "British Blondes," since Thompson was originally from London—popularized burlesque as a form of entertainment in the United States. The "Blondes" were the highest grossing theater performers of the 1868-1869 season in New York, and their performances were discussed in newspapers around the country. She is to be regarded as an early feminist, as her shows broke down walls and empowered women across America. Storey's disparaging remarks on the troupe stood fairly alone, his voice being one of very few

---

<sup>90</sup> "Wilbur F. Storey Als Mordbrenner."

<sup>91</sup> "AN EDITOR ASSAULTED: Mr. Storey, of the 'Times,' Attacked En the Street by Male and Female 'Blondes,'" *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, February 25, 1870.

larger publications critical of the ensemble—and of burlesque in general.<sup>92</sup> Therefore, his subsequent and well publicized punishment would be understood by the readers at the time as a middle-class revenge on a backwards, elitist moralizer, and in the end the episode only served to increase the popularity of the dancers.

The debate on the fire boundaries smoldered on in the following weeks, and Hesing used them to further his own political standing within the sixteenth ward and among the German-American community. He appeared in front of a crowd called for by the Anglophone press, at which a variety of north side citizens debated the fire boundaries. The north side would be condemned to become a shanty town if wooden cottages were still allowed, one speaker claimed, another voiced opposition to the rebuilding of the Schmidt brewery, while still others argued for a wider reaching inclusion of the ward into the fire boundaries. Hesing took to the stage, as the *Staats-Zeitung* claimed, demanded by a crowd of both Germans and Anglo-Americans, arguing that he would never agree to, “[...] letting the working people of the North Side being robbed of the usage of their construction sites [...]”.<sup>93</sup> He came to this conclusion due to his intimate knowledge of the ward’s needs, composition of the economic and commercial landscape and the pecuniary circumstances of the north side. Hesing was at this point an influential political boss, even though he never continuously held public office during his career. His political clout came from his newspaper primarily, and secondarily out of the deep personal and informal political connections he held within

---

<sup>92</sup> Robert C Allen and Alan Trachtenberg, *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 19.

<sup>93</sup> “Aus Der 16ten Ward,” January 22, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

the north side and beyond across the city, which was certainly strongest in the German-American community, but by no means limited to his countrymen.<sup>94</sup> His public actions and speeches given to the north side crowds illustrate how central a figure he was in the community at this time, and the kind of influence he wielded in the city.

The victory in the cause of the fire ordinance, aided by their newspaper, demonstrated the political reach that Hesing and Raster had acquired, and the German-American element through them. This episode demonstrated further how an ethnoscape—an immigrant community that is part of a greater whole—has the ability to influence the political developments of the countries in which it exists. The Great Fire also demonstrated how immigrant communities formed their distinct identities, as the German-American Chicagoans acted and perceived of themselves as Germans, as Americans and as Chicagoans, respectively. They navigated this smoldering landscape and reconvened after the smoke cleared, finding they needed to close ranks, keep up their close connections to their countrymen abroad and rally behind the cause and course that Hermann Raster and Anton Hesing laid out in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. The newspaper fulfilled several crucial functions during these months, first organizing the remains of German-American Chicago, but also serving as a lifeline both for individuals of the community, and for the northside Germans collectively, through facilitating foreign and domestic charitable donations. When Hesing returned to Chicago in early November 1872, the newspaper shifted its focus from one of mostly facilitating practical rebuilding efforts and coordinating meetings, to one of political

---

<sup>94</sup> Peter H. Olden, “Anton C. Hesing: The Rise of a Chicago Boss,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 35, no. 3 (1942): 261.

agitation. Hesing's attention to the election of Joseph Medill and the subsequent political machinations surrounding the new fire ordinance were maybe less immediately practical, however his efforts arguably prevented north side German Chicago from legally enforced extinction. Hesing and his newspaper would wield this political power in the troublesome years to come to great effect.

### **Two Immigration Experiences Clash: The Hesing-Collyer Exchange**

The intersection of issues in the ongoing dispute coalesced into a discussion on American citizenship. Class, nationalism as well as nativism and the question of national origins congealed into a new dispute over what it meant to be a good citizen and a good American. The German-Americans claimed for themselves the banner of superior citizenship, while proclaiming that the native-born citizens no longer lived up to the ideals laid out in the United States' founding documents. This supposedly better understanding and superior practice of American values must be understood as originating with the forty-eighters and their special relationship to the United States and the role the country played for them as a political role-model. In late January 1872, a new voice sounded out loudly in the debate on the fire ordinance and the place of immigrants in American society: the voice of Robert Collyer, pastor of the Unity Church of Chicago. The unitarian minister and head of one of the city's richest churches had attained modest celebrity when an illustration of him preaching to his congregation in the open, just outside his burnt-down church, was featured in *Harper's Weekly* in early

November 1871.<sup>95</sup> The minister addressed Anton Hesing directly in an open letter published in several of Chicago's most prominent newspapers.<sup>96</sup>

The contents of the letter alone again demonstrated the reach of the German-American ethnoscape, as Collyer opened with an anecdote on how he and Hesing last met on Fourth of July the year prior in the city of Heidelberg, where they both—as Americans—celebrated their chosen country's independence. Collyer himself was a Yorkshireman, who immigrated to the United States at the age of twenty-six. Both these immigrants and naturalized American citizens celebrated the American national holiday, a holiday of the country they immigrated to, in Germany, a country that was foreign to one and familiar yet also strange to the other. After all, Hesing emigrated from Germany in 1839, a full thirty-two years prior, before the revolutions of 1848 and the unification of the country into the German Empire in 1871. This incident certainly highlighted the malleability of nationalist belongings. Both Collyer and Hesing understood themselves as Americans, although Hesing's self-perception as such was complicated by his country of origin not being anglophone and culturally different from anglophone societies. Collyer appealed now to the *Staats-Zeitung* publisher on the basis of their common experience of poverty in Europe followed by prosperity in America. The poor immigrant who came to the United States would find opportunities there that they could never dream of in the old country. Collyer argued, that because of these opportunities, any immigrant to the United States had a duty towards that new country to not forego temporary hardship because the immigrant could be all but certain that

---

<sup>95</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 154.

<sup>96</sup> Smith, *Chicago's Great Fire*, 172.

more opportunities to lift themselves from this hardship anew would present themselves: “Gentlemen, poor as we are, our position is too high to let us make poverty our plea for doing such a thing as this. It might be a decent thing to do where the poor man has no chance to get along and must always take an inferior position because of his birth and breeding;”<sup>97</sup> Because the poor in America were not as poor as those of Europe, where status and class was much more calcified, society could demand more of the poor in America.

Like Collyer himself years before, the poor of Europe arrived on American shores with little more than what they could carry on their backs but could establish themselves relatively easily within American socio-economic structures. Therefore, demanding sacrifice of the poor for a greater good that eventually allowed them to rise from poverty again could not be a thing someone like Hesing, who himself worked his way out of European poverty, could outright deny. Collyer saw this as a duty that poor immigrants owed to the country. Hesing and his editors, unsurprisingly, did not agree.

Hesing used the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung* to counter the suggestions and implied accusations the minister leveled at not just the publisher, but seemingly the entire German-American community of Chicago. “Suffering from the sickly delusion that is quite common with men of the cloth, that his intervention in a public discussion had to crucially contribute to clearing up the conflicting views, Mr. Collyer gives a highly unctuous sermon, over Mr. Hesing’s head, to the German-Americans regarding their

---

<sup>97</sup> “The Duty of Foreign-Born Citizens--Letter from the Rev. Robert Collyer to Mr. A.C.Hesing.,” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, January 19, 1872.



civic duties.”<sup>98</sup> This was the *Staats-Zeitung* after all, a newspaper that would not forget its forty-eighter roots and the anti-clericalism inherent in these men’s ideology. Even if Hesing himself was not a forty-eighter and held Collyer in quite high regard for a church man, the editorship could not possibly let this confrontation pass without snide commentary. The newspaper ran both translations of the open letter Collyer wrote to the *Tribune*, as well as Hesing’s original, German language replies to these letters. Additionally, the newspaper’s staff provided editorials commenting on the exchange. They accused Collyer of not knowing what he was getting himself into with this debate, claiming the minister only parroted the *Tribune* lines—especially in regards to the city hall protest of January 15—and skirted close to openly insulting the unitarian on grounds of his religious affiliation.

This exchange of letters was more than just a practical issue. It was a public negotiation of the role, duties and sacrifices immigrant Americans should play, fulfill and bring into American society. “Is it that the immigrants come to this country as BEGGARS who have to be fed out of compassion? Or would it be actually all right if the Americans ate them up like savage Fiji-islanders, so that one would have to be grateful for not being eaten?”<sup>99</sup> Hermann Raster, who undoubtedly penned this particular commentary, pointed out that Collyer’s immigration experience was by no means a universally-shared one. Collyer was extremely fortunate in finding a more lucrative employment within the first month of his living in America. Most other immigrants, Raster included, spent months if not years before their income approached the levels

---

<sup>98</sup> “Priester Und Laie,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 23, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>99</sup> “Priester Und Laie.”

they earned in Europe prior to immigration. Certainly Raster, Hesing and Collyer were well-off immigrants at this point in 1872, but out of these three, two had spent years toiling in menial jobs. Raster worked as a farmhand in Pennsylvania and Hesing in various industries and trades before attaining some financial security in the United States.

Regarding the issue of lacking gratitude that Collyer made out among the German-Americans, the newspapermen countered that the immigrant had few things to be grateful about towards Americans in the first place. After all, the American economy and industry benefitted from the immigrant's labor as much as the immigrants benefitted from American wages. "Only among a people which harbors at the core of its soul the idea that the 'stranger' should consider himself lucky being let into the country can such an opinion as the one expressed by Mr. Collyer [...] be found as justified."<sup>100</sup> Raster closed the article by pointing out that Collyer was wrong, the Americans were the ones who owed a debt of gratitude to the immigrants who helped keep the country and American society afloat. The entire fire boundary dispute was turning into a public argument on the role of immigrants for and in American society, with both opposing parties arguing that theirs was the side of the true American spirit.

Compared to Raster's grumbling commentary, Hesing's struck a much more conciliatory tone in his open letter reply. But he also quickly pointed out what he saw as a hypocrisy on the minister's part: when Collyer first arrived in Chicago, the home he built was, too, a cottage made of wood, as was the first chapel he and his congregation

---

<sup>100</sup> "Priester Und Laie."

built. The open response mostly conveyed Hesing's deep disappointment that the minister would align with the fire-proof side in the dispute, since Hesing thought the minister a man who understood well the plight of the little people. He retorted the minister's opening anecdote about meeting Hesing in Heidelberg and saluting the Stars and Stripes by stating "The FLAG indeed, my dear Mr. Collyer, under which you bared your head belonged to your most humble servant A.C. Hesing, who had it made as soon as he arrived in Germany."<sup>101</sup> Hesing professed that he did not intend to follow the example of many Americans coming to Europe, who left all vestiges of republicanism behind in America, unable to resist the temptation of the lives of European nobles. Here Hesing demonstrated a decidedly first-generation immigrant variation of American nationalism, which in its fervor appears not too dissimilar from that of a proverbial recent convert to a new religion.

Hesing saw himself as American. German-American to be sure, but still as someone indebted to the republican and democratic ideals of his new home country, which he perceived in almost all aspects as an improvement upon the circumstances he left behind in the old world. This was a somewhat contradictory stance. Hesing was, after all, very openly and very proudly German when in America, so it seems counterintuitive that he became proudly and openly American when returning to Germany; this was however not uncommon among German-Americans of his generation. Hesing laid out his experience of raising the American flag Collyer spoke of in the various countries of Europe he traveled through the year prior, and how he found

---

<sup>101</sup> "Die Collyer-Hesing'sche Correspondenz," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 23, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

no European who would disrespect this flag in any way similar to that of Americans dismissing, disparaging and disrespecting the flags of their immigrant countrymen. Of course, the social dynamics in these two situations were quite different. Hesing was a guest, a traveler in Europe with no intentions of staying, whereas immigrants in America who retained national pride towards their countries of origins often came there to stay permanently. Which meant that a refusal to let go of the respective old countries and their national symbols could be interpreted as a refusal to integrate into American society, whereas an American flag flown abroad did not signify these same things.

Hesing however, saw himself as nothing but, “in all my thoughts and senses American, I do not require ANY lessons in the duties and obligations of adopted, and I surely can bring up better proof of this than a few tears of joy shed upon beholding the Star Sprangled Banner.”<sup>102</sup> He went on laying out his personal immigration experience, in which he came to the United States after the death of both parents, leaving the inheritance to his siblings in a bout of - as he confessed - youthful recklessness, before leaving the country to “go make my own fate”<sup>103</sup> in the United States. And unlike the English native speaker Collyer who found America open, uplifting and welcoming, Hesing’s experience in the United States was anything but. “You have not witnessed it, Mr. Collyer, but I HAVE witnessed how hordes of blood lusting Americans burned down the churches of the ‘damned Dutch’.”<sup>104</sup> Hesing pointed at a critical difference between immigrant groups in the U.S. As English-speakers, new immigrants from England could

---

<sup>102</sup> “Die Collyer-Hesing’sche Correspondenz.”

<sup>103</sup> “Die Collyer-Hesing’sche Correspondenz.”

<sup>104</sup> “Die Collyer-Hesing’sche Correspondenz.”

easily disappear into American society without any American having reason for questioning their American-ness. But those who could not, whose language and customs differed from that of Anglophone society and who therefore could not conceal their immigrant status, had to persistently live with nativist Americans questioning – if not denying – their American-ness during the heyday of know-nothingism in the 1840s and 50s.

Hesing's reply in this very agitated and almost openly insulted way to Collyer's reprimand was hardly surprising—for all his faults, in 1872 Hesing had spent more than a decade working for and with the German-American community of Chicago, shepherding this group of immigrants towards a position of general respectability and influence within the city. Having the integrity and proper Americanness of his group now challenged again, and in this open and straightforward way, after all the things he and the other *Staats-Zeitung* luminaries struggled for and achieved in the years before the fire gave rise to a palpable frustration. He went on to detail his various involvements in American politics, from Pennsylvania to Cincinnati to Chicago. Hesing had a long history of political and commercial activity in the United States—after all, he spent the better part of his life there. And now he was in a position where he could wield the experience wrought from these years of political engagement and economic activity. He used his connections to organize mass gatherings at which the north siders conferred and voted on the fire ordinances. This was his evidence against any accusations against him of a lack of American virtue and disregard of American values. “Neither Mr. Medill nor the publishers of two or three newspapers are the entirety of the people of Chicago. The opinions of the people are usually, following American tradition, expressed in

popular gatherings.”<sup>105</sup> This, lastly, was Hesing’s point to prove his and his German-American comrades’ American virtue: deciding as a community, at a mass gathering, through a democratic process. How could anyone deny these people had an understanding American values, or the duties and obligations of a true American citizen?

The Collyer-Hesing exchange was a brief moment during which the whole conflict regarding the fire borders was boiled down to its essence: perceived and real discrimination of the German element in Chicago on the one hand, and differences in the conception of what American civic duties meant to which respective group on the other. The exchange brought these issues into Chicago’s mainstream press, but English-speaking Chicago remained suspicious towards the German element’s interests. Presbyterian minister Abbot Kittridge related to his congregation the dangers of the German mob. The *Staats-Zeitung* used this as an opportunity to rail against American religion in general and what the editorship felt was a blind following of whatever their respective newspapers of choice said about any given topic. “In no country in the world exists such a grip upon the spiritual and mental live of the people as it does with the Anglo-American press and its readership.”<sup>106</sup>

Kittridge, the *Staats-Zeitung* laid out, recited the tale of the German mob storming City Hall and warned his congregation of the dangers the out-of-control northsiders posed to the city and to decent Americans at large. The minister using his

---

<sup>105</sup> “Die Collyer-Hesing’sche Correspondenz.”

<sup>106</sup> “Das Amerikanische Evangelium,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 30, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

pulpit to disseminate the tenor of Anglo-American newspaper reporting, which the *Staats-Zeitung* decried as overblown and nativist in previous editions and issues, was a particular thorn in the side of the German-Americans. Their anti-clericalism was fueled by the circumstances of this renewed attack that brought the issue of the supposed storm on city hall back into people's minds. That this minister now, unlike Collyer, used his position to whip up a renewed fear of German America infuriated the *Staats-Zeitung* editors, especially since to the editorship it confirmed their own bias that Americans tended to take what their newspapers of choice wrote as gospel – in this case, literally.

Wilhelm Rapp, who went back to Baltimore to resume editorship of the *Baltimore Wecker* in 1866, left Baltimore for Chicago and the offices of the *Staats-Zeitung* on January 20, 1872. He left the *Wecker* with his longtime friend and colleague Wilhelm Schnauffer and a man by the name of Georg Blumenthal, who bought out Rapp's part of the Baltimore newspaper. Rapp's former colleagues at the *Staats-Zeitung* welcomed him back enthusiastically: "We do not need to introduce Wilhelm RAPP to the Chicago's German audience, because the same remembers him . . . as a fighter for the justified idiosyncrasies of the German element."<sup>107</sup> Rapp promptly also re-integrated himself into local German-American politics. Two days after his arrival, he gave a speech at a mass gathering of the German Workers' Association, speaking on the contribution of German workers to Chicago: "The German worker really represents the true all-American working class. The Germans have defended, as against the greedy land monopoly, the rights of the free working class and have prevented the big money-

---

<sup>107</sup> "Wilhelm Rapp," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 30, 1872, Newberry Library (my translation).

bags from gobbling up the plots of the laboring people and from bringing the worker into the same dependent position as in the big cities of Europe and, in part, in the East of the United States.”<sup>108</sup>

Rapp, in conjunction with his *Staats-Zeitung* colleagues, connected the fight for self-determination and ownership rights with American values, while also arguing in a very similar vein as Hering and the *Staats-Zeitung* did before: that owning one’s own home instead of renting a small, crowded apartment in a tenement building, was a true fulfillment of the promise of America to its citizens. Rapp contended that American nativists trampled upon this promise when those the promise benefitted were seen or portrayed as fundamentally un-American, as outside of the Anglo-American body politic. In his view, this nativist reading was too narrow in regard to what American was intended to mean: “Since the great catastrophe it has been tried to take away by decree Chicago's cosmopolitan character. Nativistic tendencies have bared the poison fangs. The German, by nature, is cosmopolitan, very likely to get peaceably along with others, very indulgent of their pretensions.”<sup>109</sup> Chicago was a cosmopolitan city that espoused deeply entrenched American values. Therefore, if nativists attempted to turn it into less of a cosmopolitan city, these efforts would make the city less American, not more.

The fire ordinance dispute eventually concluded in a way satisfactory for the German-Americans. Mayor Medill signed the ordinance into law on February 14, 1872, and thus put an end to the ongoing conflict. The new ordinance excluded the German-

---

<sup>108</sup> “[The Chicago Fire and Prevention of Its Recurrence],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 29, 1872, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0645](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0645).

<sup>109</sup> “[The Chicago Fire and Prevention of Its Recurrence].”



American part of the north side, while also covering a significantly larger part of the city in general. The ruling also put harsher penalties in place for infractions. The area that was covered by the ordinance on the north side was industrial, not residential, and certainly not consisting of small immigrant plots.<sup>110</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* did not waste any time to capitalize on this victory for them and their readership.

Not without some satisfaction can we look back on a fight, in which the Illinois Staats Zeitung in the beginning stood all alone and later on, supported only by the smallest of the English evening papers, had to face not only the whole English daily press but even the pulpit; - a fight in which the brutal despicableness of the adversary went so far as to threaten us even with criminal indictments and the promise of a sentence for rebellion; a fight from which we finally emerged as victors.<sup>111</sup>

The editorship provided a suitable bookend to the immediate aftereffects of the Great Fire by reminding the readers of the issues now put to rest. The new ordinance itself bore the traces of the long dispute, as well as compromise in some areas where diverging understandings of civic obligations in regards of fire safety clashed. But ultimately, the fire-boundaries dispute's outcome proved a victory for Helsing, Raster and their constituency. The immigrants on the North Side had retained their right to rebuild their homes—in wood.<sup>112</sup> Raster's mentor Carl Elze also, stayed informed of the Great Fire and its aftermath while residing in Dessau. Elze had a personal contact in Chicago in addition to Raster, who frequently provided updates on his former mentee. He commented on both Raster's and the city's reemergence from the fire, concluding that,

---

<sup>110</sup> "THE NEW FIRE ORDINANCE.: The Omitted Enforcing Clause--Penalty of Violating the Provisions of the Ordinance.," *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.*, February 14, 1872.

<sup>111</sup> "[The Fire Limits Problem]," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 14, 1872, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0642](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0642).

<sup>112</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 159.

“Such a devastating blow but also such an immense force of life are only possible in America, in our worn out ways of life such a thing could not happen—it would need another war with France.”<sup>113</sup>

The victory in the cause of the fire ordinance, aided by his newspaper, demonstrated the political reach that Hesing and Raster had acquired, and the German-American element through them. This episode demonstrated further how an ethnoscape—an immigrant community that is part of a greater whole—had the ability to influence the political developments of the countries in which it exists. The German-American Chicagoans acted as Germans, as Americans and as Chicagoans, respectively. They navigated this smoldering landscape and reconvened after the smoke cleared, finding they needed to close ranks, keep up their close connections to their countrymen abroad and rally behind the cause and course that Hermann Raster and Anton Hesing laid out in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. The newspaper fulfilled several crucial functions during these months, first organizing the remains of German-American Chicago, but also serving as a lifeline both for individuals of the community, and for the northside Germans collectively, through facilitating foreign and domestic charitable donations.

When Hesing's returned to Chicago in early November 1872, the newspaper shifted its focus from one of mostly facilitating practical rebuilding efforts and coordinating meetings to one of political agitation. Hesing's attention to the election of Joseph Medill and the subsequent political machinations surrounding the new fire ordinance were maybe less immediately practical. However, his efforts arguably

---

<sup>113</sup> Carl Elze, “Elze Letter to Raster, Dessau,” May 11, 1872, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

prevented north side German Chicago from legally enforced extinction. Hesing and his newspaper would wield this political power in the troublesome years to come to great effect.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE PEOPLE'S PARTY OF CHICAGO

#### ***The Staats-Zeitung as part of a Political Machine***

The 1870s and 1880s were a period marked by accelerating industrialized capitalism and increasingly violent labor struggles. In this socio-political climate, Chicago not only rebuilt but explosively expanded, rising like the proverbial phoenix from the ashes of the Great Fire of 1871. The German-American community was at the center of these issues. The growing number of labor opportunities in the city on the one hand, and a socio-political climate hostile to organized labor in the newly-founded German Empire on the other provided the push-and-pull factors that swept a new wave of immigrant laborers from Germany into Chicago. This generation of truly working-class radicals acted in ways that most German-American Chicagoans found distasteful.

Political actors and agitators like Anton C. Hesing tried using these new immigrant groups to further their own political agendas, with mixed results. Hesing's efforts to organize a populist party in Chicago was intermittently successful in challenging Mayor Joseph Medill. But his People's Party fell apart soon after the mayor, Harvey Doolittle Colvin, failed to significantly challenge the power of Chicago's industrialists in the ongoing labor struggles. More significantly, the aging German revolutionaries were themselves becoming part of the status quo came in 1877, when the Great Railroad Strike shook the city and the nation. Instead of supporting the cause of

the railroad workers, the forty-eighters wrote angry screeds, scolding both the strikers and their demands, which the German-American newspapermen derided as unreasonable. In their private lives, the forty-eighters reflected upon the paths they had taken, with some temporarily returning to Germany. The men were getting old, and they began to look backwards, taking stock of their lives.

The owner and publisher of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* Anton C. Hesing used his political clout and the influence of his newspaper to create a short-lived, local political party that challenged the city's political establishment. These undertakings demonstrated the power that the local German diaspora had in the city, and the intense, public disputes during the run-up to the election showed the saliency and political yield that national identity and group belonging could have. Hesing's efforts were instigated by a resurgence of anti-immigrant sentiment in city politics, that in turn was a reaction to an increase in violent crime and labor unrest that ran through the city in waves. The problems increased after the Panic of 1873 caused ongoing financial problems that impacted the city's blossoming industrial capitalists and resulted in surges of unemployment as well as in repeated shortages of physical money. The *Staats-Zeitung* editorship faced a series of issues in the early 1870s, first and foremost related to labor issues which impacted the city. The group around A.C. Hesing deployed several means to hold on to their powerful positions, not all of them legal or morally sound. Further, the political ideology of the forty-eighters themselves changed, as they increasingly defended their entrenched, comfortable positions at the top of their community.

Hesing first had the idea to counter the re-emerging nativism among Chicago's elites with a political populist party in the fall and winter of 1872 and worked towards

the organization of this party for a year before the mayoral elections in November 1873. The political victory of the People's Party however coincided with the financial crisis and panic of 1873. The fallout of this economic upheaval heavily impacted Chicago's already strained labor market, causing more and steeper unemployment and social unrest that Hesing's party of corrupt self-servers and political opportunists was utterly incapable of quelling. Also, the kind of populism that Hesing espoused did not create a long-lasting alliance with the new immigrant workers arriving in the city. Hesing and his forty-eighters editorship had enjoyed broad backing by Chicago's working population in the past. But the new arrivals were industrial workers that the ageing revolutionaries had no connection to, which in turn lowered any political influence Hesing, his newspaper and his political party could have had on the new immigrants beyond the short but intense campaign season leading up to the mayoral election of 1873.

### **The City, Labor and Immigrants after the Great Fire**

The forty-eighters in their positions as community leaders of the German diaspora in the United States traditionally spoke for the workers among their countrymen. This was especially true, as historian John Jentz notes, during the earlier years of Chicago's German-American community in the 1850s and early 1860s. The *Staats-Zeitung* maintained mostly friendly relationships with the local labor associations and craft unions. During these formative years of German-Chicago the forty-eighters involved themselves in all aspects of building their community. But when this formative period ended—and many men died on the battlefields of the Civil War during the 1860s—the forty-eighters increasingly retreated from labor issues and allied themselves with German-born entrepreneurs, leaving the field to new labor

organizations, evidenced by the rise in labor publications beginning later in that decade.<sup>1</sup>

Following the turmoil of the fire boundaries dispute in 1872, the city quietly settled back into a new sense of normalcy. Most citizens focused on rebuilding what the Great Fire destroyed. Restoring the city provided many people with new jobs, but Chicago's workers alone were not sufficient to shoulder the herculean reconstruction efforts. In the aftermath of the fire, Chicago citizens employed a significantly larger number of workers than all the rest of Cook County in 1870. A considerable number of these workers came to the city specifically for the prospects of jobs in the booming construction industry, arriving from all over the United States, but also from abroad. American and European newspapers advertised that Chicago required an untold number of laborers.<sup>2</sup> The construction industry in particular benefitted from this large influx of strangers to the city, but what was a boon to some, others regarded with suspicion and concern. In a letter to the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* in March 1872 Chicago citizen John J. Bradley lamented that newspapers in England advertised to young men, "that there is an unlimited demand for labor in this city."<sup>3</sup> But while the newspapers and various construction companies dutifully worked to attract more and more laborers to the city, Mr. Bradley remarked, the city would undoubtedly disappoint

---

<sup>1</sup> John Jentz, "Chicago Radicalism – Nineteenth Century Style," in: Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James Philip Danky (ed.), *The German-American Radical Press: The Shaping of a Left Political Culture, 1850-1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 49.

<sup>2</sup> John B. Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (University of Illinois Press, 2012), 141.

<sup>3</sup> John J. Bradley, "The Labor Market--A Warning.," *Chicago Tribune*, March 18, 1872.

on fulfilling the promises of significantly higher wages and boundless opportunities for employment for many. This would leave Chicago and its citizens to deal with a destitute horde of unemployed workers who “left a good situation in England and had to sell all they had to get a small sum to take them to the railway to work as laborers.”<sup>4</sup>

As the construction season began in spring of 1872, many Chicago laborers voiced displeasure with both compensation and working conditions in the city. The German-American editors at the *Staats-Zeitung* initially voiced an understanding for both issues. The large number of newly-arrived workers confronted Hesing and his political allies with a conundrum. Just as they had celebrated the victory for Chicago’s German workers in the fire boundary dispute, the newly arriving unskilled industrial laborers threatened to upset this success. After all, Hesing and his newspaper lobbied for and won the new fire boundaries so the workers of German origin could remain homeowners, free from the financial pressures of renting. Now though, a new generation of workers arrived in the city. Many sold their last belongings to pay for the journey, just to make it to Chicago only to face disappointment: the sheer number of the newly-arriving workers depressed wages. These new arrivals lacked the means to join the ranks of homeowners—who were the essential independent German-American workers that Hesing and his editors championed. This older generation of workers was predominantly skilled, still more at home in the pre-industrialized world of artisans and small shop owners. These workers owned small plots of real estate with a traditional worker’s cottage on it. The new arrivals were of a new age, industrial workers,

---

<sup>4</sup> Bradley.



semiskilled or unskilled labor. These workers did not own much more than the clothes on their backs. Unable to afford to buy their own homes, the circumstances forced them to rent housing. But even paying rent proved difficult with such low wages. Once again, the threat of strikes began to loom.<sup>5</sup>

The issue of lower-class housing revealed how the political outlook of the forty-eighters became more conservative, especially in comparison with newly emerging sentiments on class, labor issues and housing. Historian Elaine Lewinnek states that in the aftermath of the Chicago Fire organizations like the Relief and Aid Society sought to replace crowded barracks with individual worker's cottages as quickly as possible. Urban apartment living was generally regarded as filthy, morally dangerous and a hotbed for vice, crime and perpetual impoverishment of those forced to engage in it. The counterpoint to this sentiment came from Friedrich Engels, who stated that workers who own property and real estate are less free than those who live in apartment dwellings. In Engels view real estate ownership bound workers to the land and limited their freedom of movement, as well as impact their willingness to strike. After all, striking might result in missed mortgage payments, and that in turn could result in big losses of property. Workers who owned property could be easier coerced by the upper classes since owning property gave the factory owners leverage they could use against the worker. A worker who merely rented their dwelling could simply move on to the next

---

<sup>5</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 153.

apartment. In this question the forty-eighters sided against Engels' sentiment, and with that of the Relief and Aid Society.<sup>6</sup>

This was a difficult situation for the *Staats-Zeitung*. The newspaper could not easily side with the factory owners without alienating Helsing's broader constituency. The editors could also not openly attack newly arriving German immigrants without appearing grossly hypocritical, even if their presence threatened the just-won political gains. Eventually, the editors sympathized with the strikers, suggesting that it was not the workers who were to blame but that, "It would be far better to direct moral indignation against the usurers who make life hard for the worker." Factory owners, the newspaper suggested, should be taken to task and willingly agree to demands for higher wages. The editors disagreed that using force by engaging work stoppages and strikes could compel employers to cede to the workers' demands.<sup>7</sup>

Chicago's organized labor felt rightfully exposed by the new arrivals who lacked union memberships, who by their sheer numbers threatened to undermine union efforts, if not union power all together. To ameliorate this issue, the various trade unions of Chicago organized a grand demonstration on May 15. While the Chicago papers reported that this labor march was an effort to force employers to shorten the workday to eight hours without pay cuts, the organizers of the march made it clear that this was

---

<sup>6</sup> Elaine Lewinnek, *"Domestic and Respectable": Property-Owner Politics after the Great Chicago Fire, The Working Man's Reward* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 50, <https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199769223.001.0001/acprof-9780199769223-chapter-2>.

<sup>7</sup> "An Editorial on Strikes," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 3, 1872, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_0332](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_0332).

not the case. The issue of the gathering was not even wage increases. The union members had a different message, a different cause for this protest: a demonstration of trade union strength. The intended audience for this march were not the city's industrialists, capitalists and employers, but the non-unionized new workers, who the city lured in with the prospects of boundless job opportunities. The German-American editors noted that the organizers' "idea was the show their [the unions'] strength, and induce strangers [ newly arrived workers] to join them."<sup>8</sup> The march did not attract as many participants as the unions anticipated however. Fewer than 3,000 people marched through the streets of the city. The editors at the *Chicago Tribune* remarked that this demonstrated only the lack of the strength that the unions intended to show, but the newspaper also repeated the claims the unions themselves made that the march was not about wages or the length of the workday, but about attracting new members.<sup>9</sup>

Ethnic tensions among different ethnic immigrant groups, in this case Irish, German and Scandinavian, resurfaced during the labor disputes throughout 1872. In late May of the year, the *Staats-Zeitung* reported on a strike at a Chicago coal yard led by unionized workers, who attempted to force the owner of the coal yard Robert Law to exclusively employ unionized labor. The result of the strike was that the proprietor of the coal yard dismissed all the striking workers, and replaced them with cheaper, non-unionized labor. This was not an unusual outcome of labor disputes at this time. Nor

---

<sup>8</sup> "THE LABOR DEMONSTRATION: Of Capitalists and Contractors Concerning the 15th of May Trades-Union Exhibition," *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872); Chicago, Ill.*, May 4, 1872.

<sup>9</sup> "THE SONS OF TOIL: Labor Demonstration in the Streets of Chicago Yesterday," *Chicago Tribune*, May 16, 1872.

was it unusual that employers would play one ethnic group of workers against another, which also happened at this coal yard, to which the *Staats-Zeitung* editor remarked snidely: “Those who he employed, heretofore, were all Irish, now Mr. Law is trying it with Germans and Scandinavians exclusively.”<sup>10</sup> The *Chicago Tribune* reported on the same strike, but only mentioned that the strikers were unionized workers, while those men who replaced them were not. However one of two strikers who assaulted a replacement was cited as “McLaughlin”—an Irish surname, while one of the men injured bore the name Joseph Gunther—a name that sounded thoroughly German.<sup>11</sup>

These tensions between Irish and German-American workers continued throughout the year. *Staats-Zeitung* editors reported with overt *schadenfreude* when a group of Irish and German-American workers clashed at Jones Fire-Kiln that, “the Irish could not endure the praises the Germans were receiving from their employers for their application and temperance.”<sup>12</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung*, rather than showing solidarity across ethnic lines, as employers pitted groups against each other, implied that the reason the Irish workers were replaced with Germans was that the Irish were plain lazy in comparison to the Germans. This too was a side effect of the ongoing effort to assimilate the German-American element into American mainstream society, which by and large was at best suspicious of the Irish and at worst hostile towards them. And

---

<sup>10</sup> “[Coal Yard Strike],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 28, 1872, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_0156](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_0156).

<sup>11</sup> “CITY IN BRIEF.: Personal Items. Difficulty in the Coal Yards. Meteorological. Everything;,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 29, 1872.

<sup>12</sup> “Fight between Irish and German’s,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 17, 1872, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_1116](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_1116).

while German and Irish immigrants alike faced derision and hostility, situations like the one in the coal yard ultimately prevented the emergence of a class-based, inter-ethnic group solidarity.

The rising groundswell of newcomers from Europe arriving in Chicago presented new opportunities for swindlers to exploit them—a circumstance of which the *Staats-Zeitung* was painfully aware. After all, the editors had experienced their own arrivals as greenhorns in a country that did not lack individuals and organizations seeking to exploit them. This prompted Hesing to form an alliance with the German Society, led by George Schneider, a Civil War veteran and predecessor of Hesing and Raster as owner and editor-in-chief at their newspaper. In this instance, Hesing acted like a traditional political boss – visibly throwing his aid behind efforts to prevent further harm done to people of his own ethnicity—which was likely to make the newcomers amicable towards him as well as his political camp. Hesing and Schneider, in their official roles as leaders of the German Society and *Staats-Zeitung* respectively, consulted with the railroad police of Chicago on how to best benefit the newcomers. The German-American men’s goal was to, “have policemen stationed at railway stations to be on the look-out for immigrants.”<sup>13</sup> With the assistance of the police, the men hoped that immigrants newly arriving by rail could be steered away from ruthless businessmen seeking to exploit their ignorance. In the article an omnibus company run by a Mr. Parmelee appears as an example. “Too often a family of immigrants had to pay from five

---

<sup>13</sup> “The German Society and the Immigrants.,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 16, 1872, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_11\\_0643](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_11_0643).

dollars to six dollars to be brought to their hotel just a few blocks away, since the price in the Parmelee bus is fifty cents per person.”<sup>14</sup> Further, the two men tried to convince the Chicago Police to hand out deputations to the agents of the German Society. Openly protecting newly arrived German-Americans in this way served more than just the purpose of keeping their countrymen safe, it was also a way to curry political favors with part of the German-American electorate, newly-arrived and established alike.

Hesing and the *Staats-Zeitung* luminaries had a vested interest in bringing the new working people on to their side. The coalescing immigrant working class of the city was in the process of slipping through their fingers. The forty-eighters and their newspaper were by this point parts of the establishment, of the status quo, of the bourgeoisie. While Hesing certainly was not unsympathetic to the plight of the working people, he ultimately no longer shared their interests and self-identification. As early as 1867, German workers founded a local chapter of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein* (ADAV – Universal German Worker’s Association) under the leadership of carpenter Albrecht Strehlow. This marked another moment of transnational German unity and the emergence of a new branch of the German ethnoscape. German workers began to develop class consciousness and no longer felt adequately represented by the establishment community leaders, both in Germany and abroad. This split between the older generations of workers who owned property and the newer generation who did not continued throughout the 1870s and 1880s. The German ADAV under leadership of Ferdinand Lasalle was a foundational element of German socialism and social

---

<sup>14</sup> “The German Society and the Immigrants.”

democracy. Lasalle himself was also a forty-eighter revolutionary and had taken part in the uprisings on the extreme left end of the political spectrum, and stood in close contact with Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Unlike the Chicago forty-eighters he did not flee the country after the revolutions. Instead Lasalle continued his political agitation in the workingmen's milieu across the country.

The Chicago chapter differed in some ways from the original German organization. In Germany, the ADAV functioned more like a proper political party. Also, the German ADAV was primarily made up of artisan workers with little representation of the new, lower skilled, industrial factory labor. The Chicago chapter had more in common with a trade union than with a political party. Also, the makeup of Chicago's working population was different than that of Germany at the time, with a higher percentage of industrial workers, who felt they were not well represented by the local forty-eighter leadership and their newspapers. Because of this, the ADAV pushed for the founding of a German language workingmen's newspaper in the 1870s—which meant that Chicago's German workers would neither contribute financially to the *Staats-Zeitung's* success nor could they be reached through the newspaper run by the forty-eighter establishment. With their own newspaper, the new working class created their own, sequestered public sphere, free of the influence of the old establishment represented by the forty-eighters. This effectively meant that the German-American community of laboring people experienced an internal divide. The older generations of artisans and skilled laborers were loyal to Hesing and the *Staats-Zeitung*, while the new generation of lower-skilled industrial workers flocked to the socialist institutions like the ADAV. The new arrivals identified as working-class in the modern sense. The older

generation of workers owned their homes and often also their own shops. These workers were socialized as such before the rise of industrial capitalism and the emergence of a modern class consciousness. Since the new generation effectively saw itself as having adjacent but yet different interests from the old, these new workers sought to establish their own informational infrastructure to pursue their own, specific ends, without much of the aid and if possible free of the influence of the old generation and people like A.C. Hesing.<sup>15</sup>

It was not that the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship was in general unsympathetic towards the working-class Germans of Chicago or the ADAV. The newspaper reported in great detail on the efforts of German workers during the 1867 eight-hour movement. The professions detailed in a report on the eight-hour movement march on May 1, 1867 were emblematic of the older workers: carpenters, stonemasons and bricklayers and their respective unions and associations featured prominently.<sup>16</sup> And while the forty-eight editorials reported very measured on the more violent actions of eight-hour workers, the overall sentiment that shone through the editorials was still cautiously sympathetic, when they wrote that, “the English-language newspapers of the city use those incidents to scold the workers and to stir up their readership against the workers.

---

<sup>15</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 127.

<sup>16</sup> “Die Deutsche Division in Der Acht-Stunden Prozession,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 3, 1867, Newberry Library (my translation).



No matter how unfair the behavior of some workers may be, it does not justify calling the workers thieves, murderers and the like.”<sup>17</sup>

But even though the *Staats-Zeitung* was relatively sympathetic to the cause of the workers, the workers were not necessarily sympathetic to the forty-eighter newspaper. The Chicago Arbeiter Verein, as historian John Jentz portrays the organization, was a creation of Chicago’s forty-eighters to maintain influence on the city’s working population, was a workingmen’s association that pre-dated the ADAV by nearly a decade.<sup>18</sup> In the late 1860s the relationship between this association and the *Staats-Zeitung* had cooled to such a point, that the Arbeiter Verein briefly cut all ties with the newspaper, withdrew all advertisements, and publicly announced that the forty-eighter publication would be withdrawn from the association’s reading room. After internal deliberation and personnel changes, the association reversed course, and continued cooperation with the *Staats-Zeitung*. This interlude demonstrated that the forty-eighter grip on the working population among the German-Americans was by no means guaranteed, and had begun to slip as early as 1867 already.<sup>19</sup>

Strikes and work stoppages marked the 1872 construction season as the city’s efforts to re-build after the fire boomed. Various trade unions flexed their muscles attempting to force employers to pay higher wages and implement shorter workdays.

---

<sup>17</sup> “Achtstunden-Bewegung: Ruhestörungen Auf Der Westseite,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 3, 1867, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>18</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 36.

<sup>19</sup> “Der Chicago Arbeiter Verein Und Die Illinois Staats-Zeitung,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 6, 1867, Newberry Library (my translation).

The *Staats-Zeitung* editors continued to demonstrate general sympathy with the workers' plight. After all, Hering's own background was that of a worker – but not necessarily working class. The general populace and especially the native-born establishment of Chicago was frightened by what they perceived as a general spread of lawless rowdiness, however. Violent crime spread in and through the workers' quarters of the city, especially in those parts of town where the newly arrived masses lived.

In October 1872, a year after the Great Fire, the bricklayers of the city went on strike, joining the ongoing demand of an eight-hour workday. The German-American editors were broadly sympathetic with their cause, but also chastised strikers calling for violence towards those willing to accept a compromise: “the right to coerce any member to obey this resolution and to conform with the orders of the majority, that right they have not.”<sup>20</sup> The editor quoted a speaker at a strike rally who bemoaned that the establishment press was poised to hurt the workers' efforts by mischaracterizing the strikes and demonstrations as criminal and unruly, that the unions and working-class people needed their own newspapers to counter those accusations. This was not an unrealistic notion, since while the *Staats-Zeitung* merely disagreed with the notion of coercive violence, English language papers like the *Chicago Tribune* went a step further, painting the striking bricklayers as roving bands of ruffians: “Gangs of strikers travelled through the city yesterday threatening workmen who continued at work.”<sup>21</sup> The *Tribune*, unlike the *Staats-Zeitung*, also clearly sided with the employers, who were quoted

---

<sup>20</sup> “The Bricklayers' Strike,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 8, 1872, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_0328](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_0328).

<sup>21</sup> “THE BRICKLAYERS STRIKE,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 8, 1872.

insisting that they had the right to pay any workers as much or as little as they wanted to, for as many or as few hours worked in the day as they pleased.

Numerous strikes and sporadic outbreaks of fights among workers scared the city's general population, as tension rose throughout the year of 1872. This in turn led to the rise of citizens committees, out of which emerged the Committee of Twenty-Five, a concerned citizens' pressure group that appealed to Mayor Medill and the city council to quell the labor unrest. The committee was led by German-Jewish banker Henry Greenebaum. The *Staats-Zeitung* had briefly considered backing Greenebaum as the mayoral candidate in the post-fire election in 1871, and with Hering being one of the eponymous twenty-five members, the committee also outwardly represented the interests of German-American Chicago. The other members were an eclectic mixture of Chicago's upper classes, bipartisan in politics and multi-ethnic in make-up. The committee's self-proclaimed mission as stated in an October 1, 1872 meeting was to, "suppress and punish crime."<sup>22</sup> But the first two meetings of the committee passed without meeting much of a consensus on how to combat the problems the city. Chicago's chief-of-police Mansell Talcott proclaimed, "nine-tenths of the crime is brought about by drunkenness."—but his conclusions on the issue were rejected and the meeting ended without any tangible results.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> "CRIME IN CHICAGO: The Committee of Twenty-Five Discuss Its Causes and Endeavor to Find a Remedy. Development of a Strong Feeling in Favor of Closing Saloons on Sunday," *Chicago Tribune*, October 1, 1872.

<sup>23</sup> "CRIME IN CHICAGO."

### **Temperance Resurging: The Committee of Seventy**

After the second meeting of the Committee of Twenty Five, another group gathered in the same spot the first committee held its meetings, the Chicago Board of Trade. This second group, made up primarily of Protestant clergy and Anglo-American business leaders, quickly came to the consensus the Twenty-Five had failed to arrive at. To this second group the source of Chicago's problem was easily explained: the root cause of the violent crime and unrest plaguing the city was alcohol, and especially the public consumption of alcohol during the Christian sabbath. The speakers lambasted the Twenty-Five as pawns of the liquor industry and adopted the moniker of "Committee of Seventy." As historian Karen Sawislak points out, the new committee effectively represented a quick transformation of Greenebaum's initial effort at popular police and judicial reform into a sudden re-emergence of the temperance movement, with the worst nativist, anti-immigrant sentiments at the fore.<sup>24</sup>

Popular opinion agreed with the head of police. The Committee of Twenty-Five soon abandoned other avenues of countering striker violence and crime in the city. Instead, the Twenty-Five joined with the champions of temperance and Sabbatarian laws, chief among them former mayor Levi Boone. Boone's own temperance legislation during his stint as mayor in 1855 had caused the Lager Beer Riots. Unsurprisingly, Greenebaum and Hesing wanted nothing to do with the resurging temperance advocates. Greenebaum officially withdrew his chairmanship of the committee in late

---

<sup>24</sup> Karen Sawislak, *Smoldering City: Chicagoans and the Great Fire, 1871-1874* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 229.

October 1872. His open letter, published in the *Staats-Zeitung*, bemoaned that the group's original founding purpose was to tackle the issue of crime and street violence with various political means, a strengthening of the police, reconsidering the rights and duties of certain elected officials, as well as other judicial reform efforts. But instead of working along these lines Greenebaum claimed, "a new movement was started and that on the initiative of gentlemen who have found the cure for all evils to which flesh is heir, in the enforced closing of all drinking parlors from Saturday evening to Monday morning."<sup>25</sup>

Hesing resigned from the committee as well soon after, stating that Sunday closing laws for saloons were an insult to the working population of the city. Gathering in saloons, taverns, bars and beer halls was a necessity for the working people, he said in his resignation speech, since workers lived in cramped quarters, they could not receive guests, and that in return they were also not invited out to visit other workers, since their colleagues and friends' living arrangements were all similar.<sup>26</sup> Hesing represented the common German-American line on the temperance issue. The publisher, his newspaper in general and the German-American community at large had a long history of opposition to the temperance movement since the initial clashes between German immigrants and Anglo-American anti-alcohol activists of the 1850s. To the German-Americans, temperance was nothing but a cudgel that moralistic nativists used to paint their countrymen as immoral louts and drunkards. The Committee of Twenty-Five

---

<sup>25</sup> Henry Greenebaum, "Open Letter to the Committee of Twenty-Five," October 28, 1872, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1418](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1418).

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in: Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 146.

effectively ceased to function as an independent body, and gave way to the Committee of Seventy.

The resurfaced temperance issue mirrored the fire boundaries dispute of a year earlier in many ways. Even Pastor Collyer re-emerged on the scene, repeating his accusations towards the city's immigrant population that the new arrivals owed a debt to America, and that they should follow the laws of the land without question because of it.<sup>27</sup> Historian John Jentz suggests that the temperance dispute was in line with the previous quarrel over the fire boundaries. This was an ongoing political act, a political negotiation about what it meant to be a true American citizen. Each side argued for a different interpretation of citizenship. The Anglo-American temperance advocates argued that citizenship meant duties toward the nation, that citizenship meant an obligation to make the nation more morally pure. The immigrants and defenders of alcohol consumption on the sabbath on the other hand argued that citizenship meant constant negotiations of freedoms, and an obligation to allow each citizen to do as they pleased as long as they did not interfere with the freedoms of others.<sup>28</sup>

Hesing threw his considerable political clout behind a different project: the creation of a new, populist political party. Hesing was spurred on by the re-emergence of the temperance issue, and the way the temperance advocates used the matter as a measure to determine who was and was not allowed to be a full American citizen. But he and his allies like Greenebaum were also frustrated by the city politicians who

---

<sup>27</sup> "TEMPERANCE.: Meetings in the North and South Divisions. Temperance Addresses by Leading Clergymen.," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 25, 1872.

<sup>28</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 147.

abandoned other measures to combat violence and crime. Hesing himself had also less than community-minded reasons since he saw in this new political party an opportunity to increase his personal influence and fortune. This relatively short-lived coalition formed properly in April of 1873, but its inception had a long prelude reaching back to the winter months of 1872 and early 1873, when Mayor Medill gave in to the pressure from the temperance movement and imposed stricter Sunday closing laws.

In mid-February 1873, the contours of the new political coalition within Chicago politics began to emerge as a group of Irish-American aldermen pledged their support to the anti-temperance side of the Sunday-closing confrontation. The aldermen made this decision based on new provisions to the Sunday closing laws brought in by some of their more religiously-minded colleagues, who sought to curb more than just the sale and consumption of alcohol on Sundays. The *Staats-Zeitung* quoted them expanding their demanded provisions to include, “organizing on Sundays, theater shows, concerts, circuses, or any other form of recreation,” which then “would be liable to a \$200.00 fine and six months imprisonment.”<sup>29</sup> While the *Staats-Zeitung* was, at times, just as anti-Irish as any Anglo-American newspaper, in this case Hesing saw an opportunity to expand his influence beyond his own ethnic in-group by allying the German element with the Irish behind the People’s Party project. The Irish made up a large part of the working population employed in the reconstruction of post-fire Chicago. They were an important part of the city’s emerging working class, and many Irishmen held public

---

<sup>29</sup> “[The Sunday Law],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 15, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0736](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0736).

offices. A political alliance between the two ethnic groups had the potential to turn the Irish element into an important partner for the Chicago German-Americans in the political fight against the temperance movement.<sup>30</sup>

The North Side saloonkeepers met in late April 1873 to debate on how to weather the storm of temperance and nativism that threatened their continued livelihoods. Representatives of the *Chicago Tribune* attended the meeting, but since their reporters did not speak German, all they could report upon were superficialities. The *Staats-Zeitung* lampooned this with glee. The *Tribune* reported that no German newspapermen were to be found at the meeting, but the editor replied that they were mistaken about that. The German reporters were annoyed by the Anglophone papers' journalists' incessant questions about what was being said at any given moment. They felt that their Anglophone colleagues kept them from properly conducting their own reporting. Consequentially the German newspapermen sequestered themselves away from the rest of the huddle, "in the middle of the audience instead of at the reporters' table."<sup>31</sup> The editor recommended the *Tribune* hire some German speakers instead of relying on other German reporters doing the work for their monolingual, English speaking staff. The overall mood in the city was tense around the issue of temperance, the *Staats-Zeitung* was poised to attack.

A few days later the German saloonkeepers of the North-Side went a step further, forming the *Chicago Wirtschafts-Verein* or "Saloon Association of Chicago," an all-

---

<sup>30</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 147.

<sup>31</sup> "[The Saloonkeepers' Meeting]," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 21, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_6\\_1442](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_6_1442).



German union of tavern keepers, in order to better coordinate efforts opposing the temperance policies coming out of city hall. The *Tribune* portrayed this move as morally outrageous, since not only was it opposed to the morally righteous temperance movement, but the editor insisted, it was also anti-Irish. At the inaugural meeting, the motion was adopted that this association should be solely representative of the German-American North Side, excluding the South- and West Siders of differing ethnic origins.<sup>32</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* published an anonymous letter to the editor, written by a member of the Personal Liberty League, questioning the usefulness of such an association. The writer bemoaned that the *Wirtschafts-Verein* lacked a clearly formulated purpose, and that forming yet another association opposed to temperance would confuse the public and possibly do more harm than good towards the general goal of mobilizing the public against Sunday closing. The letter-writer stated that, “[the] general closing of all the saloons on Sundays would be without doubt the best means to awaken a common participation of the public in the dispute.”<sup>33</sup>

At another point in the same day’s issue, the newspaper published yet another letter to the editor, this time from a Cincinnati German, commenting on the fraught social fabric the German-Americans in Chicago faced over temperance. The writer claimed that the anti-alcohol crusade was an issue at odds with the principles of a democratic republic. The temperance crusaders were specifically targeting German-

---

<sup>32</sup> “THIS IS INTEMPERANCE: Organization of the Chicago Wirtschaft Verein. A Constitution and By-Laws Adopted---“No Irish Need Apply”,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 25, 1873.

<sup>33</sup> “A Word Concerning the Present Movement against the Temperance Fanatics,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 26, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0733](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0733).

Americans by targeting German customs, which in his view – and ostensibly in the *Staats-Zeitung's* view, since the newspaper ran this letter without editorial commentary – did not impinge on the customs of Anglo-Americans at all: “Who prevents Catholics or Protestants from attending church? Certainly not the Germans.”<sup>34</sup> In this instance the *Staats-Zeitung* once more served to unite German-America across local boundaries. But the newspaper also again engaged with issues of citizenship and what it meant to be a proper American, and who ultimately had the primacy over interpreting issues of freedom and good conduct.

This sentiment brought the temperance question back full circle to the old conflict of nativists against immigrants. While the “Sunday question” began as an issue of opposing labor unrest and street violence, both the Anglo-Americans and the immigrant groups regarded it increasingly as a re-litigation of the temperance conflict of earlier decades. The conflict led to many unforeseen consequences. The saloonkeepers began to denounce one another, and Mayor Medill enforced the closing of some restaurants, much to the delight of the temperance advocates. The *Staats-Zeitung* stated that it would not be an easily attainable political goal to strike down the Sunday closing laws on the state level, and that the German-Chicagoans would be better off with “a city administration which will simply ignore this state law.”<sup>35</sup> Infighting among the saloonkeepers would not achieve such a goal; it was up to the general public, which the

---

<sup>34</sup> “The Sunday Question (Mailed In),” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 26, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0734](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0734).

<sup>35</sup> “The Fight against the Sunday Tyranny,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 28, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0731](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0731).

anti-temperance promoters needed to persuade of the benefits of their position. In this, Hesing and Raster foreshadowed the emergence of the People's Party in the *Staats-Zeitung*: “[an] entirely different impression would be created by a general organization of citizens. Such an organization would make a moral impression and would be powerful enough to bring victory at the elections next fall.”<sup>36</sup>

The temperance fight entered a new stage with Police Superintendent Elmer Washburn's Order No. 20, issued on April 28, 1873. This directive required police officers, who before had been instructed to have an eye out on violations of the Sunday closing law but were explicitly not allowed to seek out suspected violators, to reverse course and now do exactly that. If they harbored suspicions that a saloonkeeper on their beat was in violation of the order, they were now specifically instructed to investigate. Predictably, Hesing's editors were seething. The *Staats-Zeitung* portrayed Order No. 20 as a deliberate step by Mayor Medill and Superintendent Washburn to worsen the conflict between police and German-American citizens. Order No. 20 represented a significant infraction upon the civil liberties of a substantial part of Chicago's population, it ramped up oppression by the police, and smacked of nativism and anti-German sentiment.

The goodwill that the German-American community at large and the *Staats-Zeitung* in particular had shown towards Medill was spent. In the immediate aftermath of the Great Fire he was, “esteemed as highly, [...], as no one has else previously.” But now this appreciation had reverted. “He complains that he is attacked by everyone. He is

---

<sup>36</sup> “The Fight against the Sunday Tyranny.”

solely responsible for it.”<sup>37</sup> Order 20 served as a rallying cry to Hesing and his political associates around which they formed a coalition of people from different backgrounds opposed to the Medill government. Historian Richard Junger notes that Medill at this point employed the same tactics against saloonkeepers as Mayor Levi Boone did in 1855. It was this repetition of time-honored nativist tactics as well as the old bond between religiously inspired temperance advocates and nativist firebrands that had several German-American publications, the *Staats-Zeitung* but also the *Freie Presse* use the label “know-nothings” against Mayor Medill and his followers. The term was at this point an anachronism, the Native American Party was long dead and nobody in Chicago politics in the 1870s was an actual know-nothing. Yet the Germans remembered the struggles of the 1850s, and consciously fielded the know-nothing label against those they thought were engaging in behavior that stood in the know-nothing nativist tradition.<sup>38</sup>

Anton Hesing’s nascent political organization held its first formal meeting on May 14, 1873, about two weeks after General Order No. 20 was first enacted. The gathering took place in Thieleman’s Theater on Clyborne Avenue in the 17<sup>th</sup> Ward, in the center of German-American Chicago.<sup>39</sup> Industrialist Adolph Schoninger was elected

---

<sup>37</sup> “General Order No. 20,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 2, 1873, 20, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0729](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0729).

<sup>38</sup> Richard Junger, *Becoming the Second City: Chicago’s Mass News Media, 1833-1898* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 104, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=3413852>.

<sup>39</sup> Chicago’s wards changed significantly over time. The 17<sup>th</sup> Ward in 1873 was located between North Ave. and Division Street latitudinally and the Chicago River and Lake Michigan longitudinally.

president of what the *Staats-Zeitung* at this point called “a movement”—the group adopted the “People’s Party” moniker only in October of 1873—and expressed the intention to open this political undertaking to people of all political persuasions and ethnic backgrounds. When Hesing took to the stage, he explicitly made a connection between the current moment and the temperance conflict of the 1850s: “the current moment reminds me of the time, when . . . by order of the city council the drinking of beer was forbidden, all the Germans marched to the court house. We must be united again, as we were united in 1856 with the free minded citizens of all nationalities.”<sup>40</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* editors as well as representatives of Hesing’s political organization repeatedly called back to the struggles of the 1850s. They frequently reminded their audience of the troubles the German-American and Irish-Americans communities went through at that time and repeated to brand their political opponents as “know-nothings.”

The *Staats-Zeitung* owner then continued by making references to the recently uncovered Crédit Mobilier scandal. In the scheme, the Union Pacific Railroad company had created a fraudulent construction company that billed the federal government grossly inflated construction costs for the transcontinental railroad, and then used the misbegotten gains to further bribe Washington officials into passing laws favorable to the railroad companies.<sup>41</sup> Hesing noted that no German was among the conspirators and

---

<sup>40</sup> “Inspired Meeting in the 17th Ward,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 15, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0727](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0727).

<sup>41</sup> Richard White, *The Republic for Which It Stands: The United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896* (New York ; London: Oxford University Press, 2017), 118.

that even if Germans were to behave in that way, they would be ostracized from the community. Minister Franz Hoffman decried that German America received bad press due to less than perfect leadership, and that Hesing's intentions and plan to oppose the temperance movement were an example of the leadership the community needed. The meeting was also reported on in the *Chicago Tribune*, which quoted Adolph Schoninger saying that the current city government's course was infringing on the citizens' constitutional rights, and that the German community was targeted above all else. The Chicago Germans now had to assert their political rights and demonstrate that "they were neither drunkards, serfs nor fools."<sup>42</sup> The meeting concluded with several resolutions, chief of which was a pledge of support to any elected officials opposed to the infraction of rights, Sunday closing laws and temperance legislation in general, while also asking the German-language press to support such "liberal minded citizens." They also included items regarding to citizenship and immigration.<sup>43</sup>

Hesing's appeal to ethnic pluralism within his organization was more than empty rhetoric. The group pioneered an approach to political campaigning that the big political parties adopted only much later. They published the campaign materials in German, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, Bohemian, French, Italian and Polish.<sup>44</sup> The efforts of the People's Party here were in line with past political issues that the German element in

---

<sup>42</sup> "THE FIRST GUN: Inauguration of the Local Political Campaign. Meeting of the Germans of the Seventeenth Ward. A. C. Hesing and 'Buffalo' Miller Aunounce Their Departure from the Republican Party," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 15, 1873.

<sup>43</sup> M. L. Ahern, *The Great Revolution: A History of the Rise and Progress of the People's Party in the City of Chicago and County of Cook* (Lakeside Publishing and Printing Company, 1874), 68.

<sup>44</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 253.

general and the *Staats-Zeitung* in particular had thrown their weight behind. The editorship made a conscious effort to highlight these endeavors: the German-American element they represented had long been known for being anti-nativist, anti-slavery, pro-worker, anti-temperance. Later in 1873 during campaign season Raster and Hesing portrayed the People's Party as a logical continuation of those past struggles – and victories – of not just German Chicago, but the entirety of the city's disparate immigrant community.

Hesing's emerging movement had broad appeal. He garnered support from a wide array of groups, people and organizations, the *Turnverein*, several singing societies, the Chicago *Arbeiterverein* and others. In the following weeks numerous gatherings took place during which Hesing and his mostly German-American collaborators defined the contours of the People's Party: in the individual wards, the members of the group would seek to nominate for election only such officials which vowed opposition to temperance and police overreach, and who were reliable in their allegiance.

The leadership of the movement also pledged themselves to more inclusion. Hesing officially quit the Republican Party, while during one meeting *Staats-Zeitung* reporter Emil Dietzsch proclaimed that "German and Irish, they were all Americans."<sup>45</sup> By proclaiming this, Dietzsch demonstrated an understanding of what being American meant, a more inclusive view on citizenship and belonging to the proper American body politic that was broader than that of the nativists. Overall, the movement adopted a

---

<sup>45</sup> Ahern, *The Great Revolution*, 70.

populist platform that opposed the city elites whom Hering and his collaborators portrayed as abusing the powers of their elected office, were beholden to banks, and financial companies as well as to religious organizations.<sup>46</sup> On the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung*, Hering and his editors commented that this common enemy was now a unifying factor for the disparate German-Americans, and that, “[only] if the Germans remain united can they hope for victory in the next fall elections.”<sup>47</sup> These developments in Chicago also attracted the attention of German-Americans in other cities, who were by and large facing similar issues, especially a resurging temperance movement. The *Staats-Zeitung* published excerpts from German-language newspapers from across the United States that were sympathetic to the Chicagoans cause, if not necessarily ready and willing to emulate it.<sup>48</sup>

In late May, German Chicago gathered and created the *Deutscher Zentralverein* – the German-American Central Association - in an attempt to unify the various clubs and associations in their efforts to stand against the threat to the community posed by the temperance movement. The first goal of this new association was to agree on a “platform on which all the adversaries of Puritanism can agree.”<sup>49</sup> During the month of June, the nascent association met several times to work out a list of issues their

---

<sup>46</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 149.

<sup>47</sup> “[Political Matters],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 16, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1721](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1721).

<sup>48</sup> “Encouragement for the Chicago German Movement,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 21, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1719](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1719).

<sup>49</sup> “The German American Central Association of Chicago,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 31, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0354](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0354).



organization would fight for. The platform, published in late June in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, contained several conclusions which constituted compromises the association arrived at in order to defuse allegations by the nativist American press and general public painting the German element as unrepentant drunkards. One point embraced temperance while rejecting intemperance, while also urging the strict control of all alcoholic beverages sent to market. Meanwhile other resolutions went against the demands of the temperance politicians, agreeing that, “on Sundays business places and amusements should be so limited as not to interfere with religious services” on the one hand, but also stating that, “we deny one part of the population the right to dictate to the other part of the population about how to celebrate Sunday.”<sup>50</sup> In general the direction of the platform was geared towards securing civil rights for all citizens. This political platform was explicitly not limited to German-Americans. Instead, the candidates and their supporters in the media argued that the temperance proposal denied constitutional rights to one some of the Chicago’s citizens in the name of others.

In private, Hesing was confident that his whole gamble with the People’s Party would pay off in the mayoral elections later in the year. In an exchange of letters with Hermann Raster, who at the time was traveling through Germany, he expressed his frustration with his American allies and enemies alike, claiming that he, “cannot expect a lot from the Americans. Old feelings are resurfacing that had slumbered until now, and it becomes clear that all the friendships were nothing but pretension.” His

---

<sup>50</sup> “The German-American Central Association,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 26, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0633](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0633).

aspirations for the party lay with the Irish, who, “if unified, will give us victory. It will be inevitable.” In regard to the *Staats-Zeitung*, the post-fire disputes and overall political climate in Chicago during that time helped it prosper. Hesing was confident since, “the *Staatszeitung* [sic] never stood as well as now and I have never been this popular before.” He further expressed his personal desire to turn the *Staats-Zeitung* into a nonpartisan newspaper in the future, siding only with the German element in terms of local issues. The Germans were “unified in a way that I have never seen before.”<sup>51</sup>

Police Superintendent Washburn remained a thorn in the side of the German-American element, and not just because of his pro-temperance stance and enforcement of the Sunday closing law. Chicago’s German-American population was quite large in 1873, the *Staats-Zeitung* claiming that one in three Chicagoans was of German origin. Meanwhile, the makeup of Chicago’s police force did not reflect this adequately. Worse, under Washburn’s leadership, the percentage of German-American members of the police even diminished. The editorship took these circumstances as an opportunity to denounce Washburn as a “truly a know-nothing.”<sup>52</sup> During Washburn’s tenure as superintendent, more German-American policemen left the force by resigning than there were among the hundred and thirty nine newly appointed officers. The editors portrayed this as a dangerous development that would ultimately diminish the usefulness of the police force. In order to keep the peace, a “policemen stationed in a

---

<sup>51</sup> Anton C. Hesing, “Raster Letter from Hesing, Chicago,” June 16, 1873, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>52</sup> “The Know Nothings of the Police,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 16, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0936](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0936).

German district should be able to speak German as well as English.”<sup>53</sup> If the police and the population were unable to communicate with each other, both police efficacy as well as the sense of community of the non-English-speaking citizenry would be greatly diminished.

Hesing meanwhile related the city’s labor woes to Raster, who had just completed an interview with Chancellor Otto von Bismarck during his tour of re-unified Germany. The summer of 1873 was hot and dreary, and many of the city’s workers were still unemployed, with those who did have work received “very low wages.” But this dire situation of the city’s labor market also had its advantages, as “construction is now very cheap, and many people in town make good use of this.”<sup>54</sup> In this charged climate of labor struggles, sporadic outbreaks of violent unrest and the ongoing political agitation between temperance movement and civil liberties advocates, the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship readied itself and its readership – which now more than ever doubled as Hesing’s constituency – for the political battles to come.

### **Immigrants Allied**

The German-American Central Association of Chicago followed the ideas championed by Hesing to build a coalition of disparate voting groups in order to beat the temperance-championing elites. The German organization extended bridges between the German-American element of the city and other ethnicities. The *Staats-Zeitung* contributed to this effort by running articles enumerating the Chicago place

---

<sup>53</sup> “The Know Nothings of the Police.”

<sup>54</sup> Anton C. Hesing, “Raster Letter from Hesing, Chicago,” July 19, 1873, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

force's infractions against Bohemians, Irish, Scandinavians and even French Chicagoans. The editors urged these disparate immigrant groups to cohesion and unity, since, "[the] Puritan nativist party [...] can win in November only, if it should be able to create dissension among its adversaries."<sup>55</sup> At the same time, an unnamed German dissident tried to split the German-American coalition by attempting to elicit support for the Sunday closing laws from German-born clergymen, which the *Staats-Zeitung* editors condemned in the harshest tones.<sup>56</sup>

Building a tight-knit coalition beyond German-American Chicago, one that included several immigrant factions opposed to and vilified by the what the *Staats-Zeitung* kept referring to as "know-nothingism" seemed like the best way to move forward and gain a foothold in city politics. The Irish-American element especially, due to its strong numbers, represented the most important partner to oppose Mayor Medill. In order to have the newly forming coalition not appear too German-dominated, the alliance created agitation committees in the individual city wards, which fielded one member of the German Central Association and two other men from non-German backgrounds.<sup>57</sup> This alliance united the German faction of the Chicago Republicans and the Irish faction of the Chicago Democrats. The editorship proclaimed this a necessity since the German vote alone would not suffice to enact meaningful political change.

---

<sup>55</sup> "The Fight against the Puritans and the Knownothings," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 26, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0726](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0726).

<sup>56</sup> "Attempt to Create Dissension Amongst the Germans," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 8, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0725](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0725).

<sup>57</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 150.

Even if Germans and Irish disagreed on national politics, this emergent local political movement saw “no reason why both nationalities should not stand together in local politics when they have the same views and interests.”<sup>58</sup> As early as late May, 1873, Hesing appeared publicly side by side with Scots-Irish immigrant Dan O’Hara, who served as the chief representative for the Irish constituency of the People’s Party. As was typical among the Irish-Americans, O’Hara was a long-time Democrat, serving as a clerk at the Cook County courthouse. He had come up through a career in civic service and journalism, serving as a clerk in the recorder’s court for many years prior his involvement with Hesing.<sup>59</sup>

The German-American political agitations caused a stir in the city. Hesing’s coalition represented a sizable block of voters that, as it was now becoming evident, was much less faithful to any established political party than it was to a certain set of principles. The *Chicago Times* fumed that the Germans now abandoned the Republican Party to find shelter among the Democrats, while “German writers and speakers have been the most obuside [sic] cowardly, and false in their treatment of Democrats.”<sup>60</sup> The *Times* had a point. After all, the German-American element of Chicago had a long history of rallying against the Democratic Party going back to the 1850s and the times of German anti-slavery activities that ultimately split the German-American vote from the

---

<sup>58</sup> “No Headline,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 9, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_1110](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_1110).

<sup>59</sup> Ahern, *The Great Revolution*, 125.

<sup>60</sup> “Attention Germans! Forward March! (Editorial),” August 11, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1716](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1716).

Democratic Party towards the then-nascent Republican Party. The anti-Democratic Party sentiment of the Germans also made the German Chicagoans oppose the Democrat leaning *Times* for a long time. That these long-time opponents of the party of Jackson now switched sides made the *Times* editors suspicious of their motives, proclaiming that the Germans were only interested in “the crusade for unlimited beer and no Sabath [sic].”<sup>61</sup> The editor then made the point that in this election there would be no traditional parties but just a party of law and order (the party of Mayor Medill) and the party of “unlimited whiskey and no sabath [sic].” The Germans actually had no interest in either of these issues, as the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship repeatedly pointed out.<sup>62</sup> Their aim was not to abolish the sabbath, they just refused to allow pious Christians dictate everyone else how to behave on a Sunday. At a meeting in late August 1873 the Irish Democratic Party leadership of Chicago under Dan O’Hara announced the current conflict in Chicago was not one for the big political parties. The Democratic Party would not campaign in the fall, but join forces with the *Zentralverein* to organize opposition to Medill’ That Hesing sought an alliance between the German and Irish element, too, served as a thorn in the *Times*’ side, the editors referring to this alliance “the Hesing O’Hara conspiracy.”<sup>63</sup>

The success of this alliance was however no easily accomplished feat for any of the parties involved. At a mass-meeting of the Hesing-O’Hara ticket the German

---

<sup>61</sup> “Attention Germans! Forward March! (Editorial).”

<sup>62</sup> “Attention Germans! Forward March! (Editorial).”

<sup>63</sup> “(Editorial),” September 4, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1715](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1715).

leadership put the joining of forces with the Irish to a vote. The resolution passed, but the decision was by no means unanimous. Most Anglo-American newspapers reported on the mass gathering with less breathless outrage than the *Times* did, elaborating on the consensus seeking process and the dissenting opinions. As the *Chicago Tribune* wrote, the Germans and their ethnic allies were about, “to throw the old Democratic and Republican parties overboard, and organize a new party, which would be in favor of personal liberty.”<sup>64</sup> This was the general consensus of the alliance surrounding the *Zentralrat*. The speakers at the mass meeting repeatedly raised the question of which political party to join in order to further the goals of personal liberty. The same speakers then countered that their emerging coalition should not join any of the existing parties. They instead proclaimed the next step had to be the formation of a new, independent political organization to rival the existing ones.

But while a coalition between Irish and German-American voters had quite some political power between them, this would not be enough to successfully challenge the political establishment of the city. To broaden the coalition, the group consulted on how to appeal to immigrant Americans other than Irish and Germans as well as on how to attract Anglo-American voters. This question prompted a lively discussion about which nationalities the movement should target as voters. The German-Americans, Irish-Americans and other ethnic, hyphenated Americans that made up this new alliance and nascent party would not present themselves to the public as immigrants, but instead

---

<sup>64</sup> “CITY POLITICS: The Machinery of the Campaign Set in Motion Last Evening. First Revolution of the Wheels of the Opposing Elements,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922); *Chicago, Ill.*, September 4, 1873.

simply as Americans. The goal of this newly emerging party would not be “to force their manners and ideas upon Americans, because they were German, but because they were good.”<sup>65</sup>

The general consensus about the question of nationality and ethnicity that came through after long debates. This new alliance, while it was clearly led and founded by Germans and other immigrant groups, aimed to present itself not as an immigrant cause, not as a group that represented immigrant interests. Instead, the coalition adopted the stance that they were a group for which ethnicity was incidental. The group acted as a collective of ethnicities, and spoke as Americans: the group’s character was American, and this was the way it would seek to appeal to all Americans, regardless of national origin. Hesing’s proposed resolution, which ultimately represented a slightly less inclusive approach, was eventually adopted by consensus vote:

Resolved, That the Agitation Committee of the German-American Central Committee be requested to join the agitation committee of other nationalities yet to be appointed, and make arrangements for a mass meeting as soon as possible; and that their recommendation not be accepted until it has been approved by the German-American central committee.<sup>66</sup>

According to this resolution, the German-Americans retained the leadership of the movement, however the group explicitly intended to include other ethnicities, since the leadership was quite conscious that the German-Americans alone would not be able to succeed in taking on the newly-formed, so-called “Law and Order” ticket, the Citizens Union party that formed out of the Committee of Seventy.

---

<sup>65</sup> “CITY POLITICS.: The Machinery of the Campaign Set in Motion Last Evening.

<sup>66</sup> “CITY POLITICS.,” September 4, 1873.



The Chicago mayoral election of 1873 bore striking similarities to the post-fire election of two years prior, insofar as the big, established political parties did not bother putting together their own slates of candidates, since the political landscape of the city at the time was completely occupied by local political organizations. In 1871 this was the “Union-Fireproof” ticket, on which the *Chicago Tribune’s* former managing editor Joseph Medill was elected to the mayor’s office. With the emergence of the People’s Party, the “Republicans hesitated as to the propriety of making nominations; the Democrats were disinclined from the beginning to nominating a party ticket, and all that was necessary was for the two Committees of citizens to invite their co-operation in the framing of a ticket” – the *Chicago Tribune* reported.<sup>67</sup> The Committee of Seventy refused to concede the electoral field to Hesing and O’Hara without a fight, and thus convened on October 19, 1873 at the Grand Pacific Hotel to form a political ticket to run against the People’s Party. At the meeting, representatives from both Democratic and Republican committees as well as members of the big and small pressure groups formulated a plan of attack, that essentially boiled down to a single issue: the strict enforcement of Sunday closing laws.<sup>68</sup>

Later in October Hesing’s movement officially adopted the moniker of People’s Party at its inaugural meeting, which served as both formal establishment of the party as such and the commencement event of the political campaign. At the gathering, several speakers laid out the reasonings for a whole multitude of points the new party was

---

<sup>67</sup> “CITY POLITICS: Union of the Opponents of the Hesing-C’Hara Saloon Movement. The Republican Central Committee Vote Not to Call a Convention.,” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*, October 19, 1873.

<sup>68</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 251.

supposed to address. One of the most prominent issues was city finances and an ever-increasing tax burden that encumbered the local working population, while the people in charge of politics and industry busied themselves not with making life for their citizens easier, but instead dithered on telling people how to spend their Sundays. A member of the Committee on Resolutions, B. G. Caulfield, gave the first political speech of the evening, in which he argued these points. He quickly came around to the issue of Sunday closing laws and the accusations leveled against the People's Party, insisting that, "I want to see the Sabbath respected; I want to see the religious opinions of all men respected; but I want at the same time that no religious, or fanatical, nor Puritanical bigotry shall enter into our Sunday laws."<sup>69</sup> Caulfield – and by extension the entire party – sought to thread the needle of both opposition to the temperance-based Sunday laws, while defusing any and all arguments and accusations leveled towards the anti-temperance set, that their goal was to abolish all religious services on Sundays in favor of freely available alcohol for everyone. This was a difficult argument to make properly, since the arguments made on the pages of the city newspapers lacked nuance. Either a party was portrayed as being in favor of temperance and the complete shutdown of any and all sales and consumption of alcohol on Sundays, or one was an anti-religious drunkard who would shutter any and all places of worship while keeping all taverns, bars and beer halls open.

---

<sup>69</sup> "CITY POLITICS: First Rally of the Hesing O'Hara Crowd," *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922); *Chicago, Ill.*, October 5, 1873.

The temperance issue however, while popular, was not the most important point to Caulfield. A looming financial crisis took overshadowed all other issues: during the course of 1873, physical currency had become scarce in the city, with many citizens finding themselves unable to pay their taxes, which in turn brought the authorities down on them. Many poorer Chicagoans faced evictions due to a sheer lack of money in circulation. Much of the circulating monies at the time ended up in the hands of the recently formed railroad corporations – which was foreshadowing the larger crisis to come. This crisis exploded into the Panic of 1873 when on September 18, New York banking firm Jay Cooke & Company failed, causing a bank run and the first closure of the New York Stock Exchange in its history on September 20. This eventually sent the American economy into a depression lasting for the rest of the 1870s. The Panic of 1873 effected the Chicago economy in various ways, mostly by exacerbating and worsening already present trends. The most immediate effect was a worsening of the cash money shortage, which was widely felt across all strata of society. After that came worsening labor conditions, an increase in strikes and labor related violence as well as an increase in unemployment. This was the economic climate during which Hering christened his party.<sup>70</sup>

At the People's Party inaugural meeting, Caulfield called for currency reform. He appealed to the federal government to supply more physical money: "We do not complain that the money we have is not good, but we do complain that it is so good that

---

<sup>70</sup> White, *The Republic for Which It Stands*, 266.

we do not have enough of it to do the business of the country.”<sup>71</sup> After the speeches, a number of party resolutions were read into the record, most of which addressed the scarcity of currency and pleaded to the President of the United States to find ways of supplying these much needed moneys, keep businesses going and to prevent people from losing access to their bank accounts, (since banks accepted incoming currency but were often unable to pay their customers out again). The second and third resolutions called for the printing of more currency on the national level, while the fourth resolution suggested the City of Chicago should issue city scrip “to keep the mechanics and laborers now engaged in our municipal improvements in full work.”<sup>72</sup> This would also address the issue of striking and rioting workers better than would the prohibition of Sunday alcohol sales.

Illinois Governor John M. Palmer backed the People’s Party’s program. A letter of his was read aloud from the podium, as the governor was unable to attend in person. Palmer’s concerns mirrored the sentiment of Caulfield’s speech: how to spend Sundays was not up to politicians to decide, that it was “beyond the rightful domain of legislation,” and “every person should be permitted without legal hindrance to determine for himself” how to spend their Sundays, as long as they did not “in any sense invade the liberties of others.”<sup>73</sup> The meeting then closed with an impassionate speech from Anton Hesing. The People’s party was supposed to be “respecting person and

---

<sup>71</sup> “CITY POLITICS.,” October 5, 1873.

<sup>72</sup> “CITY POLITICS.”

<sup>73</sup> “CITY POLITICS.”

property and give poor people a chance,” the publisher intoned.<sup>74</sup> He also bemoaned that, even after more than thirty years of living in the United States, he was still referred to as a foreigner. Hesing closed with remarks that the People’s Party would go and fight for the little man, that it was the ordinary citizens of Chicago who had paid more than their fair share to rebuild, while the rich elites of the Law and Order party dodged these responsibilities wherever they could, and then hid behind religion to deny the ordinary citizen their rights on Sundays. This speech concluded the meeting but was just the beginning of the brief but intense 1873 campaign season in the city.<sup>75</sup>

Hermann Raster meanwhile returned from a long trip across Germany to find Chicago in an uproar and facing a financial crisis. The editor-in-chief expressed worry about the state of the economy in a letter he wrote to his sister in Dessau after his arrival. The lack of circulating currency impacted the newspaper as well, and not only through a dip in sales. Large parts of the *Staats-Zeitung*’s earnings were invested in a Chicago lumber mill that Hesing owned, a venture Raster had significant private investments of his family tied up in as well. Now the trouble was as Raster wrote in a letter to his sister Sophie that, “the earnings are there, it is only actual money which is scarce to pay a dividend in cash.”<sup>76</sup> Raster used the dividends that his investment into Hesing’s lumber mill generated to give some monetary support to his sister back in Germany, which demonstrated the persistent close ties between the two.

---

<sup>74</sup> “CITY POLITICS.”

<sup>75</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 151.

<sup>76</sup> Hermann Raster, “Raster Letter to Sister,” October 8, 1873, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

Raster's travels to Germany in 1873 were a movement of people in two directions as well: he accompanied his sister-in-law Gertrud—who had stayed with the Raster family in Chicago since the summer of 1871—home to Germany. On the return trip he then accompanied his own daughter Mathilde, who had stayed in Dessau for the same amount of time Gertrud spent in Chicago. This literal exchange of people was a manifestation of the German, transnational ethnoscape. Here people moved across the Atlantic, exchanged ideas and information, gathered impressions and new acquaintances, before returning to their home countries. But while doing so, they inhabited a space that for the most part was governed by their own, German language, regardless of the *lingua franca* of the nation state they lived in at the given moment. This exchange was facilitated primarily through Raster's income through the *Staats-Zeitung*. While in Germany, Raster had only remotely kept himself abreast of the events that unfolded in America. Now that he was back in Chicago, Raster was quickly drawn back into city politics.

The People's Party platform was well received by the general population, and the *Staats-Zeitung* continued to serve as one of the organizations semi-official mouthpieces. Meanwhile, the *Chicago Tribune* adopted a similar mantle for the "Law-and-Order" party. Joseph Medill had left for Europe in summer of 1873, leaving the mayoral office to interim Mayor Lester L. Bond, who now ran for the mayoral office on the "Law-and-Order" ticket. The *Staats-Zeitung* editorship stressed that while the People's Party provided an umbrella for political agitation from all ethnicities—including Americans—it was still a platform that had been originally championed by the German element, against harsh, open antagonism. The Germans were not, as the opposing voices claimed,

in opposition to popular opinion in the city, but rather, the contrary— “the Germans did not delude themselves in regards to the will of the people, but acted in accordance with the hearts of this popular majority.” On the pages of the newspaper, the Sunday closing dispute was still the fulcrum on which most of the party program hinged. Unfortunately this was also true of the opposing party. The editors denied the accusation that the People’s Party was practicing “the knownothing-ism of immigrants” and argued that even Americans agreed now that “Puritan tyranny is in no way the same thing as Americanness.”<sup>77</sup> Here the *Staats-Zeitung* editors again engaged with the argument about American national character. What was it that made a true American? Could immigrants be truly American? These questions provided for ample discussion on the pages, and the conclusion was elusive, but it reverted back to an answer that even most native-born Americans understood: “the future of this country and this city, made up of different nationalities, lies in mutual acceptance and universal equality.”<sup>78</sup>

At various conventions of the “Law-and-Order” ticket held across town in the first week of November, those same issues and questions of American citizenship were a central point of contention for many of the speakers. Numerous voices condemned the People’s Party as the “bummers’ party,” accused Dan O’Hara of running naturalization mills through which he supposedly produced new voters, as well as accusing O’Hara of being connected to gambler king Michael McDonald—both true accusations. The speakers ridiculed Hering’s point about the necessity of Sunday saloon opening to poor

---

<sup>77</sup> “Die Chicagoer Volks-Bewegung,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 14, 1873, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>78</sup> “Die Chicagoer Volks-Bewegung.”

and working people. It was an indictment of Hesing's own prejudice towards the poor, a speaker noted "It is a libel upon the homes of the poor to say that society there is not on an average with society at saloons."<sup>79</sup> The speaker referred to the speech Hesing gave at his resignation from the Committee of Twenty-Five, where he laid out the reason for his opposition to Sunday closing of saloons and taverns, namely that common workers' homes are too small to host friends and family, and that public places of gathering were vital to allow for socialization outside the stifling and crowded home. The "Law-and-Order" speakers also, again, brought up the issue of what qualities a good American citizen should have. Speaker Stephen A. Goodwin condemned the People's Party as "opposed to law and order, and un-American in every way," declaring that the organization "should be put down by sensible, old-fashioned American men and citizens as being un-American."<sup>80</sup>

The People's Party was in many ways a political machine, with Hesing and O'Hara as the "bosses." O'Hara did run a "naturalization mill" that funneled freshly minted citizens' votes towards his ticket. As clerk of the Cook County criminal court, he deputized barkeepers across the city, who would provide foreigners with the necessary citizenship papers in return for the promise to vote for the People's Party. This operation also connected O'Hara to Michael McDonald, a notorious criminal and operator of a citywide gambling ring. Historian Richard Lindberg notes that ultimately, the People's Party machine operations were much better organized than the "Law-and-

---

<sup>79</sup> "LOCAL POLITICS: The Preparations of the Hesing Crowd for Repeating, The Names of the Leaders and Field of Operations," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 2, 1873.

<sup>80</sup> "LOCAL POLITICS."



Order” opposition, whose efforts were no match for the populist politics combined with the powerful underworld connections, violent scare tactics and fraud that elements of Hesing’s ticket employed.<sup>81</sup> But while the People’s Party was in general much more ruthless in its tactics, its agents engaging in much unsavory behavior, Hesing’s movement did also have popular sentiment and sheer demographics on its side. After all, first-generation, foreign-born immigrant men made up a significant percentage of the electorate, and Hesing successfully turned the election into a referendum on the status of immigrants, whether men like him should have a lasting say in the shape of American society or not.<sup>82</sup>

With the election on November 4 fast approaching, the *Staats-Zeitung*’s coverage of the People’s Party increased in volume and sharpness of tone. Raster portrayed the election as the most important city-level vote the German-speaking residents of the city ever had a chance to take part in. He declared that the referendum now was about whether Chicago was to remain a global metropolis, or whether it would instead decay into a provincial backwater, ruled by backwards-looking puritans. Raster saw the German-American element forced into a defensive position, along with all other immigrants, which “constitute a subordinate class of people, barely accepted and at every turn reprimanded by the police.”<sup>83</sup> The German-American editors, speakers and

---

<sup>81</sup> Richard C. Lindberg and John Miya, *The Gambler King of Clark Street: Michael C. McDonald and the Rise of Chicago’s Democratic Machine* (Carbondale, UNITED STATES: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009), 72, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=1354599>.

<sup>82</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 254.

<sup>83</sup> “An Unsere Deutschen Freunde in Cook County,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 28, 1873, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

political agitators drew a straight line from the fire-ordinance dispute, which the German element still regarded as a direct attack on their livelihoods, to the “rude police state” those “haters of Germans” had implemented in the wake of the Great Fire.”<sup>84</sup> The English language papers on the other hand kept appealing to the committee of seventy and the law-and-order party to be careful about what political agenda to focus on in order to win the election. The *Chicago Tribune* pleaded, that if the incumbents did not shed their obsession on “matters with which Government [sic] has nothing to do, expect in the way of police duty...” they would lose the city to the “Hesing-O’Hara rabble.”<sup>85</sup> It was obvious to the *Tribune* that focusing solely on temperance and matters of police enforcement was the way to lose the general public beyond a few radicals, while playing directly into the hands of the “rabble.”

During the campaign the People’s Party proclaimed that the organization stood for cosmopolitanism, an open city and an open society that cared for the common people of the city—unlike the stuffy Yankee elites, who actively worked against efforts to unify Chicago’s disparate ethnic groups and acceptance of German immigrants as Americans. On the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung* the editors praised Hesing’s party as a movement of equality, equity, inclusion and openness, while painting the opposition as money grubbing aristocrats, and blamed them by association for the Panic of 1873, calling them “Yankee stock market swindlers” who “like robber knights live at the

---

<sup>84</sup> “An Unsere Deutschen Freunde in Cook County.”

<sup>85</sup> “To the Committee of Seventy,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922); *Chicago, Ill.*, October 9, 1873.

expense of the workers and peasants.”<sup>86</sup> The German-American editors repeated their claim that the know-nothing spirit of the 1850’s was resurfacing, championed by the “puritan Yankees” which could only be overcome by an alliance of all immigrant groups: “Germans, Irish, Bohemians, Danes and Swedes have come together with those Americans who are free of the sinister spirit of an evil drive to persecute others, to break the chokehold of the NEW SLAVERY of the puritan Yankees!”<sup>87</sup>

### **The Chicago Mayoral Election of 1873**

The party held its pre-election convention on October 27, during which the final roster of candidates and delegates was chosen, and the policy platform finalized. True to form, the party presented itself as the more cosmopolitan option, uniting German, Irish and Scandinavian voting blocs behind it. Hering’s first action during the convention was the passing of several resolutions aimed at cementing the policy platform that the movement had in some form been working on for the past year. The first resolution was the most important one, since with it the party agreed to adopt the principles of the platform agreed upon during the Kingsbury Hall meeting on October 4, creating a reliable continuity. The two other resolutions revolved around intricacies of the city finances and swore the party to transparency. After these resolutions, the party proceeded with the nominations of candidates. City treasurer Harvey Doolittle Colvin would challenge interim mayor Bond and Hering’s close ally Irishman Dan O’Hara was elected unanimously as the candidate to replace Colvin as city treasurer. In his speech

---

<sup>86</sup> “An Unsere Deutschen Freunde in Cook County.”

<sup>87</sup> “An Unsere Deutschen Freunde in Cook County.”

accepting the nomination, Colvin promised a lean, responsible city government and vowed to close any and all loopholes in the administration that allowed politicians to enrich themselves on the taxpayers' dime.<sup>88</sup>

On election day, the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* ran an impassioned plea to all Germans of Cook County to, “not let anything keep you from fulfilling your civic duty.”<sup>89</sup> The plea, likely again penned by Raster, portrayed the election as a crucial political turning point for the German-American community. The election was not just about political offices, but a referendum on immigrant identity, that is, “if us NATURALIZED CITIZENS are supposed to have EQUAL RIGHTS to the native born, or if we are supposed to be a SUBORDINATE CLASS.”<sup>90</sup> The editor railed against the accusations fielded against the People's Party in general and the German-Americans in particular. The city's English language newspapers, especially the *Chicago Times*, kept portraying the Germans as less than full citizens—as foreigners who at best either refused to or were simply incapable of fully assimilating into American life and who at worst were wholly opposed to any notion of law and order. Meanwhile, the Law and Order party presented “a list of candidates on which there is not a single German name to be found.”<sup>91</sup> Therefore, the editors implored their readers to not just go to the polls

---

<sup>88</sup> “Das Siegende Ticket! - Die Volkspartei in Convention,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 28, 1873, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>89</sup> “Deutsche Freunde in Cook County!,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 4, 1873, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>90</sup> “An Unsere Deutschen Freunde in Cook County.”

<sup>91</sup> “Deutsche Freunde in Cook County!”

themselves, but to also “take care that all of [the reader’s] neighbors and friends do the same.”<sup>92</sup> Here the newspaper served as a voting multiplier. The article was published on the same day as the election, so chances were that not all readers would not read the appeal in time, and the article’s author admitted as much. But by reminding the readership about the election’s stakes, at least from the point of view of the People’s Party’s leadership, the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* utilized its position in the German-American community to best effect. The editors tied the political decision making into the issue of ethnicity and citizenship, bringing up the question of who was and who was not to be counted as a full American once again.

The election ended up a full success for the People’s Party, which swept the vote by a landslide. The editorship called the election a “Sedan for the know-nothings,” a reference that the German-American readers who followed the coverage of the Franco-Prussian War two years prior would have immediately understood. At the Battle of Sedan, Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte III was captured by Prussian forces, effectively ending the French Empire and deciding the war in Prussia’s favor – a devastating defeat. The editors implied that the defeat of Mayor Medill and the resurgent temperance movement was equally as devastating and total as Bonaparte’s defeat had been three years prior.<sup>93</sup> With margins of about a fifth of the entire votes cast, the People’s Party marched into the governments of both Chicago and Cook County respectively. The coalition of voters Hesing mobilized were a majority of Chicago’s

---

<sup>92</sup> “Deutsche Freunde in Cook County!”

<sup>93</sup> “A Sedan for the Knownothings,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 5, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0349](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0349).

foreign-born citizens. This constituency made up almost a full third of the city electorate, and included not just people who traditionally voted Republican, but also a sizeable number of native-born Democrats on top. This coalition of voters secured the challengers a wide, winning margin, including thirteen city aldermen positions.<sup>94</sup>

Privately, Hermann Raster was exhausted but ultimately very pleased by the People's Party defeat of Lester Bond and the Law-and-Order ticket. In a letter to his sister Sophie in Dessau he wrote that it was only "By forming an alliance with the Irish we were able to beat the Sunday-closing party by 10,000 votes, in spite of their support by the entire English language newspapers."<sup>95</sup> Since the Anglo-American newspapers were largely on the side of Medill and Bond, Raster reverted to skills he developed during his revolutionary years and took it upon himself to write political pamphlets-in-English-which the People's Party's agents circulated on the streets. The German-American vote however was more unified than in previous years, as Raster "didn't have to suffer, as usual in these election-battles, from the personal attacks of the 'Freie Presse' as even this rag was forced to support our party because of the single mindedness of the German voter."<sup>96</sup> The *Chicagoer Freie Presse* was a Republican leaning newspaper first published in 1871 that countered what its owner Richard Michaelis saw as political corruption of German-American Chicago by Hesing, Rapp and

---

<sup>94</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 151.

<sup>95</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Sister," November 6, 1873, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>96</sup> Raster, "Raster Letter to Sister," October 8, 1873.

the political machines they had built through the *Staats-Zeitung*.<sup>97</sup> But the threat of the anti-immigrant temperance movement served to unify the German-American community beyond the usual party lines and political alignments, to the point that all German language papers of Chicago pulled together as one, and came away victorious.

In the weeks following the election, the discussion on the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung* kept revolving around the issues of citizenship and the German-American contributions to Chicago's politics, as well as the political loyalties of the German element. The Germans were to blame, an angry editor reminded the readership, since it had been them whose political engagement had turned Chicago into "the most loyal, Republican big city of the whole country."<sup>98</sup> But the Republican Party did not show their German loyalists much love, which eventually led to the current breaking point. The German-Americans of Chicago had successfully split with the party of Lincoln. Once the Germans had outlived their usefulness for the Republicans, and especially once they started voicing their own demands towards the party, there was no more room for them. They saw themselves persecuted and branded as nothing but foreign rabble, bent on dominating Chicago. The Republican Party offered nothing of real importance to their foreign-born constituents. Instead the party provided a home to opportunistic political office hunters, who on one occasion courted the German-American and Irish-American vote and patronage, and on another offered up nothing but condemnation. Worse, they

---

<sup>97</sup> Eugen Seeger, *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt* (Chicago: The George Gregory Printing Company, 1892), 424.

<sup>98</sup> "Amerikanische 'Republikaner' Und Die Illinois Staatszeitung," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 11, 1873, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).

sought to “inflame the holy zeal [of American Puritans] against the Catholic Irish and the unbelieving Germans”<sup>99</sup> These issues, the editors proclaimed, made it impossible for the German-Americans of Chicago to remain loyal to the Republicans any longer. The split with the party was complete, with the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* now declaring that it “refuses to tolerate the title of a ‘Republican paper’ going forward – no matter the result of today’s election.”<sup>100</sup>

The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* printed a gleeful article extolling the virtues of the People’s Party, the editors not hiding their schadenfreude over the loss of the opposition’s ticket: “All of the scolding and nagging, all the lies and slander of the newspapers, all admonitions of clergymen, all moneys raised, all efforts to raise the hate of the native-born against the ‘strangers’ to fever pitch, all of these things have been proven moot and useless against the closed phalanx of the People’s Party!”<sup>101</sup> Hesing and his editors reminded the readership of the significant obstacles German-American Chicago overcame with the election, while also stressing that the party needed a multi-ethnic coalition to do so. It was not just naturalized immigrants who voted the party in, it was also a significant proportion of the native-born vote. Stating this clearly served several purposes. The editors emphasized that this election had been a fair and open one, with fewer interruptions and irregularities than city elections of previous years.

---

<sup>99</sup> “Amerikanische ‘Republikaner’ Und Die Illinois Staatszeitung.”

<sup>100</sup> The editorial was dated November 4, but it only appeared in the November 5 edition and was reprinted in the weekly edition on November 11.

<sup>101</sup> “Der Sieg Der Volkspartei,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 11, 1873, Weekly edition, Newberry Library (my translation).



They countered arguments the English language press made that, “in the Helsing precincts, the books were controlled by his minions, and when the repeaters came around, they were allowed to vote, and the illegally naturalized were accommodated in the same way.”<sup>102</sup> They also stressed that the victory of the People’s Party was not a victory of the foreign element over native-born Americans, but rather that it was the foreign element allied with native-born citizens that carried the party to victory.

This emphasis served as a repudiation of the accusations leveled against the German-Americans by the English language press on the one hand, and a call for inter-ethnic political unity on the other. All the glee over the People’s Party’s victory notwithstanding, the campaign season’s aggressive politicking was not conducive to taking the city forward. As much as the *Staats-Zeitung* editors had a vested interest in celebrating their victory and defending their victory’s rightfulness against accusations from the English language press, they also had a vested interest in calming down the citizenry and preparing readership and community alike for the new political era to come. In the coming months the People’s Party promised to see to the betterment of all citizens, regardless of national origin. But the defeat of the Law and Order ticket did not only bring benefits to the German element. Some employers around the city took such offense at their employees’ voting record that the week following the election saw a number of dismissals of German workers from Anglo-American run companies. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors decried these events in the harshest tones, promising that, “the

---

<sup>102</sup> “ELECTIONS: The Helsing-O’Hara Ticket Carries the Day. The Average Majority About 12,000. H. D. Colvin Elected Mayor and Daniel O’Hara Treasurer of Chicago,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 5, 1873.

*Staats-Zeitung* will recommend its readers not to buy any longer from anyone who voted for the fanatics.”<sup>103</sup>

With Hesing’s political victory, Chicago would remain an important node in the transnational German ethnoscape, while the People’s Party’s victory also demonstrated how such an entity had the power to influence local politics. The outcome of the election meant that Chicago was “NOT a miserable Yankee village, but a cosmopolitan city of the world.”<sup>104</sup> Going forward, Chicago was to be a mosaic of ethnicities and cultural practices, in which “all ethnic idiosyncrasies have to be acknowledged [...] with all of their peculiarities [...]” And this would happen without any one group, especially not the “Yankees,” declaring their own idiosyncratic cultural peculiarities as the norm. The People’s Party’s victory was a culmination of the long, rhetorical battle that Hesing and his allies fought on the podium of public discourse, revolving around the question of good citizenship and American identity. In their eyes the party’s victory proved the point that the immigrant collective had a better grasp on what it meant to be American. This lent further credence to the notion that the party’s representatives – and Hesing during the fire boundary dispute – had argued: that the native-born Americans had forgotten the core values that America stood for, and that it needed the immigrant element to embody these values anew. This ultimately meant for the German-Americans and Irish-Americans and other immigrant groups to take over what Karen Sawislak calls “civic

---

<sup>103</sup> “Despicable Revenge,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 7, 1873, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_1106](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_1106).

<sup>104</sup> “Der Sieg Der Volkspartei.”

stewardship” now, since the puritanical Sabbatarians and their ilk failed at maintaining it.<sup>105</sup>

However triumphant the victory of the People’s Party in the 1873 election was, its reign over the city was doomed to be short-lived due to the circumstances of the times as much as by the inaptitude and corruption of its officials. Shortly after the election, the depression that had begun in September with the failure of Jay Cooke & Co. worsened. While the numbers of unemployed workers and laborers never went down over the course of the year, by December overall numbers of unemployed in the city had spiked rapidly due to the seasonal job market slump of winter that combined with the effects of the onset of the Panic of 1873. Thousands of workers gathered in breadlines paid for by banks and insurance companies.<sup>106</sup> Others lined up in front of establishments run by crooks like Michael McDonald, whose charity increased his influence across the city’s growing, seedy underbelly.<sup>107</sup>

But the People’s Party and their mayor Harvey Doolittle Colvin were incapable of staving off the worst effects of the economic downturn. They delivered on their promise of reversing the Sunday opening laws, but did ultimately very little to ameliorate the economic hardship of the city’s hard-hit workers. The change in police leadership did yield tangible results for the city’s population however: whereas the previous legislative period had seen a culling of German-born police officers and an increase in the arrests

---

<sup>105</sup> Sawislak, *Smoldering City*, 250.

<sup>106</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 155.

<sup>107</sup> Lindberg and Miya, *The Gambler King of Clark Street*, 73.

of German and Irish-born citizens, now the trend reversed. Immediately after the People's Party taking over city hall, the arrest rates for white, American-born men increased by 30 percent.<sup>108</sup>

Worse yet, the inherent structure of the working population of the city – and the country at large – was changing. The transient workforce that gave rise to the complaints about non-unionized, rowdy workingmen—complaints that then caused the issue of the Sunday closing laws to resurface—was outgrowing the more traditional, sedate working men to which the People's Party catered. That alone predestined Hering's party's ultimate failure. And while the People's Party's success demonstrated that nativism and morality-based politics were on the way out, that the body politic was changing and that immigrant Americans could successfully claim good citizenship regardless of their specific cultural habits, Hering and his associates were in the end faced with an issue they could not solve. Ultimately, the People's Party held power in Chicago for only two years. In many ways, the party's long-term failure was also borne of the leadership's inability to recognize the changes in society that went deeper than immigration. In February 1874, the *Chicago Times* called for a stop to new immigration from Europe, to quell “the spread of Communism here” that newly immigrating German workers supposedly brought along with them.<sup>109</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* editors did not think much better of the new workers' ideology. In May of the same year, they wrote in response to Communist worker demands that “now our German workingmen propose to

---

<sup>108</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 152.

<sup>109</sup> “[A Split Among Workers],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 14, 1874, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1137](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1137).

mend it by laying on the sledge-hammer still more violently.”<sup>110</sup> While the forty-eighters at the *Staats-Zeitung* had supported a populist political movement that fought against American conservatism, they were no longer as radical or politically forward thinking as they used to be, and especially no longer at the forefront of political radical thought of the 1870s. The times had changed. The former revolutionaries of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* finally found themselves among the ranks of the status quo Yankees. The revolutionaries of the 1870s were of a different type and of a new generation.

---

<sup>110</sup> “Can There Be Too Much Wealth? (Editorial),” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 14, 1874, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1136](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1136).

## CHAPTER 8

### NEW IMMIGRANTS, CORRUPTION, AND LABOR UNREST

#### **The Whisky Ring Scandal, and the Great Railroad Strike of 1877**

The failure of the People's Party and Anton C. Hesing, publisher and owner of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and in the early 1870 one of the most influential German-American Chicagoans, resulted in the forty-eighter editorship losing influence on the German diaspora in the city. The times were changing. Industrial labor increasingly dominated the city. And with industrial jobs came industrial workers, a new generation of immigrants who had new ideas about themselves and the groups they belonged to. These new, low to semi-skilled immigrant workers remained outside of the reach of the *Staats-Zeitung*.

The newspaper of the established German-American community had little to offer them. The editors fundamentally did not understand the new immigrants, or the conditions in which they lived. Neither did they understand the circumstances that drove the immigrants from Germany, nor did they understand the situation they had to face in the United States. The *Staats-Zeitung* catered to working people in the past, but those were of a different generation, a different type of worker. The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 was the biggest labor unrest the United States witnessed up to this point. The strike demonstrated how the newspapermen at the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* lost their influence on the German-American community at large. Although the German ethnoscape in the 1870s continued to influence local politics, new immigrants brought new voices to the United

States that changed the direction of politics. The strike also revealed that the forty-eighters Hesing employed had become parts of the status-quo, whose once-radical politics were now anything but.

### **Anton C. Hesing and the Whiskey Ring**

This failure and defeat of the People's Party in 1876 as well as Hesing's involvement in one of the many government corruption scandals of Ulysses S. Grant's administration created a new dilemma for the German-Americans in Chicago. Historian Rudolf Hofmeister details how Hesing's star began sinking after the Great Fire destroyed considerable parts of his property. These losses caused Hesing to engage in an array of uncouth if not outright corrupt deals, exploiting both his position in German Chicago and the German Americans he purportedly served. When other German-language newspapers made allegations towards these issues, he used his ownership of the city's largest German-American publication to fight back in an effort to intimidate and silence dissenting voices.<sup>1</sup> What Hofmeister ignores is how deeply involved the *Staats-Zeitung* publisher became in local politics at this time. His book contains no mention of the People's Party and does not engage much with the fire boundary dispute following the Great Fire. Hesing was in a peculiar situation in the early 1870s. His personal wealth took a hit, but in the meantime his political clout in the city and beyond was as far-reaching as it had ever been. These circumstances led him down a road that eventually resulted in his retreat to irrelevance.

After a series of scandals plagued his public standing in previous years, all of which he could more or less successfully deflect, Hesing was implicated in what became known as

---

<sup>1</sup> Rudolf Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago* (Champaign, Ill.: Stipes Pub. Co., 1976), 158.

the Whisky Ring Scandal in 1875. This massive tax evasion scheme was one of a series of corruption scandals that marred the Grant presidency. Corrupt internal revenue agents handed off revenue stamps for liquor products to distillers for a bribe. The distillers profited more from their products sold, while the revenue agents passed on about 40 percent of the bribe money they collected to their superiors, to keep the “ring” going. Arguably the highest-ranking government official receiving these kickbacks was Grant’s presidential aide Orville Babcock. In 1874 President Grant’s then newly-appointed Secretary of the Treasury Benjamin Bristow discovered the scheme, and began breaking the ring apart in the summer of the following year.<sup>2</sup> What followed was a nationwide hunt to root out the distillers and their government-employed co-conspirators, which eventually resulted in numerous well-publicized court cases across the country.<sup>3</sup>

Hesing benefitted from the local scheme, in which the Chicago police chief Jacob Rehm was the main official facilitating the tax evasion.<sup>4</sup> Rehm and Hesing collected unpaid tax money from the sales of a local distillery that provided spirits to Chicago taverns, the owners of which received kickbacks from the distillery to keep the true proceedings off of their official books. The court charged that Hesing received upwards of \$40,000 this way.<sup>5</sup> For months the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Times* and the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* published

---

<sup>2</sup> Richard White, *The Republic for Which It Stands: The United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2017), 205.

<sup>3</sup> Jennifer Rose Hopper, “Reexamining the Nineteenth-Century Presidency and Partisan Press: The Case of President Grant and the Whiskey Ring Scandal,” *Social Science History* 42, no. 1 (January 19, 2018): 114.

<sup>4</sup> Kelly Pucci, *Chicago’s First Crime King: Michael Cassius McDonald* (Arcadia Publishing, 2019), 92.

<sup>5</sup> Richard C. Lindberg and John Miya, *The Gambler King of Clark Street: Michael C. McDonald and the Rise of Chicago’s Democratic Machine* (Carbondale, UNITED STATES: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009), 78, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=1354599>.



close coverage of the case. While the Anglo-Americans publications of Chicago and beyond were overtly critical of Hesing, precluding his guilt in the Whisky affair, the *Staats-Zeitung* editors predicably reported on the proceedings against their publisher defensively, and portrayed their employer in a favorable light.

The Whiskey Ring scandal severely damaged the reputation of the Republican Party, both on the national and local levels. In Chicago the scandal laid bare the partisan fault lines in the city's newspaper landscape. While reporting on the court proceedings, the *Tribune* editors kept deriding the attacks *Chicago Times* editor-in-chief Wilbur S. Storey fielded against both the Whiskey Ring conspirators and the Republican government officials indicted in the trials.<sup>6</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* printed daily dispatches from their court reporters during the time that the proceedings against Rehm and Hesing went on, with an unsurprisingly sympathetic predisposition towards the accused. Editor-in-Chief Hermann Raster publicly defended his own honor against accusations Storey and his *Times* editors fielded against him. In an angry, rambling open letter to the *Times*, Raster stated that he never misappropriated money, neither as wagonmaster United States Customs House in New York nor during his time as Collector of the Revenue in Chicago. He did eventually bail Hesing out of jail, which "was very nearly all I was worth. I would not and would not and could not qualify in twice the amount of the bond."<sup>7</sup> Since Raster himself could not bring up the necessary securities for posting bail, Anton Hesing's son Washington provided the rest, and the *Staats-Zeitung* publisher could walk free—for now.

---

<sup>6</sup> "WHISKY: Messrs. Rehm and Hesing Appear and Plead Guilty.," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 18, 1876.

<sup>7</sup> Hermann Raster, "WHISKY: Reproduction of a Letter by Mr. Hermann Raster to the Chicago "Times," January 10, 1876.

While Hering was on trial for his involvement in one scandal, his publication poured vitriol on the participants in another one. This was the “Indian Ring” scandal, in which the Secretary of War William Belknap was found to have given what amounted to monopoly powers to traders at army outposts in Indian Territory - traders which he himself appointed only after receiving a direct bribe. The soldiers stationed at these posts had no choice but to buy supplies from these monopoly traders at inflated prices. The traders then kicked back parts of the profits generated to the Secretary of War. Investigations into the matter then revealed that Belknap’s wives Carrie and her sister Amanda, who married Belknap after Carrie’s death in 1870, gave the secretary the initiating impetus to initiate the scheme. Their desire for a lavish lifestyle overextended Belknap’s finances, so he sought extraordinary means to maintain his family’s life of raucous parties and extravagance.<sup>8</sup> Raster was outraged: “Woe is him, who brings a beautiful, empty headed, ambitious wife to Washington, who is addicted to pomp, who for one evening’s reception will hang twice her husband’s yearly income on her body in the form of silk, velvet, lace and diamonds. Before he knows it, he will bite the into the apple of sin – and begin to STEAL.”<sup>9</sup> Belknap resigned from as Secretary of War the day prior to the article’s publication.

The Indian Ring Scandal—like the Whisky Ring—were emblematic of the Grant Presidency, which was plagued with corruption, bribery and all kinds of scandals, some of which reached into the White House itself. A dam had ruptured in upper echelons of the Grant administration. Further scandals would be uncovered now, since Belknap and his wife were not the only Washington officials who lived lives much more wasteful than their

---

<sup>8</sup> Ronald C. White, *American Ulysses: A Life of Ulysses S. Grant* (New York: Random House, 2016), 565.

<sup>9</sup> “Belknaps Entlarver,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 3, 1876, Newberry Library (my translation).

ministerial salaries alone would allow. As an American, Raster was particularly incised at the impression these scandals would make abroad, due to the unfortunate timing: the evidence of this widespread corruption came to light in the year of the nation's centennial. The *Staats-Zeitung* did not, however, run commentary of a similar nature on their publisher's involvement with the Whiskey Ring. That Raster focused his editorial vitriol on the Indian Ring, almost appeared as if he was running interference and attempted to deflect attention from the broader implications the Whiskey Ring scandal had for his employer. People like Belknap and his wives were portrayed as unquestionably guilty, while Hesing and Rehm received barely any scrutiny, if the editors were not outright denying their guilt and decrying the charges against them as being motivated by nativism and xenophobia.

The Whiskey Ring trials began in January of 1876 and proceeded for several months. The *Staats-Zeitung* eventually began referring to the Whiskey Ring Scandal as the *Schnappskrieg* ("schnapps war"—however "schnapps" in colloquial German can also mean "humbug"). While no shots were fired and the only casualties of this conflict were federal tax revenues and some of the defendants' personal freedoms and reputations, the sheer volume of people accused in the process justified the sensationalist label. Many local distillers and producers of alcoholic goods, a vinegar maker who hid a distillery in his vinegar factory, small-scale makers of whiskey from Chicago, and small towns across Illinois, had to stand trial.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> "Das Neueste Vom Schnapps-kriege - Deputy Collector Root Zur Disposition Gestellt Und Verhaftet," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 29, 1876, Newberry Library (my translation).

One of the indictments against Hesing was that he accepted a bribe of \$40,000 to bar his son Washington Hesing from running for the congressional seat of Charles B. Farwell in Illinois' 3<sup>rd</sup> congressional district. This money supposedly came from other participants in the Whiskey Ring, primarily Jacob Rehm. The *Chicago Tribune* had a reporter in the courthouse who interviewed several of the accused, including Jacob Rehm and both Anton and Washington Hesing on the matter. Rehm told the reporter that he had facilitated a loan to Anton Hesing with the explicit intention that Washington Hesing would withdraw from the race. Anton Hesing replied to this allegation that this was in fact not true, and that his son never had any intention of running in the congressional race in the first place.<sup>11</sup>

The Hesings position was that they were themselves badly affected by the depression as badly as everyone else, and their personal finances would not allow for one of their family to run a costly congressional campaign. Also, Anton Hesing relayed that, “a very fine citizen approached Washington Hesing in July of 1874 and offered him a sum of \$25,000 in cash in the name of Mr. Farwell, as well as Mr. Farwell’s support, should Washington be nominated in the election of 1876. Washington refused the offer with indignation.”<sup>12</sup> The Hesings insisted that Washington’s refusal of this bribe, as well as his lack of intent to run in the first place, made it clear that they had not only never accepted any money for Washington’s retreat from the congressional race. They had been offered a substantial bribe long before the purported loan of \$40,000—and never accepted any of

---

<sup>11</sup> “The Hesings: That \$40,000 Loan. an Interview with Mr. Rehm,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922), March 16, 1876.

<sup>12</sup> “Grand Jury,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 17, 1876, Newberry Library (my translation).

the money. As to the \$40,000 loan, that could be explained by various smaller sums of several thousand that changed hands across the span of some years between Rehm, Hesing and others, with no foul play involved—or so the Hesings claimed.

The episode highlighted the shocking level of corruption within American politics at every level. Most revealing was how deeply involved the Hesings were in many of the misdeeds. Just to what exact degree was not quite certain to the public. A.C. Hesing had long been a political boss of the German North Side, a position which had made him, his family and friends quite wealthy—sometimes at the expense of other German immigrants. Although he arguably also genuinely helped his German-American countrymen. Just how corrupt he himself had become in the process was now up to the courts to decide.

Meanwhile, in city politics, Mayor Harvey Doolittle Colvin of the People's Party faced disaster. After the charter election of Chicago in April 1875 established that mayoral elections were from this point only to be held in April of odd-numbered years, Colvin believed he could stay in office until the city elections of 1877. Historian John Jentz argues that the People's Party officials had deliberately set the date for April 1875, since with this date they could make the argument that the mayor would not even have to face a challenger for two more years.<sup>13</sup> The People's Party's tenure overall was marred by ineptitude and corruption. The elected officials utterly failed to reign in the worst effects of the Panic of 1873 on the city, and the city of Chicago almost had to declare bankruptcy in the process. That the city paid most of its bills with city scrip due to the shortage of paper money was the biggest factor that almost brought Chicago into irreversible financial ruin.

---

<sup>13</sup> John B. Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (University of Illinois Press, 2012), 188.

With an administration plagued by scandal—of which the Whisky Ring was only the latest and greatest—Colvin faced an outraged public when he decided to hang on to his office for another year, while fighting the constitutionality of the 1875 charter election in court. His opposition, a coalition of outraged bipartisan interests and the Anglo-American evangelicals the People’s Party had opposed all throughout the organization’s existence, mobilized and nominated Thomas Hoyne for the office of mayor. Hoyne was a Democratic Party member from New York, but in this election he ran as an independent. Officially, neither Democrats nor Republicans made efforts to nominate candidates for the mayor’s office in the 1876 election, and the mayor’s office also did not appear on the official ballot. The *Chicago Tribune* noted that, “if Colvin may be impressed at all by the fiat of the popular voice, it will be when he finds a unanimous vote, without party or other dissensions, against his longer continuation in the office of Mayor.”<sup>14</sup> An overwhelming amount of voters wrote Hoyne’s name on their ballots—and even though the office of mayor was not officially up for election, a few also wrote in Colvin’s name. The will of the people was clear. Colvin was voted out. But he refused to accept the legitimacy of this election.

The ensuing squabbles about whether or not Hoyne or Colvin were the rightful mayors of the city further degraded the public’s opinion of the People’s Party. The *Chicago Tribune* published lengthy minutes of deliberations of the newly elected city council, in which the aldermen at length deliberated whether or not Harvey Colvin should remain in office. Alderman Mark Sheridan made the case that Colvin and his city council “willfully

---

<sup>14</sup> “The Hon. Thomas Hoyne for Mayor,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 13, 1876.

and corruptly neglected the discharge of their duties” when they did not call for a mayoral election that year. Sheridan’s argument was that since the 1876 election was the first election under the newly adopted city charter, this election by necessity should have included voting on the office of the mayor. By omitting this vote from the ballots, the Colvin administration acted not only negligent, but attempted to rob the citizenry of their right to vote.<sup>15</sup> Hoyne’s city councilmembers then declared that Colvin had lost the election. Hoyne pleaded with Colvin to vacate the office, which the People’s Party’s mayor refused to do. Eventually, the Illinois Circuit Court declared the April election void, and called for a special mayoral election to be held in July, 1876.<sup>16</sup> Hoyne did not run again, and Republican alderman Monroe Heath was subsequently elected as Mayor of Chicago. The tenure of the People’s Party was—indisputably—over.<sup>17</sup>

While the debacle surrounding the 1876 city elections went on, the trial against Hesing and his co-conspirators culminated in Anton Hesing’s sentencing. The trial seemed to turn in favor of the influential publisher. The court reporter of the *Staats-Zeitung* came to the conclusion that “Mr. Hesing, in his position as stakeholder in a distillery, he has never had any personal involvement in RUNNING the day-to-day business, or even KNOWLEDGE of the particularities of this company’s everyday operations.”<sup>18</sup> In his final address to the court, Hesing denied knowingly having committed any crimes: “I have not

---

<sup>15</sup> “Harvey Hoisted: The People Did Not Vote In Vain For A Mayor At The Last Election,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 9, 1876.

<sup>16</sup> Bessie Louise Pierce, *History of Chicago, Volume III: The Rise of a Modern City, 1871-1893* (University of Chicago Press, 2007), 345.

<sup>17</sup> Lindberg and Miya, *The Gambler King of Clark Street*, 80.

<sup>18</sup> Unknown, “A. C. Hesing,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, March 18, 1876, Newberry Library (my translation).

assisted in the running or in the carrying on of any distillery. I simply have been a stockholder in a concern where it has been proven or acknowledged, that they have defrauded the Government [sic].”<sup>19</sup> Helsing went on to deny that he had conspired with anyone regarding these fraudulent activities. District Court Judge Henry Williams Blodgett then proceeded to hand the most severe sentence to Helsing out of all the high-profile defendants, finding the publisher guilty of conspiracy to defraud the United States government and that in his capacity as a distiller, removed spirits from his distillery to perpetuate this fraud. Helsing was sentenced to two years in jail and a \$5,000 fine.

The German-American community was outraged. With the help of the *Staats-Zeitung* a broad petitioning campaign was organized to have Helsing’s sentence reduced. The editors portrayed the verdict against their publisher as one that was not motivated by facts or the guilt of the defendant, but by other reasons, as Raster editorialized: “Helsing has never been forgiven for having created the People's Party which triumphed so completely over the puritan Know-Nothings. This accounts for the constant instigations; that Helsing should be punished severely. Helsing was mostly punished for the recognition he won for the foreign-born element.”<sup>20</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* proclaimed that the verdict was a form of revenge of the city’s nativists against the immigrant elements, and Helsing became their sacrificial lamb. Helsing also refused to testify against Jasper Ward and other alleged co-conspirators, which along with the long-standing animosity of the city’s political

---

<sup>19</sup> “COUNTY JAIL: Judge Blodgett Sentences the Second Batch. Helsing Gets Two Years and a Fine of \$5,000,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 25, 1876.

<sup>20</sup> Unknown, “Why A. C. Helsing Went to Jail.,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 24, 1876, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_1527](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_1527).



establishment served the *Staats-Zeitung* - and with it the older generations of German-American Chicago – as explanation for the harsh sentence.

Hesing's allies and friends at the *Staats-Zeitung* and throughout German Chicago gathered at a mass meeting immediately after the sentencing, at which former owner of the newspaper Lorenz Brentano, who had just returned from his stint as United States consul to Dresden, spoke. Brentano implored the gathered that if there was to be a petition to lower Hesing's sentence, the group should proceed with caution. They should do their best to not—in a flight of righteous outrage—bring judge Blodgett up against them. Brentano said he “had visited Mr. Hesing the day before, and he had nothing to say against the Judge.”<sup>21</sup> The meeting then resolved to circulate petitions across the city, pleading to the judges to reduce Hesing's sentence.

These petitions then proceeded to climb the ladder of American jurisprudence, to the point that Attorney General Alphonso Taft recommended Hesing and some of his co-conspirators receive executive clemency from President Grant. As one of the judges worded the argument in a letter to Taft laying out the reasoning for this suggestion, “I could not find in the history of these trials any ground for the comparative severity of his sentence, other than the fact that *he had given his testimony*.”<sup>22</sup> The judges—and Attorney General Taft—eventually reasoned that Hesing's harsh sentence came down to his pleading guilty and then essentially testifying against himself while on the witness stand for the defense of

---

<sup>21</sup> “HESING: A Large Meeting of His German Friends,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 28, 1876, <http://search.proquest.com/hnpchicagotribune/docview/171646650/928C623C7A2F4287PQ/1?accountid=12163>.

<sup>22</sup> T. Lyle Dickey, “Judge Dickey's Letters: His Reasons for Signing the Petitions for Pardon.,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 24, 1876.

another one of the Whiskey Ring conspirators. President Grant commuted the sentence of Hesing and four others on September 25, 1876. Hesing only served three months of his two-year sentence.<sup>23</sup> The mobilization of forces to free Hesing again demonstrated of how far reaching the political influence of the German diaspora had become, and how this entity could influence political decision making through informal means.

However, the defeat of the People's Party, the fallout of the Whiskey Ring, and the other social and political upheavals of the 1870s prevented Hesing from maintaining his influence over his fellow German-born immigrants and avoiding their further radicalization. The Whisky Ring Scandal tied his and his supporters' hands at a time during which they would have needed to maintain a tight grip on the German-American element in Chicago. But instead of working towards preventing the city's German laborers from fraternizing with the new socialist radicals, the owner of the *Staats-Zeitung* was consumed with defending his honor and livelihood in court, against what he and his newspaper framed as an onslaught of nativist revanchism. Hesing and his newspaper left something of a power vacuum in German-American Chicago during this time. Rudolf Hofmeister argues that another contributing factor in this diminishing of local political influence was that the German-language newspaper landscape of Chicago increasingly fragmented in the 1870s, preventing the German element from forming a cohesive political unit in the way that the community had been during the rise of the Republican Party.<sup>24</sup> What made matters worse for the standing of the *Staats-Zeitung* was that the newspaper's forty-eightier editors proved increasingly out of touch with the needs and mindset of the

---

<sup>23</sup> "Whisky: Text of the Pardon Granted to Hesing Et Al.," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 25, 1876.

<sup>24</sup> Hofmeister, *The Germans of Chicago*, 161.

new working-class immigrants. This resulted in the recently arrived immigrant workers flocking towards more radical organizations with few of the old order German-Americans being able (or willing) to offer up alternatives.<sup>25</sup> How much his political capital and sway over the majority of German-American Chicago was exhausted would become evident a year later, when the United States' first nationwide labor unrest also gripped Chicago.

This lapse was one of the impulses that gave rise to the socialist Workingmen's Party of Illinois and its print mouthpiece *Der Vorbote (The Herald)*, founded in February of 1874.<sup>26</sup> The Workingmen's Party consciously positioned the newspaper against the German-American bourgeoisie press, a direct refutation of the *Staats-Zeitung*. Hesing's newspaper represented the status-quo to the new, more socialist minded immigrants. The workingmen's associations of the forty-eighter generation began losing much of their influence on the city's workers after the end of the Civil War. This trend continued and accelerated with the unification of Germany and subsequent wave of German immigrants. These new immigrant workers understood their positions in society differently. Unlike the earlier immigrant generations, in which working people were mostly skilled artisans, these new arrivals were overwhelmingly destitute peasants from the eastern parts of the German Empire. The new arrivals came with less wealth and personal belongings, and instead of finding opportunities to open their own small shops and artisan businesses, they were absorbed by Chicago's growing—and labor hungry—industrial manufacturing sectors. With

---

<sup>25</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 194.

<sup>26</sup> James R Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement, and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), 49.

this shift came a new self-identification, a new understanding of their position in society.

The new workers were in the Marxist sense members of the proletarian working class.<sup>27</sup>

The radicalization of Chicago's working class was a phenomenon kindled by social, political and economic changes on both sides of the Atlantic. The *Staats-Zeitung*, Anton Hesing and Hermann Raster, but also Lorenz Brentano, the political leaders of the German-American establishment of Chicago, increasingly lost their influence on the German workers. They could no longer easily intervene with a sharply worded article and the help of friendly, forty-eighter run organizations like the *Turnverein*. Due to this loss of control, they were not in a position to have much of an impact on the events that unfolded during the summer of 1877. The erstwhile revolutionaries were now in the comfortable middle-class, status-quo positions. They argued against changes the working people and newly-arrived German socialists demanded, who now took over the positions of political organizers and leaders from the forty-eighters, whether the latter accepted it or not.<sup>28</sup>

### **The New Radicals**

During the depression years of the 1870s, numerous labor strikes rocked Chicago. Workingmen grew more militant and tried to fight off wage cuts, layoffs and longer working hours. Unionized workers organized most of these strikes and protests, but Chicagoans also witnessed marches of loosely organized unemployed people demanding better wages and more paid jobs in general. Public opinion as expressed in the pages of the

---

<sup>27</sup> James R Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement, and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), 60.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Weber, Dirk Hoerder, and Renate Kiesewetter, *Glimpses of the German-American Radical Press*. (Bremen; Berlin: Labor Newspaper Preservation Project, Universität Bremen; John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies, Library, 1985), 182.

establishment press was rarely on the side of these men and women. A Chicago-specific issue was the Relief and Aid Society, which originally formed to give aid to those Chicagoans stricken by the Great Fire. Since its founders set the society up to only provide aid to the supposedly “truly deserving poor” (the criteria for which the society determined themselves), much aid collected from charitable donations was never distributed. Many unemployed and underpaid wage workers staged large protests against the society in order to pressure its leadership to disburse the money to the masses clearly in need of relief. But the leadership of the Relief and Aid Society and the city alike were not moved by those efforts, and instead staved off the angry masses by force. Both the Chicago Police and the First Regiment of Illinois, an armed militia comprised of industrialist and capitalist henchmen, quelled the subsequent protests in the summer of 1874.<sup>29</sup>

Despite depression, high unemployment and persistent labor struggles, Chicago’s population experienced an unprecedented boom during the 1870s. A large influx of newly arriving immigrants from Europe fueled this explosion, most of them from Germany. These new immigrants were mainly workers from Prussia, in the northeast of the newly founded nation-state. Earlier generations of German-Americans hailed from the more central and southern parts. Similar to the overall composition of the forty-eighter generation before, the bulk of this generation was made up of working people of little means and meagre education, but like the forty-eighter wave it had its share of well-educated, highly politicized intellectuals as well. This group became the equivalent of

---

<sup>29</sup> “CITIZEN SOLDIERS: Organizing the First Regiment of Illinois Militin. THE CONSTITUTION. THE FIRST MEMBERS. MR. STONE,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 29, 1874.

Raster, Rapp, Brentano and Schneider for their respective generation.<sup>30</sup> This upswell of the population, the rampant unemployment and consequent unrest, as well as the renewed influx of immigrants that bolstered the clientele of the pre-existing beer halls, served to worsen the fears of the city's temperance establishment. All of these events eventually led to the German socialists becoming the new leading cadre of intellectuals among the now-current wave of immigrants. These new leaders contributed to the further radicalization of the German diaspora— to the point of forming their own armed militia group, the *Land und Wehr Verein* (Land and Defense Association) in April 1875.<sup>31</sup>

Chicago was a city socially segregated in terms of national origins, but also in terms of wealth and professions. The city's newspapers served as a connector between the worlds inhabited by the fortunate and those of less ample means – however, the mainstream newspapers reporting on labor issues mostly sided with capital, arguing strictly against the workers and their demands. In the spring of 1876, the Bohemian employees of a West-Side lumberyard went on strike after their employer docked their wages during the still-ongoing depression. Instead of engaging with the disaffected Bohemian strikers, the company hired Irish and German strike breakers to fill the vacancies at a lower wage. This caused a violent protest, which the *Chicago Tribune* editors decried as an, “attempted interference with the right of other men to labor at any price they choose to accept,” and called for, “the strong arms of authority to suppress quickly and summarily the mob-violence incited against it.”<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, 62.

<sup>31</sup> John B. Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (University of Illinois Press, 2012), 169.

<sup>32</sup> “Yesterday's Proletarian Riot.,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 9, 1876.

The reporting in the *Tribune* was sensationalist and focused on the violence and the infraction of the strikers upon the rights of their fellow workers. The article did however serve to bring the laborers' discontent to the attention of the newspaper's higher status readership, who otherwise might not have taken much notice of the riots in the secluded industrial zones of the city. This was another example of a newspaper bridging a spatial divide, this time within a city.

None of the striking and protesting ultimately helped the workers. Due to the ongoing depression and high unemployment rates, employers frequently found other people willing to toil in their establishments for whatever low wage they chose to pay.<sup>33</sup> This in turn radicalized labor, leading to a surge in socialist and communist organizations in the city. The traditional political bosses of the immigrant districts lacked the clout with the new workers to stop this trend. As historian Hartmut Keil notes, the forty-eighters in leadership positions largely abandoned labor issues after the Civil War, allying themselves with German business elites. To some degree this dynamic also happened at the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, since Anton Hesing, who became the sole owner and publisher after 1867, was not a forty-eighter.<sup>34</sup> As early as December 1873 Chicago labor leaders rallied support for a labor-led workingmen's party, as they perceived the success of Hesing's People's Party as a sign that Chicago's working population could give rise to such an organization – but not under the leadership of someone as windy and opportunist as Hesing and his allies.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, 73.

<sup>34</sup> Hartmut Keil, "A Profile of Editors of the German-American Radical Press, 1850-1910," in Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James P. Danky, editors *The German-American Radical Press*, 1992, 25.

<sup>35</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 158.

## The Great Railroad Strike of 1877

During the summer months of 1877, the front pages of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* were dominated by reports on the Russo-Turkish war that broke out in April. The faraway conflict served as a welcome distraction during a generally slow news cycle. But while foreign correspondents kept sending updates on troop movements and commentaries from European dignitaries, reports on an altogether different kind of event began trickling in from the eastern United States: accounts arrived of railway workers blocking trains in West Virginia. This was the beginning the Great Railroad Strike, the first major nationwide labor uprising in United States history.

The initial reporting on the spreading conflict in West Virginia and Maryland read like war correspondence. Under the heading *Die Streiker* (the strikers), the editors lined up a whole slew of dispatches from correspondents and other newspapers in the eastern United States. That the strike could extend to Chicago was then a distant possibility. “Worker uprisings are supposedly expected along the Central Ohio and Chicago branch tracks,” the *Staats-Zeitung* editors predicted.<sup>36</sup> Chicago was, after all, the nation’s railroad hub, and widespread unrest was in the air during the hot summer months.

The insurrection in West Virginia was a disorganized affair ignited by a number of issues. Workers faced longer hours, stricter control, and less of a say on their day-to-day lives. The wage cuts that the administration of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroads enacted followed preceding wage cuts at the Pennsylvania Railroad.<sup>37</sup> Faced with revolt, the

---

<sup>36</sup> “Die Streiker,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 21, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>37</sup> White, *The Republic for Which It Stands*, 346.



railroad tycoons pleaded to their governors for assistance. The corporations then received both material and personnel support in the form of state militias that moved in to quash the strikes.<sup>38</sup> The German-American editors accused governor of West Virginia, Democrat Henry M. Matthews of being too timid. They alleged that he was, “loath to call for federal troops. He ultimately was left with no other choice, since he had to prevent the further destruction of human lives and property.”<sup>39</sup> The presence of armed militias, army units and the national guard did not defuse the situation, however. On the contrary: “the presence of the military [seemed] to only exasperate them,” as the *Chicago Tribune* concluded.<sup>40</sup>

In the following days, news of the spreading strike and increasing unrest dominated the *Staats-Zeitung* headlines, pushing news of the Turko-Russian war to the sidelines. The editors gathered dispatches that detailed the various measures that elected officials enacted to counter and curb the strikes. They also published the deliberations and conclusions that the strikers held and proclaimed in public meetings. The *Staats-Zeitung* differed slightly from the reporting of Anglo-American papers like the *Chicago Tribune*, which for the most part only relayed the judgement passed by either elected officials or railroad administrators about the strikers but gave no accounts from the strikers themselves. Historian Richard Junger argues that most Chicago newspapers engaged in highly sensationalistic reporting on the labor unrest, focusing on the destruction and confusion the strike brought with it. This was especially true when the various strike

---

<sup>38</sup> Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, 75.

<sup>39</sup> “Die Streiker,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>40</sup> “RIOTOUS STRIKERS: Alarming Disorder Prevailing at Martinsburg, W. Va. Great Strike of the Firemen and Brakemen of the Baltimore & Ohio,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 18, 1877.

actions first in the East and then in Chicago turned violent. Junger cites only one Anglo-American newspaper, the *Chicago Daily News*, that was—initially—sympathetic with the striker’s cause.<sup>41</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* however did not stand in open solidarity with the workers. The editors wrote that the employees of the Erie Railroad, after their employer instructed them about the coming wage cuts, “returned back to work, seemingly content” and that it was only a “a few hotheads” who refused to return to their jobs.<sup>42</sup> This ambivalence was a dynamic that characterized the *Staats-Zeitung*’s reporting on the strike in the East. The editors proclaimed an understanding for the reasons behind the labor action in one article while harshly condemning the means by which the workers sought to pursue their goals of higher wages—especially if those means escalated into open violence—in the next.

On July 22, the strike reached fever pitch in Pittsburgh. Soldiers fired their rifles into the crowd and in retaliation the strikers set fire to rail cars and depots. The fire then spread out of control. The *Staats-Zeitung* headlines the following day read about the “railroad war in the East,” with the editors reporting from the “field of battle.”<sup>43</sup> Local leaders found themselves completely unable to keep the situation under control. Commenting on these events, Raster penned a long editorial that laid out the exact reasons the situation in Pittsburgh had escalated the way it did. He proclaimed that the current news out of Pennsylvania was, “more terrible than anything reported on coming out of the

---

<sup>41</sup> Richard Junger, *Becoming the Second City: Chicago’s Mass News Media, 1833-1898* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 107, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=3413852>.

<sup>42</sup> “In Baltimore Fliesst Das Erste Blut,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 21, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>43</sup> “Vom Kriegschauplatz,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

United States in twelve years.” Raster then concluded that the reason for America being prone to civil unrest of these proportions could be blamed on the lack of a standing army:

How many thousand, if not ten- or hundred thousand native born Americans may have sighed yesterday morning ‘oh if only we had a small piece of a standing army, like those [...] effete empires and kingdoms of Europe, an army we can rely upon to restore peace and order.’ Because what pathetic protection provide those militias, comprised of honest family fathers and young store clerks [...].<sup>44</sup>

This was certainly an odd way of framing the strike, especially for an old revolutionary like Raster. But his sentiment demonstrated the peculiarities of the aging forty-eighters’ mindset—namely that they who once rose up against similar militaries now lamented their absence. However, Raster’s analysis here was less of a call for violent suppression and more of a general musing about the nature of the United States and its citizens. Raster primarily bemoaned the lack of an army since, without one the United States lacked the implicitly coercive means to instill a sense of duty and respect towards the public order that only the threat of military intervention by a standing army could instill. But Raster still ended on a conciliatory note: “When all of this ends, it will end in that very American way,” he wrote. “It will eventually come to the same end that all conflicts in this country come to: a fair compromise.”<sup>45</sup> In many ways this sentiment was one prevalent among the ageing forty-eighter generation, as participation in the Civil War impacted their outlook on American politics and society. Historian Ella Lonn remarks that the erstwhile radicals softened their positions after the Civil War, and embraced compromise where the realities of the situations on the ground made such a position more

---

<sup>44</sup> “Das Pittsburger Blutbad,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>45</sup> “Das Pittsburger Blutbad.”

prudent than immovable, absolute dogmatism.<sup>46</sup> Raster himself did not fight in the war, personally. But many of his friends and colleagues did—and their changing sentiments regarding politics and society in America changed the overall conversation.

The *Staats-Zeitung* editors' position towards the strike remained one of ambivalence. While still stressing the lamentable loss of life and property that the events in Pittsburgh wrought, another editor sought to better explain the situation and motivations of the strikers, especially due to the, “remarkable notion of sympathy for the rioters present in the reporting of horrors out of Pittsburgh.”<sup>47</sup> This editor described sympathy in the reporting about the riots as a “good forty-eighter quality,” since the reports portrayed the strikers as “citizens, and – where such a thing was possible – as innocent victims.”

Searching for the reasons the correspondents of the *Staats-Zeitung* had for expressing such sentiments, the editor squarely laid the blame on the railroad companies and their merciless quest for monopolies which always led to widespread price gouging, arbitrary pricing, corruption and continued underpayment of their workers. These issues were on the minds of the correspondents out of Pittsburgh when they reported on the strike, and thus explained the sympathy for the strikers hinted at therein. This did not, in the eyes of the editor, excuse the violence and rioting, but, he wrote, “it cannot be denied that there was little in the way those grievances were aired.” A “calm and sober” response to the real and perceived injustices the railroad corporations had committed in their pursuit of profits was necessary, but instead “one remembered only – and amplified one’s outrage - the ways

---

<sup>46</sup> Ella Lonn, “In the Civil War” in, Adolf Eduard Zucker, editor, *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, (New York, Russell & Russell, 1967), 219.

<sup>47</sup> “Die Andere Seite,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

in which the railroad companies kept the freight traffic of the country in perpetual insecurity and confusion.” On top of this, the *Staats-Zeitung* editor found that the reports on the wage cuts that caused the strike undercounted in comparison to those reported in most English language papers, writing that: “if this [wage cut] was indeed [this severe], then the strikers are indeed justified when they say, ‘It was you railroad companies who shrank the profits of your railroads with your mad and bloodthirsty competition, which is YOUR fault, and not ours.’”<sup>48</sup>

The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* editors sympathizing and not outright condemning anything to do with the strike actions was in line with a wider trend in middle-class reactions across the United States. The *Staats-Zeitung* was a thoroughly status-quo, middle class publication by 1877. Many members of this emerging class across the country sympathized openly and in some cases even actively participated in the strike actions. Historian David Stowell observed that many middle-class Americans in the late 1870s came out of traditional occupations which pre-dated the rising industrial-capitalist societal order. As such, these members of the middle class shared an aversion of the railroad corporations with the workers. The railroads were largely seen as representative of the new industrial order that with its massive concentration of power threatened older, more democratic and republican ideals. The various scandals during the administration, especially the Credit Mobilier debacle, served to paint the railroads as engines of

---

<sup>48</sup> “Die Andere Seite.”

unimaginable corruption in the public imagination. The reactions of the *Staats-Zeitung* editors have to be understood as informed by a very similar sentiment.<sup>49</sup>

The situation in Pittsburgh served as an impetus for further exposition by the *Staats-Zeitung* editors on labor issues in general and the broader strike, during which the newspapermen maintained their ambivalent stance towards the strikers and their demands. On the one hand, the railroad companies received their dues; the editors recalled condemning their behavior in the preceding years. On the other hand, the sheer mayhem on the streets of Pittsburgh, the destruction of “100 locomotives and 2,000 train cars,” as well as destruction of “the railroads, the train station buildings, granaries, pieces of cargo, etc.” served to raise their editorial ire.<sup>50</sup> They felt that workers had rightful grievances against the corporations. But no matter how justified, those grievances did not allow for the wholesale destruction of property and – most importantly here – capital. The *Staats-Zeitung* editor admonished that, “every worker with just an iota of common sense has to understand that the DESTRUCTION of such capital that is necessary for certain work outputs is the absolutely stupidest way to achieve a better compensation for such work output.”<sup>51</sup>

Who was ultimately responsible for the wholesale and wanton destruction of property in Pittsburgh remained unclear. Some voices denied that it was the strikers who committed these acts, but rather blamed the destruction on a riotous mob incited by the

---

<sup>49</sup> David O. Stowell, “Small Property Holders and the Great Strike of 1877: Railroads, City Streets, and the Middle Classes,” *Journal of Urban History* 21, no. 6 (1995): 744, <https://doi.org/10.1177/009614429502100603>.

<sup>50</sup> “Mittel Und Zweck,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 24, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>51</sup> “Mittel Und Zweck.”

chaos. The editor replied that, “all workers sympathetic to the strikers should proclaim OPENLY AND UNAMBIGUOUSLY that they condemn those misdeeds and turpitudes.”<sup>52</sup> The sentiment here put the *Staats-Zeitung* in a position that was neither outwardly hostile towards the strikers, but also not embracing their cause. Instead, the editor scolded the strikers for risking to squander the goodwill their cause had in the general population, since the railroad companies’ standing with the public was not quite beneficial. The *Staats-Zeitung* agreed in this evaluation with that of the *Chicago Tribune*. The latter newspaper ran a reprint of a “Plea to the Real Strikers” from Pittsburgh. Like the *Staats-Zeitung*, the writers of the plea differentiated between who they saw as workers with actual grievances engaging in a righteous strike, and those who only wanted to incite chaos. It was not the strikers who set fires and looted in Pittsburgh, but, “a much lower grade of men than those who inaugurated the real strike. They are those who have neither character nor position to lose by their action, and seem to hold themselves amenable to no law whatever.”<sup>53</sup>

But even if the editors saw the riots that resulted from the strikes as ultimately detrimental to the workers and their cause, in these early days of the Great Railroad Strike the sympathies of the *Staats-Zeitung* editorial board were still more—if hesitantly—in favor of the striking workers than they were opposed to them and their cause. While one editorial condemned the violence that occurred in the wake of the strike, another editorial detailed the reasons for the strike and ultimately found their cause just. The editor conceded that the wages the railroad workers received from the corporations were too low, especially considering “[the breakers and stokers] have to lead a double household, since

---

<sup>52</sup> “Mittel Und Zweck.”

<sup>53</sup> “FEVER: Fearful Protraction of the Present Terrible Crisis,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 24, 1877.

their positions do not allow [them] to eat at home, requiring them to buy food on the way and often even require them to pay for lodging.”<sup>54</sup> By detailing the working conditions of the strikers, the editors built sympathy for their plight, explaining the underlying causes of the strike to the readership.

Other forty-eight-run German-American newspapers around the country followed a similar trajectory. The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* reprinted articles reflecting like-minded sentiments. Through these reprints the *Staats-Zeitung* again acted as a bridge between discreet nodes of German-American life, while also facilitating a dialog between the disparate editors on the page of the newspaper. The German-American cultural sphere gained a cross-regional cohesion through this facilitation. The *Westliche Post* out of St. Louis proclaimed that the initial charge of the workers was justified, but “[the striking workers] prevented others from taking their place, they dared lay hand on others’ property and destroyed it, and they interrupted traffic on the public ways of communication...”<sup>55</sup> The St. Louis newspaper was run by Carl Schurz at the time, probably the most prominent German-American forty-eighter, Civil War veteran, and United States Secretary of the Interior. The *Westliche Post* editorship insisted that “the state cannot allow this kind of behavior from a part of its citizenry, law and order must prevail.”<sup>56</sup>

The *Philadelphia Demokrat* meanwhile struck a chord more in line with the high-minded political philosophizing of the forty-eighter lot, stressing that, “since it is the

---

<sup>54</sup> “Hunger Loehne,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 24, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>55</sup> “Der Arbeiteraufuhr,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 24, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>56</sup> Unknown, “Der Arbeiteraufuhr.”



people of the United States who gave themselves laws, these laws must be upheld.”<sup>57</sup> The *Demokrat* editor made a comparison with the despotic states of Europe, where a strike like this was impossible in the first place. But the American people had only themselves to blame if they allowed the laws that they themselves voted for to be violated in these ways. According to the *Demokrat*, disputes of this kind should be solved on the basis of constitutional democracy, through “social reform, which precludes social revolution and especially social war...”<sup>58</sup>

Carl Daenzer, editor of the St. Louis *Anzeiger des Westens* and himself another forty-eighter, struck a similar chord in his conclusion. Law and order needed to be restored first. Like the other German-American newspaper editors, he too admitted that the Pittsburgh riots, arson and pillaging were in all likelihood not caused and perpetrated by striking workers but by “riotous rabble.” The railroad corporations’ behavior had a role to play in the strike, as did the ineffective deployment of the militia. But all of those issues, including the wage situation for the railroad workers, required “first and foremost the restoration of lawful order.”<sup>59</sup>

The situation in Chicago meanwhile remained tense, but the strikes were still far away. Chicago’s railroad workers were ready to join the strike, but it took them time to organize. Things remained relatively calm initially, with the *Staats-Zeitung* commenting

---

<sup>57</sup> “Krieg,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 24, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>58</sup> “Krieg.”

<sup>59</sup> “Der Strike Der Eisenbahnarbeiter,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 24, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

on “not even the smallest strike being enacted.”<sup>60</sup> Chicago was the headquarters of the Workingmen’s Party of the United States, which successfully represented both native- and foreign-born workers. At a crowded solidarity rally in Market Square with somewhere between six and twelve thousand workers in attendance, the party called upon Chicago’s rail workers to support their striking colleagues in the East in any way possible.<sup>61</sup> The mass gathering proceeded “without incident, better than many a political mass rally.”<sup>62</sup> The first work stoppage of the Chicago area railroad workers came from the switchmen of the Michigan Central Railroad Company, in which initially only thirty employees took part. Chicago’s railway companies took measures to mitigate possible strikes in the city after the debacle of Pittsburgh by loading freight trains outside the city while only allowing passenger cars passage.

In the calculation of the *Staats-Zeitung* editors, the structure of Chicago’s working population made the city’s workers generally less prone to join in the strike. As Helsing and his editor bemoaned during the aftermath of the Great Fire and the political fight for fire boundaries in 1872, most of Chicago’s German workers were in the possession of some—if small—property and real estate, a small plot of land with a worker’s cottage. These were the working people that Helsing and his political machine had courted and that had constituted the traditional German-American political power base. These workers were not, as the editors stressed, like the “proletariat, meaning the laboring but at the same time completely unpropertied population as it is found in the eastern cities,” but rather, “a very

---

<sup>60</sup> “Musterhaftes Chicago,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 24, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>61</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 197.

<sup>62</sup> “Musterhaftes Chicago.”

large part of Chicago's working population have their small estates, which they do not wish to wantonly endanger."<sup>63</sup>

But this was a miscalculation. The forty-eighters behind the *Staats-Zeitung* misjudged how much the makeup of Chicago's working population had changed. As the loss of power for Hesing's People's Party demonstrated, while a large part of the city's working population was indeed made up of owners of small property, their numbers were dwindling. The "proletariat" of the city had grown over the 1870s to the point where these unpropertied workers and their families made up the bulk of the city's workers. Unfortunately, the *Staats-Zeitung* underestimated the size of this population, as well as the general willingness of Chicago's working class to join in the strike.

The aforementioned mass gathering of workers took place outside the office of the *Vorbote*, the Workingmen's Party's main press organ, at which Albert Parsons spoke to the masses. Parsons was a former Texas Confederate and typesetter who came to Chicago in 1873 with his mixed-race wife Lucy and became radicalized in the city. Now he had spread leaflets across the working-class districts agitating for a mass gathering and subsequent strikes. Among the grievances of the Workingmen's Party were the city's tramp laws, which effectively criminalized the public life of the unemployed, and which the city police widely used against labor agitation.<sup>64</sup> The writer of the leaflet bemoaned that the law "made it possible to arrest any unemployed workers as vagabonds when they are looking for work, with no arrest warrant necessary." And also that "any workers who organize are branded as

---

<sup>63</sup> "Musterhaftes Chicago."

<sup>64</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 198.

criminals under the law...” while pointing out that police and military were brought in to protect not the working class citizens but those cutting the worker’s wages. The Workingmen’s Party called for the workers of the city to “unite and organize.”<sup>65</sup> But while the spread of the leaflet seemed to precipitate the rioting, the actual mass gathering did not see any violence. The *Staats-Zeitung* admitted that, “it has to be acknowledged, that the organizers and leaders of the gatherings held their word to the mayor, that nothing should happen to incite the masses to the best of their will.”<sup>66</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* reporter writing about the gathering misheard Parsons, who gave the workers of Chicago the title “Army of Starvation” but the newspaper gave it as ‘Armee der Erlösung’ (Army of Salvation).<sup>67</sup> The editors pointed out that the speakers repeatedly denounced violence, while “insistently urging for the immediate organization of the workers.” The lawmen were equally praised for their “exceptional prudence” towards the workers, since, unlike in Pittsburgh, police kept out of sight, “did not put a single hurdle in the way of the masses,” and generally allowed the gathering to proceed.<sup>68</sup> The leaflets inviting the public to this mass gathering employed a gendered language of manliness reminiscent of Civil War recruitment. The speakers openly referenced their wartime experiences, stressing that many of the workers had fought in the war, “for the capitalists” —the same group of people who, in the war’s aftermath, pitted the freedmen as

---

<sup>65</sup> “Musterhaftes Chicago.”

<sup>66</sup> “Die Arbeiter-Massenversammlung,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 24, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>67</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 198.

<sup>68</sup> “Die Arbeiter-Massenversammlung.”

competition against white labor to keep wages down, and who now refused to do anything for the workers.<sup>69</sup> As historian Richard Junger found, one of Parsons' main accusations against the railroad corporations was the meager pay, off of which both railroad workers and their families were supposed to live. And while the gathering proceeded without incident, some workers supposedly called for the hanging of the railroad bosses. The Great Railroad Strike had arrived in Chicago.<sup>70</sup>

As the strike spread into the city, the establishment newspapers feared rioting and a recurrence of the chaos in Pittsburgh. Papers like the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* respectively ran editorials and articles that proclaimed understanding for the cause of the strike by laying out just how badly paid the railroad employees were, mirroring Albert Parsons' complaints. But the editors also chided the strikers for their actions. What irritated the establishment newspapers particularly was the prevention of strike breakers taking over their now vacant positions. This was an issue that editors of the *Staats-Zeitung* had criticized as early as 1867 during the eight-hour movement. The *Tribune* stressed that the strikers lacked support by the broad plurality of workers in the city, since when the strikers encountered "[a worker] at work, they made him stop. In nine out of ten cases he went home. In the tenth case, he followed [the strikers' mob] out of curiosity."<sup>71</sup> The *Tribune* asserted that most workers lacked interest in the strike, and that those who joined the strikers did so not out of conviction or necessity, but out of curiosity.

---

<sup>69</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 199.

<sup>70</sup> Junger, *Becoming the Second City*, 108.

<sup>71</sup> "IT IS HERE: General Strike Among the Chicago Railroad Operatives. Where It Began, and How Carried from Place to Place," *Chicago Daily Tribune.*, July 25, 1877.

The *Staats-Zeitung* editors went a step further, accusing the strikers of a lack of foresight, since, “in those cases where factories operate without profits, or even with losses, that it would be preferable for the owners to close [the factories] completely rather than continue operations with a higher wage paid.”<sup>72</sup>

This editorial followed a similar trajectory as the comments the *Tribune* printed on the same day in regard to strikers interrupting work for laborers who were, “happy with their work, their wages and their employer.” The strikers “forced many industrious German workers into idleness,” who, instead of joining the strike, should “not take part in the gatherings in the street,” since if they did they would “contribute to preventing the return of quick return of calm to the city.”<sup>73</sup> Raster commented that the strike was “taking on the characteristics of a revolution, if not the character of a social war.” This in turn served him as an opportunity to compare the strikers and their demands to the 1848 revolutions. Like the demands brought forth by the young German revolutionaries, the demands of the strikers were “demands of outrageous reach, such as the one for the federal government to take over the entirety of the rail- and telegraph network.” To the editor, these demands seemed similar in breadth and scope as the demands of the 1848 revolutions. In 1848, the young men’s political goals were similarly “removed from the ones of the movement’s leaders, and far from anything that impacted most of their everyday needs.”<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> “Wohin?” *Illinois Staaats-Zeitung*, July 25, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>73</sup> “Wohin?”

<sup>74</sup> “Wohin?”

Many of the concessions the strikers demanded of their employers came from a strike program formulated by Chicago's socialists. In Chicago, as in the rest of the country, the strike spread quickly beyond just the railroad, with workers from other industries joining in solidarity. In many instances the mass walkout assumed the character of a general strike. Both *Staats-Zeitung* and *Chicago Tribune* decried the strike as the work of hoodlums and disaffected children and teenagers, since many of those striking were very young men and often indeed children. But, as John Jentz noted, this was by no means an unusual circumstance. After all, child labor was still widespread, and few working-class children and teenagers received more than rudimentary education before their parents required them to work.<sup>75</sup>

The revolutions of 1848 in which Raster participated and the wisdom and insight provided by twenty-nine years since granted him a unique lens through which to view the strikes. He saw the demands of the strikers as a youthful folly with no regard for the material reality of the situation. At this point in their lives, the ageing forty-eighters were members of what the new generation of socialists and communists would call the bourgeoisie. The former revolutionaries themselves now owned property and capital. Thus, they had a material interest in the strike not impacting the city's – and the country's – economy too much, regardless of how sympathetic the forty-eighters ultimately were to the cause of the strikers. They also had ideologically moved away from the political positions of their youth and had taken often harsh inventory of the revolutions in their time in the United States. The forty-eighters portrayed the strikers' attempt to enforce higher pay

---

<sup>75</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 200.

through work stoppages while also demanding a nationalization of the railroads in 1877 America as a fatuity similar to demanding jury courts and freedom of the press in 1848 Germany: both sets of demands were fueled by a quaint sentiment, but were also ultimately doomed to failure because demands of this scale, combined with a surplus of leaders who each attempted to pull the entirety of the movement in a different direction, lacked a realistic chance of actualization. Worse yet, in another parallel to the revolutions, “a mass of most unclean elements, rogues and layabouts attach themselves to the coattails of the upright and honest revolutionaries, to commit all kinds of shenanigans in their names.”<sup>76</sup>

Perhaps that the forty-eighter editors of the *Staats-Zeitung* felt torn at this juncture was not surprising. On the one hand, they had gone through the follies of youthful rebellion themselves. With the benefit of almost thirty years’ hindsight they could evaluate their youthful zeal differently. On the other hand, the revolutionary experience and the political ideology they harbored during those earlier years lastingly impacted their outlooks on society and life, on right and wrong, and left them with a lingering suspicion of those in power. During the Great Railroad Strike this dichotomy was plainly visible on the pages of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, when one editorial chiding the strikers for their unrealistic demands was followed by another editorial that rebuked the “railroad kings” just as harshly. The editors accused the railroad companies of rejecting “even those demands that public opinion recognizes as just and reasonable,” which imperiled the public peace to such a degree that the federal government had to eventually intervene.

---

<sup>76</sup> “Wohin?”



At the time of this issue's printing, federal troops were on their way to Chicago from the Dakotas, where the Indian Wars were in full swing. The editor took this early federal involvement in the strike as a sign that if the railroad corporations remained recalcitrant towards even the reasonable demands of the strikers, they would "put the realization of the socialists' demand that the federal government take the entirety of the railroads under its aegis into a much closer proximity."<sup>77</sup> That the forty-eighter editor styled the railroad executives as "kings" indicated the way the *Staats-Zeitung* newspapermen regarded these industrialists, namely akin to the despotic aristocrats of Europe.

But the forty-eighters at the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship were no socialists. Indeed at this point in their lives, they were no longer revolutionaries. They had firmly become members of the status quo and as such were quite friendly towards capital. However, they still firmly opposed outright corrupt and immoral profit-seeking behavior. The industrialists harmed not just the workers with their conduct, an editor bemoaned, but their investors hurt as well, since the industrialists "skimmed the fat off of the soup, leaving their investors with only a thin broth." The railroad barons engaged in various corrupt business techniques that ultimately served as a justification for lowering the workers' wages. Meanwhile, the corporate executives who passed on losses to investors while pocketing profits for themselves had "well earned the scorn of all honest people and deserved worse, since they disturbed the public peace."<sup>78</sup>

But while the Army contingents were on their way to secure the peace in the nation's railway hub, the composition of those regiments gave the *Staats-Zeitung* newspapermen

---

<sup>77</sup> "Die Eisenbahnen," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 25, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>78</sup> "Die Eisenbahnen."

cause for bitter ridicule. Those regiments not deployed in the Indian Wars were generally understaffed, to the point that, as the editors observed, “some lieutenants who command more than four men have to be addressed as colonel, some even as general!” The cause of this was the practice of Army officers retaining the titles and ranks they had achieved during the Civil War. The editor compared these circumstances to that of local armies of the Duchy of Gerolstein, one of the German statelets involved in the 1848 revolution, which had fielded similarly small units commandeered by military officers with ludicrously high ranks which belied the size of their command.<sup>79</sup> The involvement of federal troops in general allowed for another round of their derision towards the former states of the Confederacy. The fact that West Virginia and Maryland, both former slave states, were now clamoring for an intervention from the federal government, while previously touting the supremacy of states’ rights and state sovereignty, caused further mockery by the *Staats-Zeitung* writers: these states, “whose ruling party used to insist on the sovereignty of the states” now had “southern-democratic governors who were the first to most urgently call for federal help” were something the newspapermen derided as “fate and history having a sense of humor.”<sup>80</sup>

The deliberations of the German-American editors on the benefits of a proper standing army were corroborated by Civil War hero William Tecumseh Sherman, who during a speech in New York City proclaimed his favor of the United States developing such a military. In a speech given in President Rutherford B. Hayes’ honor, the general

---

<sup>79</sup> Unknown, “Das ‘Herrliche’ Kriegsheer,” July 25, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>80</sup> “Staaten-Souverainitaet,” July 25, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

chastised the Democratic congress for shrinking the army, stating that, “the American people would become a mob without a strong, standing army.”<sup>81</sup> While this position in general agreed with that of the *Staats-Zeitung* editors, the latter took umbrage with what they perceived as the English language newspapers regarding Sherman as a modern-day prophet. Now with the strike in full swing, the sorry state of the army was seen as one of the reasons the riots erupted in the way that they did. The English language papers essentially regarded Sherman’s utterances, which he had made mere weeks before the strike broke out, as prophetic. In that, the Anglo-American press essentially agreed with the *Staats-Zeitung*’s assessment that a standing army would work as a deterrent against riots and violent mobs.

The forty-eighter political convictions in regards to standing armies bears some closer scrutiny, as does their broader political self-identification during the age of Reconstruction in the United States. Forty-eighter hero and veteran of the Civil War Friedrich Hecker identified strongly with a kind of republican liberalism that lionized ancient republican ideals like that of the Roman Republic. Hecker was of course his own person. He enjoyed a high status among the German-American population in general and entertained close, personal connections to many forty-eighters who at this time became influential in American politics. Thus, his position allows an insight into the broader forty-eighter mindset. As such, Hecker saw the Civil War as a victory of republican ideals, in which the American republic emerged victorious, with American republican institutions essentially engaging in a protracted act of self-correction. In regards to the standing army

---

<sup>81</sup> “Ein Prophet [Gen. Sherman],” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 27, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

that remained in the southern states as an occupying force, Hecker stood in opposition. He regarded the military occupation and the maintenance of the army at the strength it was at during Reconstruction as an over-inflation of centralized state power. In this respect at least, Hecker and other republican liberals of similar convictions disagreed with the sentiments Raster, the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and men like Sherman represented.<sup>82</sup> But Raster's position among the forty-eighters was relatively exceptional, as historians Lawrence Thompson and Frank Braun remarked. Ideologically, Raster was an outlier, who turned towards reactionism in older age, while most of his former brothers-in-arms retained a higher degree of their revolutionary spirit.<sup>83</sup>

Raster sided with Sherman, making arguments for a strong standing army to instill fear in the population lest there should be uprisings while also wholly embracing the positions of the German Empire and chancellor Otto von Bismarck. Other forty-eighters, however, balked at what to them seemed like an over-expansion of centralized state power. Hecker, for one, regarded especially the issue of a strong standing military as ultimately detrimental to his republican ideals. In the question of the Great Railroad Strike, he also did not see the strikers as a fundamental threat to republic as such. When voices rose crying for national mobilization and clamoring about the strikers being an organized, communist attack on the United States, Hecker called for calm. In his view, as Hecker biographer Sabine Freitag notes, the American republic offered no space to such an

---

<sup>82</sup> Sabine Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker: Two Lives for Liberty* (St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 258.

<sup>83</sup> Lawrence S. Thompson, Frank X. Braun, "The Forty-Eighters in Politics," in: Adolph Eduard Zucker, editor, *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848* (New York: Russel & Russel, 1967) 152.

ideology as communism or socialism. Thus, the strikers could not be socialists. And following that conclusion, the uprisings did not constitute a fundamental threat to the republic, that this republic could not take care of by itself. State intervention, while necessary, would not need anything as drastic as full mobilization.<sup>84</sup>

As the strike intensified on the streets of Chicago, the German-American editors' ire focused not on the strikers themselves, nor the socialists nor even on the capitalists, but on rabble rousers, whom they perceived as the real instigators of the violence, rioting and excesses of the strike. The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* was not alone in its assessment of the make-up of the striking crowd, as the English-language newspaper editors all found similar language to describe these opportunist rioters, who made up an unruly, law-defying mob.<sup>85</sup> Raster and his colleagues were particularly incensed about "those HOODLUMS, who maybe never in their lives have done a single day's worth of good labor, or plan on doing so..."<sup>86</sup> According to one *Staats-Zeitung* editor, these particular strikers were either minors or very young men who had successfully strong-armed the older working men out of practicing their jobs. This was an untenable situation, since, as this editor wrote "it is quite questionable whether it is an 'improvement of the workers' situation' when sixteen- to eighteen-year-old louts, who themselves don't feel like working, get to force family fathers, who earn adequate wages, to forgo those wages?"<sup>87</sup> Of course, as mentioned earlier, these strikers being minors did not necessarily mean that they were not workers.

---

<sup>84</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 418.

<sup>85</sup> Jentz, *Chicago in the Age of Capital*, 199.

<sup>86</sup> "Die Arbeiter Und Die Strolche," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 26, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>87</sup> "Die Arbeiter Und Die Strolche."

The editors argued that the spread of the railroad strike into other industries across the city should turn the tide of public opinion against the railroad strikers. The workers should not cooperate with this mob, since “neither our good German workers nor German socialists are hoodlums or thieves.” The *Staats-Zeitung* argued that Chicago’s traditional German workers were still in a special position compared with workers elsewhere, as they owned real estate and property, which meant these workers paid property taxes in the city. The editors felt it necessary to remind their readers – and supposedly the German workers among them – that “a continuation of the current state of affairs will deprecate the value of their property exponentially more than they could wish to gain in a forced increase of their wages” on the one hand, and on the other that all damage done to public property during the strike would be paid with taxpayer money, which would mean that “the taxes will rise to a degree that many small estate will not be able to bear it.”<sup>88</sup> This line of argument, again, followed the issues that came out of the fire-boundaries dispute, and Helsing’s fight for the German craft workers, who, unlike industrial workers, largely owned their own small pieces of land and a worker’s cottage instead of renting a tenement apartment room. In many ways the *Staats-Zeitung*’s championing of this propertied type of worker was in-line with the general republican ideology that most forty-eighters had internalized. This conviction was in some way a result of a certain kind of Americanization of the former revolutionaries. Most of them were still republicans, but their republicanism was one that

---

<sup>88</sup> “Die Arbeiter Und Die Strolche.”

advocated specifically American ideals—property and free enterprise especially—over others.<sup>89</sup>

As the strike spread across the country, cargo transport was affected, resulting in some industries being forced to send their workers home since the raw material to continue regular operations did not come through. Police and strikers now clashed frequently in Chicago, but also “with workers who did not want to be disturbed in their honest earnings,” as the *Staats-Zeitung* put it, culminating in a three-sided clash between police, strikers and workers unwilling to strike on the West Side’s United States Rolling Stock Company. The West Side lumberyards meanwhile experienced a work stoppage that as such was the result of the strike’s general circumstances much more so than it was the result of striking workers. The lumber yards paid their workers wages that, as the editors put it, were “just as high as they were the year before.” But with the “complete cessation of rail cargo, they can neither receive nor ship lumber for building,” so even if the lumber workers entered a strike, such an action could not have had much of an impact on the lumber business.<sup>90</sup> What industrialists across the city were instead most afraid of were strikers—or strike adjacent rioters—engaging in arson. Many factory owners sent their workers home long before any strikers arrived, some in order to prevent any altercations since some workers were indeed opposed to the strike and sought a confrontation with the mob.

---

<sup>89</sup> Bruce C. Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 265.

<sup>90</sup> “Bundesmilitär in Der Stadt,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 26, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

That mob remained a particular thorn in the side of the old forty-eighters, and served as the *Staats-Zeitung* editor's excuse to at times pour condescension on the strikers as a whole. The riotous elements among the strikers caused public disturbances and violence, which the editors could not excuse. To them, it was not that the entirety of the working population was at fault for the ensuing chaos. Most workers indeed wanted to continue working and earning money. The editors discerned between the workers and the rabble rousers and rioters, however. Workers initiated the strike itself, but it were the "slackers, loiterers, bums and hoodlums, who view the general confusion as an opportunity for causing scandals, to riot, loot, plunder and especially to DESTROY."<sup>91</sup> To differentiate this element from the entirety of the working classes, the editor borrowed Marxist terminology, referring to these rioters as "the fifth estate," which in Marxist dictum describes the lumpenproletariat, the lowest of the classes who lack revolutionary potential. Employing communist terminology in this way was a way of the editors to both condemn the violent strikers as well as ever so slightly lampoon the new socialists. In the view of the *Staats-Zeitung* editorial board the socialist ideology could not really be applied to the United States, since "the first two estates – nobility and clergy – don't exist as such here, but the German socialists imported and applied so many other not entirely fitting things to America, that even this classification of estates might be used here still."<sup>92</sup> The fourth estate, the willing workers, now were called on to go up against what the editors called the fifth, the rabble, to unite with the bourgeoisie, to end the rioting and end the strike and to continue work and the normal life that the strikers disrupted.

---

<sup>91</sup> "Der Fünfte Stand ["faulenzler"]," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 27, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>92</sup> "Der Fünfte Stand ["faulenzler"]."



The *Staats-Zeitung* editorship were no socialists or communists, but some forty-eighters were. A veteran of the Prussian 1848 revolution, Joseph Weydemeyer was the first to preach Marxist gospel in the United States as early as 1857, when he worked on opening a communist club in New York. But even though Weydemeyer and his close circle of forty-eighter Marxists maintained their positions throughout most of their lives, they failed to make much of an impact on the rest of the German diaspora in the U.S. As Bruce Levine points out, the radical left of the forty-eighter intellectuals was too fractured, and the Marxists were simply outnumbered by a plethora of other radical socialist-adjacent ideologies.<sup>93</sup> Historian Dirk Hoerder notes that the early forty-eighter Marxists and utopian communists did not leave much of a lasting impact on the German-American landscape overall. Only in the 1870s, with a new wave of immigrant workers arriving from Germany, where socialist ideas were more prevalent, did socialist ideology have a breakthrough in German America.<sup>94</sup>

The old forty-eighter editors took the strike as an opportunity to refer back to their lived experiences during a revolution. Their past participation in the events of 1848, they argued, gave them much needed insight and enabled them to comment more succinctly on the riots. As the strike grew more unwieldy with each passing day, a growing number of people ended up injured. Most of these claimed themselves to be -and the voices in the American press agreed that they were - innocent bystanders. The *Staats-Zeitung* editor vehemently denied this, referring back to his experience in the revolutions, where “those

---

<sup>93</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 142.

<sup>94</sup> Dirk Hoerder, “The German-American Labor Press and Its Views of the Political Institutions of the United States,” in: Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James Philip Danky, editors, *The German-American Radical Press: The Shaping of a Left Political Culture, 1850-1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 184.

became ‘innocent bystanders’ in the moment of being hit, while in the process of picking up bricks to throw at the soldiers.”<sup>95</sup>

This argument was a revealing twist in the forty-eighter political persuasion. Here the editor and former revolutionary – which makes it unlikely that Hesing wrote this editorial, since the author refers to his own participation in the revolution – condemned the riotous violence against the forces of the rulers. On the one hand, this is surprising, on the other hand, the forty-eighter revolutionaries were principled intellectuals, not a riotous mob. The forty-eighters, especially academics like Rapp and Raster, styled themselves quite consciously as such. During the 1848 Revolution they needed to counter the popular imagination of any and all revolutions bringing a reign of terror akin to the French Revolution, which at the time in Germany still loomed large in most people’s minds. Therefore, the editor was not condemning the act of rising up against any—perceived or real—slight by a ruling elite as much as that he condemned the rioters—and especially “those sickening, disgusting sentimentalities—there are no innocent bystanders to street fights like those that Chicago has seen in the past two days.”<sup>96</sup>

Since the strike was a national event that impacted several strongly German-American cities across the country, the *Staats-Zeitung* facilitated communication among the disparate communities. The newspaper connected its readership by printing editorials from other German language publications from other cities, thereby shaping the German-American cultural sphere beyond the local boundaries. For example, a *Staats-Zeitung* correspondent described the situation in St. Louis, where the strikers had successfully

---

<sup>95</sup> “Unschuldige Zuschauer,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 27, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>96</sup> “Unschuldige Zuschauer.”

pulled the city to its knees, stopped all inbound railroad traffic and threatened to blow up the bridge across the Mississippi River. In an effort to make the conditions understandable for the *Staats-Zeitung* readership the correspondent stated, “I have never seen a bigger confusion of terms, a bigger insecurity in disciplining and actions, I have barely seen anything like this, not even at the time of the provisional government in Paris in the year 1848.”<sup>97</sup>

In a reprinted editorial from the *Cincinnati Volksblatt*, another forty-eighter newspaperman opined against the position that the *Staats-Zeitung* editors pushed in regards to a standing army. Unlike the Chicago journalists, this editor argued that a standing army was the last thing the country needed, indeed that a standing army was “a nail in the coffin of the republic.” He further argued that, “American society has to be capable of defending itself, and not rely on the rifles of a soldateska”—a term recalling the standing armies of European nobility who answered only to the noblemen and were unaccountable to the people.<sup>98</sup> Unlike the *Staats-Zeitung*, whose writing staff argued that a standing army would serve as a deterrent against uprisings and mobs, the *Cincinnati* paper argued that such an army would be mostly just costly, and ran counter to the ideals and principles of a democratic republic. In that point, the *Cincinnati* paper agreed with the aforementioned position of Friedrich Hecker, demonstrating the heterogeneity of forty-eighter persuasions. The despots of Europe – which the forty-eighters once fought vehemently against—rose to their positions “on the shoulders of a weak-willed mass

---

<sup>97</sup> “Der Unfug in St. Louis,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 27, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>98</sup> “Republik Und Stehende Heere,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 27, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

army.”<sup>99</sup> That the *Staats-Zeitung* reprinted this opinion spoke for the newspaper’s journalistic integrity. The *Staats-Zeitung* newspapermen trusted their readership to draw their own conclusions from the opinions offered.

A recurring thread that wound through the reporting on the strikes and riots was that of what the editors referred to as “louts,” “slackers,” and “brats” who took over the strike from those workers actually impacted by the detrimental labor conditions that caused the unrest originally. These elements did not (supposedly) share the grievances of the initial strikers, but only sought to revel in chaos and destruction. In the minds of the establishment newspaper editors and on the pages of their publications this made any and all actions against this “rabble” justified. The *Staats-Zeitung* editors applauded a police action against the rioters which saw a dozen of them dead, declaring that, “the restoration of public peace was the ends which justified the killing of people, the killing was NOT the ends – and if the ends of public peace could be achieved with a comparatively low means, all the better.”<sup>100</sup> What the editor took offense to was the calls from the English language papers, especially the *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Times* from the day before, in which their respective editors Wilbur F. Storey and Joseph Medill called for an even harsher crackdown upon the rioters, chastising the police and militia for their moderation. If the strike, riots and interruption of rail traffic went on, the *Tribune* threatened “[the strikers] will be stamped out by the vengeance of the whole community, United States troops, militia, police and citizenry.”<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>99</sup> “Republik Und Stehende Heere.”

<sup>100</sup> “Die Drei Schreckenstage,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 28, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>101</sup> “Plain Words with Strikers,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 27, 1877.

The *Staats-Zeitung*, by contrast, called for restraint. These “hundreds of people who following the recipe of the General’s Bum of the Times and Tribune would have been blasted to bits can now still become useful members of society,” stated the editors.<sup>102</sup> Brutally cracking down on the uprising would permanently poison the well of public peace in the city, the editor concluded, and restoring public peace a day early would not be worth permanent damage it would cause to the class relationship of Chicago. The events of the Great Strike demonstrated that a certain solidarity existed between workers and the emerging middle class in America. As historian James Green remarks, the labor leaders sought to find solutions to the labor issues that the labor movement could apply in the specifically American context. These same leaders were encouraged by what had happened, by the forcefulness of the strike, but also by the fact that many citizens who were not themselves workers had actively joined in. Where the labor leaders tacitly agreed with the sentiments of the *Staats-Zeitung* was that the power of big money and the influence of the industrial capitalists over society was in the very least detrimental to a flourishing society. Some of the forty-eighters agreed that this emergent American aristocracy needed to be curtailed. But few agreed on how to pursue such a goal.<sup>103</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* drew conclusions on the meaning, progress, and outcome of the labor unrest as the strike eventually wound down in the areas where it began a week earlier. In their resume of the strike’s various costs in terms of money, lives, material and social cohesion, the editors stressed that the material cost of the strike and the following riots were high. Other issues, however, demanded consideration when regarding the

---

<sup>102</sup> “Die Drei Schreckenstage.”

<sup>103</sup> Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, 81.

overall cost of the strike to society. The editor noted that the loss of life and property should not be the only consideration in evaluating the cost of the labor unrest. To him, “the exposure of the damages to the life of public- and social life, the existence of which only few have guessed in the present extent” was more crucial.<sup>104</sup> The editor bemoaned that one of the biggest losses incurred by the strike was a growing “mistrust in the ability of a republican state to survive.”<sup>105</sup> In their political ideology the *Staats-Zeitung* editorship stood close to the republican idealism of Friedrich Hecker. This brand of liberal republicanism was outmoded and no longer as radical in 1877 compared to 1848. Yet Hecker—and by association many of his forty-eighter brothers-in-arms—stuck with this particular persuasion. Historian Sabine Freitag finds that this brand of republicanism perceived of the American republic as a modern iteration of the republics of antiquity, combined with a strong sense of individualism that was bound to the individual’s property rights. This was indeed a radical position in Germany in 1848, but not thirty years later on American soil. Hecker saw the citizens of a republic as unbridled individuals, who should remain free of state influence, including any sort of welfare state. Hecker himself regarded welfare systems with suspicion, as these systems reminded him of European monarchies, and utterly incompatible with the American republic and the spirit of American self-sufficiency.<sup>106</sup>

In a reversal of the statements made in a previous editorial, the old forty-eighters now reversed their conclusion in regard to the lack of a standing army in America. Whether

---

<sup>104</sup> “Nach Der Schlacht,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 30, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>105</sup> “Nach Der Schlacht.”

<sup>106</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 413.

this was due to Hermann Raster—who likely penned the first article bemoaning the lack of a standing army—having a change of heart, or due to another editor writing this later article, is not entirely clear. This was not the first time that the *Staats-Zeitung* printed heterogenous opinions on the same topic. The editor remarked that the American situation in 1877 differed from that in Germany in 1848. That the revolutions of 1848 transpired in the way that they did served as a demonstration that standing armies indeed were not a sufficient deterrent against popular uprisings, since “standing armies offer no protection against moral discouragement.”<sup>107</sup> Therefore the negatives of maintaining such a military apparatus to society outweighed the positives.

But the editors also had more optimistic conclusions to offer, further demonstrating the sometimes-contradictory attitudes the forty-eighters held towards armed state power. While they judged many of the official reactions to the strike as inadequate, the organization of the militias “in a country whose population does not possess even a trace of military organization, is indeed no small task.”<sup>108</sup> Going further, they even questioned whether German officials could have done the same, if the country lacked the widespread military experience the United States had in the wake of the Civil War. Generally citizens’ militias were after all where men like Friedrich Hecker made their first military experience. Before the Civil War Franz Sigel pleaded for the creation of such militias in New York, which would serve to maintain the peace in a citizen’s republic.<sup>109</sup> Friedrich Hecker had

---

<sup>107</sup> “Nach Der Schlacht.”

<sup>108</sup> “Nach Der Schlacht.”

<sup>109</sup> Carl Friedrich Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution; the German Forty-Eighters in America* (Westport, Conn, Greenwood Press, 1970), 284.

himself drafted the Badensian revolutionary militia laws, which stated that the grand duchy's standing army was to be abolished and all citizens armed, and that these armed citizens could then be called into action as a true popular militia by the republican elected representatives of the people. After the Civil War when Reconstruction ended and President Rutherford B. Hayes withdrew federal troops from the South, Hecker approved. In his view—and that of many other liberal republican forty-eighters—the war had resulted in too much centralization of the country, which stood in opposition to the ideal, citizen's republic that represented the ideal form a nation-state should have.<sup>110</sup> Another – putative – positive development in the eyes of the *Staats-Zeitung* editor was that the strike and its wide-reaching repercussions served to demonstrate to the public the vital importance of the railroad for the nation.

The aftermath of the strike in Chicago dominated the headlines and editorials into early August 1877, with the editors offering more evaluations of the strike itself, as well as plentiful commentary on the way that both the common populace of Chicago and the English language press looked back upon the ten days of chaos in the city. The *Tribune* and *Times* continued to criticize Mayor Monroe Heath for not cracking down harder on the rioters, upon which the *Staats-Zeitung* editors commented that “as the old forty-eighters know only too well, every drop of blood shed in a civil war is a bitterly evil dragon's seed, out of which new struggle and bloodshed will grow in the future.”<sup>111</sup> What particularly raised the ire of the aging revolutionaries was the tendency of those citizens who did not partake in the quelling of the riots to brag about and demand harsher measures against the

---

<sup>110</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 78.

<sup>111</sup> “Die Helden Nach Der Schlacht,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 31, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).



rioters after said riots had long been ended. Those “old crones who boasted great heroic deeds which they would have done, had they not cowered underneath their beds” fumed the *Staats-Zeitung* editors, since those sentiments apparently reminded them of the less glorious hours after their failed revolution in Germany. But the forty-eighters eventually preached reconciliation. Now that the strike was over, but the social issues that caused the unrest remained unresolved, “it will be the most reasonable thing, to negotiate those open questions without angry accusations and bloodthirsty boasting, since the issues at hand can only be solved through laws, and not with rifles.”<sup>112</sup>

The Great Railroad Strike conjured in the imagination of the German immigrants a ready comparison between the American labor unrest and earlier German political uprisings. This sentiment was present across the country, across the various German-American communities, as evidenced by newspaper editorials that explicitly made this comparison. The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*'s editors published not only their own sentiments, but also those from other cities' German-American publications. A *New York Staatszeitung* editor reflected upon the revolution of his youth and the circumstances in Germany that forced the young German revolutionists to “either accept all bad conditions without complaint, or to break the law.” The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* reprinted this editorial.<sup>113</sup> In this portrayal of the revolutions, the forty-eighters rose up against a system that was inherently unjust and oppressive. The system of pre-1848 Germany had offered to those disagreeing with it absolutely no other choice but to revolt in open rebellion. This was not

---

<sup>112</sup> “Die Helden Nach Der Schlacht.”

<sup>113</sup> “Achtundvierziger Und Siebenundsiebziger,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 1, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

true of the striking workers of 1877, however. The forty-eighters simply had no other option available to them, while the American worker could “if he finds that the existing laws no longer serve his freedom and welfare, he can change them and replace them with better ones.”<sup>114</sup>

In this evaluation, the forty-eighter editors from both New York and Chicago demonstrated both a change but also a continuity of their political persuasions. They still believed that the United States was the superior nation-state in terms of government and the means that government offered to its citizens. The people just had to mobilize within the confines of electoral politics and make use of the methods for change offered by the American republic. But this perspective failed address the issues that the American government had in the 1870s, especially in regards to the corrupting power of money flowing out of industrial capitalism, against which the strikers saw their only chance in work stoppage and uprising. German historian Daniel Nagel elaborates that the initial reason for the German forty-eighters to come to America had been the role that the United States played in the revolutionaries’ imagination, as the refuge for the exiled of all countries and an ideal—and idealized—republic. Other forty-eighters like historian and lawyer Friedrich Kapp recognized and pointed out disparities between the idealized view of the United States and the harsh reality that many of his fellow brothers-in-arms who came to America seemed to ignore, disparities that came to the fore in the strike. During the revolution Kapp was a classical republican in that regard, as he saw market capitalism as

---

<sup>114</sup> “Achtundvierziger Und Siebenundsiebziger.”

an corrupting influence and antithetical to the people's republic most forty-eighters strove for.<sup>115</sup>

Kapp returned to Germany in 1870 after the Prussian government declared amnesty for the revolutionaries. He became a politician and representative for the national-liberal party in the German parliament after unification of the country. He wrote a long article on the Great Railroad Strike published in German historian and fellow national-liberal representative Heinrich von Treitschke's journal *Preussische Jahrbücher*. The *Staats-Zeitung* reprinted the article in parts. Kapp agreed with many of the *Staats-Zeitung's* sentiments, ridiculed the former slave states for now begging for federal intervention. Kapp mirrored Raster's increasing reactionism, scolded the railroad corporations that compromised with the strikers for "engaging in politics that can only bear evil fruit in the future," and bemoaned the bad conditions of the state militias and their insufficiently harsh behavior during the strike, while praising the actions of the federal troops.<sup>116</sup> Kapp was himself a transnational figure, who now further bridged the divide between Germany and German-America. In his article he cited several German-American newspaper reports on the strike, including the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*.

The forty-eighter editors revealed their disdain for the strikers, or at least for the outbreaks of violence, the refusal of allowing strike breakers to work in their stead. They were generally appalled by the unruliness of the whole affair—which also served to damage

---

<sup>115</sup> Daniel Nagel, *Von republikanischen Deutschen zu deutsch-amerikanischen Republikanern: ein Beitrag zum Identitätswandel der deutschen Achtundvierziger in den Vereinigten Staaten 1850-1861* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2012), 43.

<sup>116</sup> Friedrich Kapp, "Der jüngste Aufstand der Eisenbahnarbeiter in den Vereinigten Staaten," *Preussische Jahrbücher* 40 (September 15, 1877): 407.

the old forty-eighters' material interests. After all, the strikers, who the newly immigrated socialists were sympathetic towards, represented the kind of workers whose interests and political allegiances were not aligned with those of the aged forty-eighters. The older German-Americans represented not just a different generation, but in many cases a different social self-identification with a different class. The old revolutionists had never been industrial workers themselves, even when they rebelled against the order of their country, they were primarily middle-class intellectuals. Now they had not just shed most of their youthful radicalism but had become members of the status quo. The *Staats-Zeitung* in particular served as an illustration of this dynamic for various historians of German-America. Historian Bruce Levine notes that the newspaper turned away from the initial radicalism of its editors after Anton Hesing became its sole owner.<sup>117</sup> John Jentz, too remarks that Hesing's taking over of the newspaper represented a power shift in German-America towards the entrepreneurial class.<sup>118</sup> But Hesing's rise within the *Staats-Zeitung* leadership was only emblematic of a longer and larger process.

After all, he himself was an important agitator for the forty-eighter cause before and during the Civil War. Hesing's taking over the newspaper was not a sudden shift, he had long since been a forty-eighter ally. His buying out of the *Staats-Zeitung* co-owners coincided with a general softening of the forty-eighters after the war. During this time they increasingly became part of what the socialists would call the bourgeoisie. This became obvious during the strike, when the forty-eighter editors decried the strike actions and

---

<sup>117</sup> Levine, *The Spirit of 1848*, 265.

<sup>118</sup> John Jentz, "The 48ers and the German Labor Movement in Chicago," in Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James P. Danky, editors, *The German-American Radical Press*, 1992, 59.

vehemently denied that the revolutions of their youths had been anything like the current upheaval. The American socio-political circumstances simply did not excuse the strike, they argued. In this notion, the *Staats-Zeitung* was again in agreement with Kapp's sentiment, who wrote that "every American worker can become an independent property owner, given sufficient effort and good timing. Thus it is possible for any 'proletarian' to become a 'bourgeois' with relative ease in the short or long run."<sup>119</sup> Kapp—and the *Staats-Zeitung* editors—argued that American social conditions were still much less hardened and far more malleable than those in Europe. Comparing the social conditions of the United States in 1877 with those of Germany in 1848 was folly. Conditions in Germany could not have been changed as easily—neither for the individual nor for society—as they could be changed in the United States. Thus there was no excuse for rioting, violence and disruption of the public order.

The aftermath of the strike served the old forty-eighters as an opportunity to reckon with the new radicals and their socialist ideology. The strike itself was over and the country slowly returned to normal, so the day-to-day reporting returned to other issues. The editorials published during the following weeks, however, continued to run commentary on the labor situation in general. After citing a lengthy excerpt from the Milwaukee German-American socialist newspaper *Sozialist*, the editors took the demands of the Wisconsin newspaper for a centrally-state controlled economy apart. The *Staats-Zeitung* editor asked, "The state? What kind of thing is that even?"<sup>120</sup> The state, according to the Chicago editor, in the sense that the socialists used the term was not applicable to the American context.

---

<sup>119</sup> Kapp, "Der jüngste Aufstand der Eisenbahnarbeiter in den Vereinigten Staaten," 411.

<sup>120</sup> "Der Staat," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 8, 1877, Newberry Library (my translation).

Such a concept that did not in America - at least not in the way it did in Europe, where this, specifically socialist idea of the state originated. In the United States, the state would be the federal government, and thus the whole issue of appealing to the state to assist if not take over the economy was at least a confused, if not an entirely impossible idea.

Further, the forty-eighter editor sharply criticized any calls for any state actors to intervene, since in the United States this was neither necessary nor even desirable, if state intervention of this kind was even possible in the first place: “if one imagines how a number of our commissioners, elected by temperance legislatures, would try to command all newspapers, all [various kinds of] factories, ‘to the best of all people?’”<sup>121</sup> The *Staats-Zeitung* editorial painted the socialists as idealists, as dreamers who had no real connection, no real idea of what lived reality on the ground in the United States entailed. They also questioned if the new arrivals could understand how the American state, while still superior to the state actors of Europe was still by no means fit to fulfill the role that the socialists sought for it. This then was the result of people who had lofty ideas and ideals in their youth, but who decades of experience had made wary of those things. This was a sentiment mirrored by Friedrich Hecker, who distrusted the post-Civil War developments in American federal politics. Hecker had long been suspicious of a strong, centralized state—and as such tacitly in agreement with the Chicago editors. Shortly after the Great Strike Hecker still championed a decentralized agrarian republic, following an almost Jeffersonian ideal.<sup>122</sup>

---

<sup>121</sup> “Der Staat.”

<sup>122</sup> Freitag, *Friedrich Hecker*, 402.

The Great Railroad Strike represented a culmination of issues for the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and its aging former revolutionary editors. The event was the biggest social cataclysm after the American Civil War that demonstrated the new fissures that erupted across German America and the German ethnoscape in general. The new wave of immigrants, in which the socialists now represented the thought leaders that the forty-eighters had represented in their respective immigrant cohort of the 1850s, was one that the older, more experienced and more settled German-Americans had little influence on or agreement with. This then served to demonstrate that the forty-eighters had indeed undergone a fundamental change. The men had become representatives—and allies—of the status quo. Also, the times had changed. The beliefs that they held were neither radical and revolutionary any longer. Some of the forty-eighters at the *Staats-Zeitung* appeared to have dropped them all together, as evidenced by the increasing reactionism of editor-in-chief Hermann Raster.

This rupture in German-America between the older generation of immigrants and the wave of immigration that now came out of the German Empire dominated German-American internal politics for the time being. Nine years later, a week before the Haymarket Riot, Hermann Raster wrote to his sister that,

Since [the founding of the German Empire and Bismarck's 1878 anti-socialist laws] the esteem in which the German immigrants were held has sunk year after year because of the character of the immigrants has become more disgusting, offensive and unpleasant. We old forty-eighters are almost ashamed of our German name, when we see what rotten rogues and bandits the great German empire sends us.<sup>123</sup>

---

<sup>123</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Sister," April 29, 1886, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

This dynamic had previously played out in similar fashion between the “grey” generation of German-Americans who immigrated to the United States earlier in the nineteenth century and the forty-eighter generation, who challenged the supremacy of the “greys” over the German-American community during the early 1850s. Now the forty-eighters were in the same position as the “greys”—and the new immigrant wave with its communists and socialists was challenging their hard-won supremacy over German-America.

That did not mean that the forty-eighters as a whole had simply become unprincipled and cynical. The revolutionary experiences of their youths still informed their lives, opinions and political outlooks. But as the men had aged, so had their ideas. Raster wrote of this that, “we are in a very critical period, almost like in March 1848 in Germany. Except that instead of the freedom fanatics of that time (or even the fools; I was one, too) we have rude workers who make demands out of all reason.”<sup>124</sup> Raster thought of this as letting go of youthful zeal and folly, as coming to terms with how the world—and the United States especially—functioned. Instead, in his own view, he and his companions turned towards their actions being informed by their lived experience as mostly well-assimilated immigrants in the United States.

The forty-eighters did in fact possess a better understanding of the country as a whole than the new arrivals did, simply by virtue of having lived in the United States for thirty years. Therefore, they could better gauge what political demands were realistic and which ones were not. But they also lived in a different material reality than the new arrivals. The new immigrants lacked property and the level of wealth that the forty-eighters

---

<sup>124</sup> Raster, “Raster Letter to Sister,” April 29, 1886



accumulated during an age of relative prosperity in the 1850s and 1860s that had dissipated with the Panic of 1873. The shift to industrial capitalism and wage labor still ongoing and could not be reversed. But the country was also still in the grip of an economic depression that exacerbated the pains the shift to industrial capitalism enacted on the working population. The new immigrants were also quite literally a new generation of young men who had taken up new political ideologies and ideals. The socialists, communists, and anarchists of the 1870s and 1880s were in many ways analogous to the forty-eighters, whether the aging men liked it or not.

## CONCLUSION

### LEBENSABEND UND VERMÄCHTNIS

#### **The Golden Years and Legacies**

As the forty-eighters entered their twilight years, they had achieved comfortable positions within the transnational German sphere. Wilhelm Rapp and Hermann Raster continued their work for the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, enjoying comfortable upper-middle-class lifestyles. Lorenz Brentano successfully ran for Congress on a Republican ticket and served between 1877 and 1879. All the newspapermen, current and former, remained in contact not only with each other, but also with various people of importance – especially in the German-speaking circles – around the world. The forty-eighter group remained closely knit, even after years of waxing and waning sympathies for one another. Upon Raster reviewing the latest collection of poems by Caspar Butz in the pages of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* Sunday edition, Butz thanked the editor in a letter, stating, “I am afraid that a certain monotony dominates my poems: the memories of 1849 are showing too strongly and give the whole affair too sinister a coloring.”<sup>1</sup>

Even at this time in their lives, the revolutions of their youth were still prominent in the old forty-eighters’ thinking. But more than that, the revolutions also connected them with one another. This connection as a group that shared the revolutionary

---

<sup>1</sup> Caspar Butz, “Raster Letter from Butz,” September 7, 1879, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

experience, even before their other mutual, shared experience of immigration to the United States, provided them with a bond that indeed lasted a lifetime. Rapp and Raster both traveled extensively in Germany, relating their impressions from the now unified homeland to their readership in Chicago through travel letters, which were first published in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* and later collated into book form.

Raster's position as the *Staats-Zeitung* editor kept him at the fulcrum of the German-American world. As a newspaperman, he received invitations to representative events. In 1878 for example, a railroad company representative invited Raster and a select group of German-American journalists on an excursion of their leg of the trans-continental railroad between the Rocky Mountains and Kansas City.<sup>2</sup> In addition to business connections, Raster also maintained connection to the German-American arts scene. In 1881, when German-American conductor Leopold Damrosch toured the United States, he implored Raster, with whom he had a personal relationship, to advertise his Chicago concert on the pages of the *Staats-Zeitung*. Instances such as these show the position that a man of Raster's standing had within the German-American community and the German ethnoscape beyond the borders of the United States. But he also functioned as a connection between German and American political life, sometimes to his own detriment.

After President Andrew Garfield was assassinated in 1881, Raster's temper brought the *Staats-Zeitung* into trouble with the German Empire. In the aftermath of the assassination, the strident editor-in-chief wrote scathing remarks in his newspaper,

---

<sup>2</sup> C.B. Schmidt, "Raster Letter from Schmidt," May 27, 1878, Hermann Raster Papers, Chicago History Museum (my translation).

lambasting the German Kaiser his chancellor Otto von Bismarck for their significant lack of public condolences on the American President's death. Raster commented in a letter to his wife, the "German Consul General . . . designated the Ill. Staatszeitung as 'insult to his majesty' . . . immediately [placing] it in the 'black register.'"<sup>3</sup> This meant that sale and import of the newspaper put those conducting the imports under closest government scrutiny. Raster observed that the letters his wife had sent to him from Germany were addressed to the "Illinois Staats-Zeitung" on the envelope, which prompted German government agents to open them and scrutinize their contents. Clashing with the government of their old home country in this way put the editors in an awkward position. They generally saw and also wrote about the unification of Germany into the German Empire as a positive development. But their general disposition did not mean that they were uncritical towards Bismarck and the Kaiser. This episode demonstrated where the old forty-eighters positioned themselves in terms of their new national self-identification—defending the honor of the United States against the rulers of their own—former—home country.

As he advanced in age, Raster's political commentary, especially towards the working classes and the new socialist ideologies, grew increasingly hostile in tone. He grumbled that, "if the workers don't like it, they should return to their potato soup" when working-class readers of the *Staats-Zeitung* complained about the political position the newspaper expressed towards them. Publisher Anton Helsing scolded his editor in a private letter, claiming that Raster's recalcitrance in the matter was becoming

---

<sup>3</sup> Hermann Raster, "Raster Letter to Margarethe Raster," September 26, 1881, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

a financial liability for the newspaper, as “we had 1,600 cancellations of the daily edition, so let me tell you, we should be more careful [in how workers are addressed].”<sup>4</sup> Raster’s colleague and friend Wilhelm Rapp chimed in here as well, scolding his co-editor that, “the worker’s movement will not be over for a long time” and that, “your correspondence is well received by the better off part of our readership, but your private letters are insufferable. Your comment that the workers should return to their German potato soup has caused a lot of bad blood.”<sup>5</sup>

The *Staats-Zeitung* also published an ongoing series of Raster’s travel letters written during his voyage through Germany in 1886. In those, Raster again praised the cleanliness of German cities, stating his dismay at the dirt and grime that apparently was much more characteristic of American cities at the time. “[The factories in Bremerhaven] are all clean and fresh, the brickwork just as red as if they had been built yesterday,” he wrote. They are not, like the factories of Pittsburgh, a blemish, but an adornment of the landscape instead.”<sup>6</sup>

Raster kept in contact with old friends in Germany over the years, particularly through his activities as foreign correspondent for newspapers in Berlin and Augsburg. In Bremen he stayed at Hotel Hillmann, of which he wrote that it was a “favorite headquarters of all traveling German-Americans.”<sup>7</sup> Here again the specifically

---

<sup>4</sup> Anton C. Hesing, “Raster Letter from Hesing,” September 15, 1886, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>5</sup> Wilhelm Rapp, “Raster Letter from Rapp,” August 6, 1886, Hermann Raster Papers, Newberry Library (my translation).

<sup>6</sup> Hermann Raster, *Reisebriefe von Hermann Raster. Mit Einer Biographie Und Einem Bildniss Des Verfassers* (Berlin: Buchdr. Gutenberg (F. Zillesen), 1891), 90.

<sup>7</sup> Raster, 98.

transnational German ethnoscape left traces. If this hotel was indeed a favorite of “all traveling German-Americans,” it indicated that Raster was by far not the only one of those. In his letters Raster wrote about various places across Germany where he encountered other German-Americans on the road. The biggest number of them he encountered in a health spa at the foot of the Taunus Mountains, where he met a medical practitioner from St. Louis and eight other German-Americans from Chicago. In this instance, he saw himself in a special situation between America and Germany—neither fully American nor fully German. He also stated that his German-American countrymen felt similarly.

Raster also commented on his role as an involuntary cultural envoy in Dessau, Anhalt. In his old hometown he filled the important role of a returning emigrant who spread the word from the other end of the migration to America. He stated that, “the people here know more about the moon than they do about the United States.”<sup>8</sup> Raster found harsh words for the prejudices and obliviousness towards German-Americans that he experienced on his trip. For this, he laid the blame primarily on the Prussian newspapers that rarely covered American or even German-American events. And while he found a lot of praise for Germany, for its cleanliness and orderliness and well-maintained roads, he critiqued harshly the slow and badly connected railroads and the poverty of the city dwellers. He also wrote about finding himself estranged from his old home country as a German-American, missing American friendliness and strongly disliking what he referred to as the German caste-system, which the forty-eighters once

---

<sup>8</sup> Raster, 100.

rose up against.<sup>9</sup> Raster's travel letters very clearly illustrated his in-between status, as now being neither German nor American.

Raster constantly criticized Germans' behavior in comparison with that of Americans, yet at the same was equally critical towards Americans in other aspects, especially when it came to American drinking culture and cultural habits regarding alcohol. Commenting on the excesses of the New York aristocracy during the centennial celebrations of the Constitutional Convention, he summarized his long-held views on American drinking culture: "either one wants to be a dried old stick, or drunk like a wild man, that is the way of the American." Raster concluded this was why Americans never understood the Germans. The latter want "to be neither one or the other, but who wants in a happy harmony of the soul enjoy all the good gifts of life with good measure."<sup>10</sup> Americans, according to Raster's decades of observation, lacked this sense of moderation—they only knew either complete sobriety or wild drunkenness. In this they were entirely unlike the Germans, whom he thought knew how to pace themselves and who had little interest in the wild kind of excesses that Americans often indulged in when drunk.

During his stay in Berlin, Raster commented on the slower pace with which German newspapers operated, in comparison with American publications. Raster realized that the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* had published not only a more comprehensive report on the death of King Louis of Bavaria than did newspapers published in Berlin,

---

<sup>9</sup> Raster, 148.

<sup>10</sup> Hermann Raster, "Patriotismus," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 4, 1889, Newberry Library (my translation).

but that the German-American newspaper printed its report on the king's death before the news even broke in the German capital.<sup>11</sup> This was also aided by asynchronous technological advancements. Telegraphic news still made it across the Atlantic faster than within Germany itself, and German newspapers still faced a political landscape domestically that did not care much for a truly free press. But this also demonstrated the extent of the German-American ethnoscape, and how interwoven these transnational organizations operated across very long distances. The German-speaking cultural sphere thus not only transcended national borders, but also the Atlantic Ocean. What further contributed to Hermann Raster's travel letters' role for the German-American ethnoscape was that these letters were also published in the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, adding again to the flow of ideas that constituted an ongoing German-American ethnoscape and erased the physical distance between Germany and German America. The letters were especially significant regarding the possible lives German-Americans were shown here. Raster's letters allowed the German-Americans in Chicago to imagine what life would await them, should they entertain the fantasy of returning to their old fatherland.

Raster's colleague Wilhelm Rapp returned to Germany on a personal trip in 1889. Like Raster, Rapp traveled the country and wrote letters back to Chicago about his experiences. In Potsdam for example, he visited the grave of Prussian king Frederick II. In a subsequent letter, he praised Potsdam's famous Garrison Church for its plain beauty and mentioned that he was more smitten only by the gravesite of George

---

<sup>11</sup> Raster, *Reisebriefe von Hermann Raster. Mit Einer Biographie Und Einem Bildniss Des Verfassers*, 132.



Washington.<sup>12</sup> Rapp's travel letters from that time added a certain paradoxical air to his character. Here is a former forty-eighter who fought against the nobility of Germany and spent a year in prison and his life in exile for doing so, praising the old monarchs and the new. But his reverence for the German monarchs was still only exceeded by his reverence for the first president of the United States. This paradoxical dichotomy was in line however with the way the *Staats-Zeitung* and other German-American papers had reported on the Franco-Prussian war and the subsequent unification of Germany as an empire, rather than as the democratic republic the men had envisioned in their youth. In his letters, Rapp expressed a certain adoration for Otto von Bismarck, as well as for the German Kaiser Friedrich III, who had died a year earlier but was still vividly commemorated in Berlin as one of the unifiers of Germany: "Nothing makes a bigger impression on the freedom loving visitor in Berlin than the omnipresent adoration of Kaiser Friedrich!"<sup>13</sup>

In Berlin, Rapp also met a German-American friend from Chicago who was serving as consul to the city, a man named Julius Cohen. Cohen was at the time subscribed to both the local *Voss'sche Zeitung* (The Voss Publishing Company Newspaper, Germany's newspaper of record, in publication since 1704) but also the *Tägliche Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. Again, the newspaper served as a vital facilitator of the German transnational cultural sphere. Cohen—about whom nothing else is mentioned other than that Rapp knew him from Chicago and that he worked as a trade consul—

---

<sup>12</sup> Wilhelm Rapp, *Erinnerungen Eines Deutsch-Amerikaners an Das Alte Vaterland. In Reden Und Briefen* (Chicago: F. Gindele, 1890), 60.

<sup>13</sup> Rapp, 62.

remained informed about the events in his chosen hometown of Chicago while living in Germany. And he chose to do so not through the means of ordering the *Chicago Tribune* or any other English language newspaper, but by reading the largest German-American one.<sup>14</sup>

Traveling through northern Germany, Rapp reminisced about his time in Berlin. The construction of the Reichstag building, the growth of the city and the new migrants had all transformed the city from a Prussian garrison town into a global metropolis. In the same letter, he also ruminated over visiting the Turnvater Jahn memorial in the Hasenheide Park south of Berlin, the place where Jahn founded the first Turner Society.



Figure 7. Plaques from Turner Associations around the world at the Jahndenkmal in Hasenheide Park in Berlin – Photo by Von Malud, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6962726>.

The memorial was gifted to the city by Turner societies around the world—bearing

<sup>14</sup> Wilhelm Rapp and Hermann Raster, *Wilhelm Rapp Papers*, n.d., 65.

plaques commemorating chapters from Berlin, and other places in Germany, but also from Turner societies in Cincinnati, Washington D.C. and Chicago, making it a built representation of the transnational, circulatory nature of the German ethnoscape.<sup>15</sup>

Lorenz Brentano, meanwhile, resided in Washington D.C. for his term as a U.S. congressman. During his time there, a letter arrived from Mulhouse in Germany, that provides further contemporary insight into the extent of the transnational nature of German-America in the late nineteenth century. The letter was written by a premier lieutenant of the Badensian army by the name of Breisacher. Lieutenant Breisacher had fallen madly in love with Lorenz Brentano's daughter Caroline "Kery" Brentano. The young woman had remained in Germany when her father returned to the United States, where she eventually met the premier lieutenant, and the two fell in love. But as it was custom at the time, the groom-to-be needed to first ask the father of the bride for his permission. The distance between groom-to-be and father-in-law-to-be made this a somewhat difficult endeavor. But Breisacher made the best of it, writing to Brentano and opening his plea with the lines, "writing is the only way of communication, and so I implore you to not interpret the cold paper as a lack of true emotion."<sup>16</sup> The distance was only one difficulty for the young man's amorous endeavor, another one was his status and his personal wealth. As a military officer in the Badensian army, he lacked the traditional means to secure a marriage of the sort that "could secure for my love a home

---

<sup>15</sup> Rapp, 65.

<sup>16</sup> Breisacher, "Brentano Letter from Breisacher, Muelhausen," February 12, 1884, Brentano Family Papers, Chicago History Museum (my translation).

adequate for her previous mode of living, education and [social] standing.”<sup>17</sup> But this confession of his own lack of means was made with the intention of not appearing as “one who equates happiness with money and money with love.”<sup>18</sup>

Brentano was indeed impressed by Lieutenant Breisacher’s openness and honesty. The father of the bride-to-be wrote in return that “the open and manly tone of your letter has not failed making a positive impression on me and my wife.”<sup>19</sup> Brentano was on the one hand impressed by Breisacher’s directness to freely admit his financial shortcomings, but on the other hand, these shortcomings did indeed give him pause. He also stated that if his daughter had asked him if she could marry a military officer, he would have “voiced [his] doubts.” But in her decision on who to give her hand in marriage to, she went over his head and decided on her own “which was her complete right.”<sup>20</sup> Breisacher wrote in return that he would do anything to make the marriage possible, and that he would also do anything for the happiness of his wife-to-be. He then laid out in minute detail his own income and the various costs that a marriage such as this would produce in Germany. Lastly, he would leave the details of the marriage ceremony to Brentano. The latter then agreed to the terms of the marriage by telegram, since Breisacher and Caroline Brentano wanted to get the union arranged quickly.

---

<sup>17</sup> Brentano Letter from Breisacher, Muelhausen,” February 12, 1884.

<sup>18</sup> Brentano Letter from Breisacher, Muelhausen,” February 12, 1884.

<sup>19</sup> Lorenz Brentano, “Brentano Letter to Breisacher, Washington D.C.,” March 6, 1884, Brentano Family Papers, Chicago History Museum (my translation).

<sup>20</sup> “Brentano Letter to Breisacher, Washington D.C.,” March 6, 1884.

The Breisacher episode was evidence of the workings of the German ethnoscape in its flows of people across the Atlantic. Here was a German man who fell in love with the daughter of a German-American immigrant, who in turn had come back to Germany as an American official, bringing his daughter along, before returning to the United States. As such, Caroline Brentano was already a transnational person. Born in Kalamazoo, a second-generation immigrant who returned to and remained in her father's homeland, until returning to the United States for marriage. The Premier Lieutenant and the daughter of the then-former congressman married two years later in Chicago.<sup>21</sup>

The still-active members of the *Staats-Zeitung* chronicled the achievements and various fates of their countrymen, getting involved in the then-flourishing German-American historical societies and other regional congregations. Wilhelm Rapp became a "corresponding member" of the Society for the Research of the History of the Germans in Maryland, as well as a founding member in Chicago's own Schwabenverein. Later he served as a founding member of the German-American Historical Society of Illinois. These historical societies were all a means to the end. The luminaries of the forty-eighter generation began to die off, and with them died the knowledge and insights of their generation of German immigrants. Historical societies formed all over the country to chronicle the recent, lived past of the respective ethnic or local communities they formed. Also, a new generation of immigrants with different ideologies and politics had arrived, so the older generation of German-Americans scrambled to maintain their

---

<sup>21</sup> "Wedding Announcements," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 26, 1886.

primacy over the interpretation of what it meant to be German-American. The forty-eighters themselves were leaving the spotlight and retreated into history as they began to die off, but their legacy within the German-American community in the United States and on the German ethnoscape beyond the borders of nation states remained strong.

Even in death, Hermann Raster proved to be a transnational character. Raster succumbed to long illness during a spa journey to Germany in 1891 while in Cadowa, a town in southern Silesia. He was 64 years old. The *Staats-Zeitung* obituary read that he had premonitions of his own death, had visited the graves of his parents in his home town Zerbst, and secured a grave site for himself there by their side as well.<sup>22</sup> But his surviving family had different plans. His wife Margarethe, daughter Anna and sons Edwin and Walther repatriated his body to the United States on a steamship out of Bremen.<sup>23</sup> After Raster's remains arrived in Hoboken, his New York friends as well as Anton Hesing and other colleagues from the *Staats-Zeitung* arranged for a memorial gathering at the local German Club, where his body was put up in state. His family, colleagues and friends attended, reading several eulogies that stressed the deceased's monumental role for the German-American community, for German-American newspapers and the relationship between Germany and the German diaspora. Various professional associations of German-American journalism and public life sent tributes, the National Association of German-American Journalists sent a wreath with the inscription reading "Dem Altmeister" (to the grand master), the Newark German Press

---

<sup>22</sup> "Illinois Staats-Zeitung," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 25, 1891, Newberry Library Foreign Language Press Survey.

<sup>23</sup> "HERMAN RASTER'S BODY RECEIVED: Arrangements for Funeral Services in New York Today.," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 11, 1891.

Club of Philadelphia sent an anchor. After the ceremony in Hoboken, Raster's casket was loaded onto a train bound for Chicago, accompanied by his Chicago friends, colleagues and family.<sup>24</sup>

The *Vossische Zeitung*—Germany's leading daily, published in Berlin—printed an obituary on July 27, 1891 that read that Raster was, “one of those forced to emigrate due to the year 1848. Raster was the most distinguished German journalist of America, of a sharp mind, and he knew how to reach a wide audience with his writing—even if he was quite inconsiderate at times.” The editor of the *Vossische Zeitung* remarked that Raster had throughout his life strived for a closer unity in spirit between the United States and Germany, but that he nonetheless had been in favor of then-representative William McKinley's tariff bill.<sup>25</sup>

Anglo-American newspapers around the country reported on the German-American editor-in-chief's death. A *New York Times* obituary read that he had worked at the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* for twenty-five years, and that the newspaper's “leading position was mainly due to his genius.”<sup>26</sup> The *Chicago Tribune*'s obituary reported that “German journalism in the United States has received a severe loss” with Raster's passing. Even though Joseph Medill's publication feuded with the *Staats-Zeitung*, Raster and his fellow editors quite frequently, the obituary nonetheless gave nothing but

---

<sup>24</sup> “HONOR HERMAN RASTER: IMPRESSIVE CEREMONIES AT THE GERMAN CLUB IN HOBOKEN,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 12, 1891.

<sup>25</sup> “Verschiedenes,” *Vossische Zeitung*, July 26, 1891, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (my translation).

<sup>26</sup> “OBITUARY - Hermann Raster,” *New York Times*, July 26, 1891, <http://search.proquest.com/hnpchicagotribune/docview/94872047/F9824AEF89114A86PQ/3?accountid=12163>.

praise, reading: “Though his reputation has been confined mainly to the German press, he undoubtedly would have made an equal success had he been identified with any one



Figure 8. Grave site of Hermann Raster and his family at Graceland Cemetery, Chicago (Photograph by author, 2020).

of the American dailies of this country, and in this respect, his death is a loss to the profession in the United States.”<sup>27</sup> The *Washington Post* reported on Raster’s eventual interment on Graceland Cemetery in Chicago, where his successor as editor-in-chief at the *Staats-Zeitung* and colleague Wilhelm Rapp held the eulogy.<sup>28</sup>

Lorenz Brentano passed away only a few months later, on September 17, 1891, in Chicago, at age seventy-seven. The former *Staats-Zeitung* owner and acclaimed German-American politician’s death did not quite cause the same kind of stir as Raster’s

<sup>27</sup> “Death of Herman Raster,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 26, 1891.

<sup>28</sup> “Burial Rites of Hermann Raster,” *The Washington Post*, August 14, 1891.



did, as his passing was not reported on in the national newspapers in Germany.

However, the American and German-American newspapers covered his death and funeral closely. The *Staats-Zeitung* obituary pointed out that he was “at one time one of the most famous Germans, and German-Americans,” stressing his personal achievements for both the German-American community but also for the United States at large.<sup>29</sup> Brentano was, after all, instrumental in the introduction of German lessons into Chicago’s public school curriculum during his tenure as chairman of the Chicago School Board, represented his new home country during his time as United States consul to the city of Dresden, and then again served his country in the House of Representatives. The Anglo-American press took note of his passing as well. The *Chicago Tribune*’s obituary stressed Brentano’s lifetime of achievements and his connectedness with the forty-eighter movement, his service to the Grand Duchy of Baden, his connection to General Franz Sigel and his subsequent accomplishments in his chosen exile to the United States. The obituary also mentioned his daughter’s marriage to Captain Breisacher.<sup>30</sup>

Brentano’s funeral was a procession of characters that exemplified his transnational career, and his connections in politics, jurisprudence and newspaper publishing. One of his pallbearers was Chicago Mayor Hempstead Washburne, his eulogies were given by an American judge, an Austrian-American newspaper editor and a Swiss-American Civil War veteran. The speakers gave the addresses in German and

---

<sup>29</sup> “Lorenz Brentano Died,” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, September 18, 1891, Newberry Library Foreign Language Press Survey.

<sup>30</sup> “LORENZ BRENTANO DEAD: ONE OF CHICAGO’S GERMAN-AMERICAN CITIZENS PASSES AWAY,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 18, 1891.

English. Every speaker stressed that Brentano had been a champion of freedom and the rights of his fellow men. Like the addresses given, the funeral decoration contained reminiscences of the forty-eighter revolution, with the black-red-golden flags of the short-lived revolutionary republic adorning the coffin. General Hermann Lieb, who gave a German oration, said that Brentano sought to “preserve in America all the noble and domestic qualities of the German people.”<sup>31</sup> Lieb was not a forty-eighter, although he immigrated to the United States in the 1850s from Switzerland. But he had fought in the Civil War where he rose to the rank of Brevet Brigadier General. That a character such as Lieb would eulogize Brentano—following an Anglo-American judge—was again testament to the deceased’s transnational connections. The eulogy at Brentano’s interment at Graceland Cemetery was delivered by Joseph Brucker, an Austrian



Figure 9. Gravesite of Lorenz Brentano and Family at Graceland Cemetery, Chicago (Photograph by author, 2020).

---

<sup>31</sup> “BRENTANO, THE PATRIOT, AT REST,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 21, 1891.

immigrant, who worked for several German-language newspapers in Chicago and had a career as secretary for the Wisconsin Republican Party.

Anton C. Hesing's death caused the biggest ripples in the newspaper landscape. The *New York Times* ran a short obituary, mentioning that Hesing's son Washington was postmaster of Chicago. The *Chicago Tribune* meanwhile published a number of long editorials, eulogies and obituaries for the *Staats-Zeitung* publisher, including a translation of Hesing's last article written for his own newspaper, as well as a sketched portrait. The day after Hesing passed, the newspaper published several obituaries. One penned by *Tribune* publisher Joseph Medill read, "Mr. Hesing's strength lay in great part in the fact that he knew his countrymen thoroughly and sought to be always on that side which they favored." But this was the *Chicago Tribune* after all, and its publisher and then-editor-in-chief had clashed with Hesing numerous times over the years. While the obituary certainly exuded respect for the departed, Medill also wrote that, "when in politics, Mr. Hesing was sometimes a little too dictatorial." In this, the *Tribune* editor alluded to Hesing's efforts surrounding the People's Party and the pain he caused Medill when he was mayor. Given the vitriol Hesing's *Staats Zeitung* at times poured out over Medill, especially during the fire boundaries dispute in 1872 and the People's Party mayoral run the year after, the German-American publisher received very amicable treatment from the *Tribune*. Medill concluded that, "the asperities of past conflicts have disappeared and one only remembers the indomitable spirit of the man who came here

from Germany a poor, friendless boy and worked himself up unaided to the position which Mr. Hesing occupied here for so many years.”<sup>32</sup>

The German community of Chicago mourned Hesing publicly. The German-American Press Club of Chicago remarked upon the many services the deceased had rendered to German-Americans in Chicago and beyond. In a news report on Hesing’s passing, the *Chicago Tribune* also reminded readers of Hesing’s charitable activities, which he had engaged in during his final years. Hesing was vital in the establishment of the Altenheim, the German retirement home in Forest Park, Illinois, and also served as the president of the Schiller Theater in Chicago, a theater built to serve the German-American community—one that frequently presented theater and opera by German playwrights and composers in German language.<sup>33</sup>

Long after his death, the *Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter* (German-American Historical Pages), a quarterly journal of the German-American Historical Society of Illinois, published a long article in 1911 detailing Hesing’s life. The author, German-American writer Edmund Deuss, remarked that Hesing’s memory was luckily not dominated by “messages reported about his person by the *Chicago Tribune* or the *Freie Presse* at the times during which the publishers of such papers were fighting Hesing as their opponent and saw everything in him that they thought bad and worthy of hate.”<sup>34</sup> Deuss also remarked that Hesing did indeed engage in crooked deals towards

---

<sup>32</sup> “Anton C. Hesing,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 1, 1895.

<sup>33</sup> “A. C. HESING DEAD: The Famous German Editor Called Rather Suddenly,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 1, 1895.

<sup>34</sup> Edmund Deuss, “Anton Caspar Hesing - Ein Charakterbild aus der Sturm- und Drangzeit der Deutschen in Amerika,” in *Deutsch-amerikanische Geschichtsblätter* by Deutsche-amerikanische

the end of his life, that he was a part of the Whiskey Ring and that he allowed for corruption to take hold in German-American Chicago. He concluded his portrait of the *Staats-Zeitung* publisher with the remark that Hesing's immoral enterprises were at their heart a tragedy, since he engaged in these activities with the singular goal of allowing a better life for his only son Washington Hesing—who died childless only two years after his father. Hesing was interred at St. Boniface Catholic Cemetery in Chicago, a few blocks north of where Raster lay at Graceland Cemetery.

Hesing's legacy for German-American Chicago is difficult to assess in entirety. He was a complicated figure who led a complicated life. In many ways, Hesing represented the American dream. He arrived in the United States penniless and without much knowledge of the English language. He rocketed upwards in society through hard work, thrift and smarts. He lacked much of a formal education but made up for this with what Germans would call *Bauernschläue*—a peasant's shrewdness. He tried his hand at various businesses and industries, only to ultimately become successful on the field of politics, where his reward for agitation for the Republican Party was the Cook County sheriff's office—a success which he then turned into commercial accomplishment when he used the money he made as sheriff to buy into the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. Hesing subsequently used his position, connections and influence to further expand both his commercial and political endeavors, bought a profitable planing mill on Chicago's West Side and turned the *Staats-Zeitung* into a mouthpiece that influenced German-American Chicago along the political lines he and his allies saw as beneficial. Then, after

---

historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, vol. XI (Deutsch-Amerikanische Historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, 1911), 241, <http://archive.org/details/deutschamerikani11deut>.

disaster struck in the 1870s, first with the Great Chicago Fire and then the Panic of 1873, he succumbed to the rampant political corruption of the age, attempting to preserve his family's material well-being by questionable means. But in spite of this fall from grace, Anton Caspar Hesing was still regarded as ultimately an admirable figure, a pillar of



Figure 10. Gravesite of Anton C. Hesing's Family at St. Boniface Catholic Cemetery, Chicago (photograph by author, 2020).

German-American Chicago. Even long after his death, as the article in the *Geschichtsblätter* illustrated, German America regarded him as an overall positive

compatriot who benefitted his community much more than his lapses served to damage the people he came from.

The last of the *Staats-Zeitung* men to pass away was Wilhelm Rapp, who died in 1907. Rapp had taken over as editor-in-chief at the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* following Raster's death. The *Chicago Abendpost* (Chicago Evening Post) remarked that, in the later years of his life, Rapp had "become a principal figure among the Germans of Chicago."<sup>35</sup> Rapp was a founding member of the German-American Historical Society of Illinois, an association of German scholars, historians and writers created in the year 1900. This historical society's goal was to capture the history of Germans in Illinois, consciously created to prevent this loss of insight into the German-American past at a time when many of the most important members of the German diaspora were dying off. He was also a member of the Chicago Schwaben Verein (Association of Swabians), the German-American National Association and a Turner.

As with Hermann Raster and Lorenz Brentano, the obituaries of Wilhelm Rapp also contained plenty of reminiscences of the deceased's activities during the 1848 revolution. Secretary of the German-American Historical Society of Illinois Emil Mannhardt wrote in his obituary published in the *Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter* that Rapp "kept the faith towards the flag of equal rights for all and remained true to the ideals of his youth—that of a free man in a free state."<sup>36</sup> Mannhardt

---

<sup>35</sup> "Wilhelm Rapp (Husband of Mdme. Schumann Heink)," *Abendpost*, March 1, 1907, [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_11\\_1500](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_11_1500).

<sup>36</sup> Emil Mannhardt, "Wilhelm Rapp. Geb. 14. Juli 1828, gest. 1. März 1907," in *Deutsch-amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, by Deutsche-amerikanische historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, vol. VII (Deutsch-Amerikanische Historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, 1907), 59, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.319510007281008&view=1up&seq=2>.

stressed several times in this long article how much Rapp had been shaped by the events of his youth, that he kept to himself in matters of belief, and that he was a principled man, but never dogmatic in his views.

The Anglo-American press commemorated Rapp's death as well. The *Chicago Tribune* noted that his health had been dwindling ever since the 80-year-old editor-in-chief was hit by a streetcar in late January of the same year. The same obituary also repeated the false tale that Rapp, after his escape to Washington D.C. from Baltimore, where a secessionist mob had almost lynched him in 1861, was offered the position of Postmaster General of the United States by Abraham Lincoln. The *Washington Post* obituary contained a remark that Rapp was "said to be the oldest German editor in the United States."<sup>37</sup> Wilhelm Rapp was interred at Graceland, the same elite Chicago cemetery at which his former colleagues Hermann Raster and Lorenz Brentano were buried.

Rapp's passing was indicative of a sea change in German America and the transnational German-speaking ethnoscape as a whole. The forty-eighters were now almost all gone, and a new generation had long since begun to dominate the German diaspora. Germany itself was ruled by emperor Wilhelm II, whom older German Americans despised, contributing to a growing rift between the homeland and German America. The onset of the twentieth century signaled the decline of German America. Fewer people immigrated, and the now second-generation German-Americans became increasingly Americanized, to the point that only a dwindling number of them even

---

<sup>37</sup> "SIR FRANCIS PLUNKETT DEAD: He Was Secretary of British Legation at Washington 1876-77," *The Washington Post* (1877-1922), March 2, 1907.



spoke German.<sup>38</sup> The slow but steady disappearance of German speakers among the German American community was one among an array of issues that contributed to the



Figure 11. Gravesite of Wilhelm Rapp and family at Graceland Cemetery, Chicago (photograph by author, 2020).

seismic and fundamental change within German America.

When the forty-eighthers arrived on American shores in the late 1840s and during the 1850s, the German-American community was already sizeable, but by far not as influential as the diaspora was at the time of the former revolutionaries' passing. The forty-eighter generation left a sizable, lasting mark on the American social fabric. First, after fleeing from Europe, the forty-eighthers found the nation state that inspired their republicanism in peril from within and set out to fight this peril—slavery. Since the

<sup>38</sup> John A. Hawgood, *The Tragedy of German-America* (New York: Arno Press, 1970), 290.

forty-eighter revolutionaries were academics, lawyers, politicians and journalists, many of them were used to inhabit leading positions within their circles—and use those positions to shape and direct the parts of society they could enact an influence upon.

Initially, they were more interested in preserving as much German character as they could—both for themselves and within their community. This brought them into conflict with the temperance movement. The fight with temperance-minded Anglo-Americans was a culture clash that flamed up time and again throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. All through their publishing careers the forty eighters referred to anything they perceived as American nativism as “know-nothingism”—referring back to the Native American Party or the “Know-Nothing” Party of the 1850s, long after that political organization had ceased to exist. The fights of the 1850s during which the forty-eighters prepared the German diaspora to push back against Anglo-American nativism informed their stance on American mainstream politics for decades to come.

The *Staats-Zeitung* and other, similar publications mobilized a sizable part of German America for the Republican Party and thus had a palpable influence on the course the fate of the nation took. The forty-eighters rallied support for the Republicans on all levels, in Chicago they elected the first Republican mayor, and then turned that success into a massive support for Abraham Lincoln’s presidential campaign. This support earned those leaders of the German-Americans whose efforts had proven instrumental for Republican success renown and lucrative public positions. In the northern states these endeavors also largely made the German immigrants more acceptable by the American public at large. But anti-German sentiments still prevailed, and the forty-eighters never ceased to fight back against these notions.

Participation in the American Civil War began a slow but steady process of assimilation of the former revolutionaries into the mainstream of American society. After the war, and with the achievements they earned during the various battles and campaigns, the forty-eighters were at the apex of their influence. Carl Schurz was named Secretary of the Interior, Lorenz Brentano served in the Illinois Senate, and Hermann Raster and Anton Hesing used the *Staats-Zeitung* to further support for a political party of their own in Chicago. But the times were changing, and the men who once rebelled against the reactionary status quo eventually lost much of their fervor. The revolutionary experiences of their youth still informed their thoughts and politics, but those ideas were no longer radical in the 1870s. During this time, new immigrants began to arrive from the German homeland who were socialized under different circumstances than those the forty-eighters had known. These new radicals—socialists, industrial workers—now vied with the older generation for the primacy over the German diaspora.

Throughout all of these years, the immigrants from Germany maintained a close connection to their friends and family back in the old country. Letters and messages sent by telegraph constituted this backbone of the transnational German cultural sphere, as well as packages and personal voyages. Through these means, the German diaspora remained informed about the events in the old homeland. But the messages and ideas that came out of the German community in America also furthered the next generations of German immigrants. The forty-eighter newspapermen shipped issues of their publication back to the old country. There, news from the thriving German communities in Chicago and elsewhere inspired more immigration, as did letters and personal accounts from German-Americans traveling abroad. As did those from family

members who came to the United States to visit their friends and relatives who had crossed the Atlantic for good.

Thus, the revolutionaries who worked at the German-language newspapers like the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* were instrumental in creating, nurturing and facilitating the German ethnoscape between Germany and the American diaspora. This transnational entity, the German cultural sphere, received a great enhancement from the forty-eighters, who took over the reins after their arrival. Their achievement for the German diaspora was that they mobilized the German-Americans into a stronger and more cohesive community that proved resilient and influential for the rest of the nineteenth century.

This study has shown that nineteenth-century immigrants constituted an important part of a transnational entity, that included those who shared a German national identity. The lives of immigrants at this time were centered on their new home in America, but that did not mean that they neglected or lost their connections to their home country and those who shared their language and culture. This unifying national signifier first emerged a few decades before the 1848 revolutions but was ultimately what bound the revolutionaries together—both among each other but also to their nation, as the events surrounding the Franco-Prussian war demonstrated. This ethnoscape was made possible through the medium of the newspaper, since newspapers effectively edited out the spatial distance between the German homeland and the diaspora, but also between the discreet German-American settlements themselves. The larger German-American community became possible through the newspaper. And as the German newspapers declined, and as the forty-eighters died off, the German

ethnoscape began to wane as well, and the German immigrants had to face a whole new array of issues in the new century.

### **Epilog: Death of a Newspaper**

Historian John Hawgood refers to the era from 1855 until the outbreak of World War I as the “hyphen period” of the German diaspora. During this time, German-Americans proudly carved out this hybrid nationality, the hyphenated immigrant identity, for themselves—but were also identified as such by other Americans. At the turn of the century things began to change—the children and grandchildren of the forty-eighter generation who grew up as Americans no longer identified as Germans or German-Americans but increasingly assimilated into the American mainstream. This was especially true in the realm of culture, as historian Peter Conolly-Smith notes. German cultural products of the nineteenth and early twentieth century were heavy and earnest in nature, wordy and heady, and required a broad cultural knowledge of their audience, as well as a good grasp of the German language. These theater productions, books, journals, and operas fell increasingly out of favor with most German-Americans, who began to favor the lighter, American mass market culture. Conolly-Smith illustrates this with the example of the *Bronxer Literaten Club* (Bronx Club of Literarists), which closed its doors due to a lack of members in 1917, just as the United States entered World War I. But the lack of members was not due to the war, but rather due to the fact that, instead of meeting to read and discuss the works of Friedrich Schiller in their free

time, the German Americans of New York in 1917 preferred that favorite American pastime: the motion pictures.<sup>39</sup>

The relationship between the German Empire and the United States had cooled significantly under the rule of Wilhelm II. The young Kaiser's own colonial ambitions clashed with those of America. The United States State Department perceived the German presence in Latin America and the Caribbean as a challenge to the Monroe Doctrine, and the presence of German war ships in the Pacific as a threat to the American claim to the Philippines. All of these threats were more perceived than based in reality—after all no war or open, armed conflict emerged from any of these situations. But real or not, these perceived threats fueled anti-German sentiments in foreign policy abroad and immigrant relations at home in the U.S. Historian Nancy Mitchell stresses that this threat of American supremacy in the Western Hemisphere was mostly imagined—but that German actions did nothing to dispel the illusory threat.<sup>40</sup>

As the United States entered into World War I, the internal and external dynamics that had enacted pressure on the German-American community rose to a fever pitch. While the older generation of German-American newspapermen never warmed up to Wilhelm II, the more recent immigrants who had taken over at many German-American publications stood with the German Emperor, cheering their old home country on as it entered the Great War against Britain. When the United States joined the war in 1917, these German-language newspapers that had initially sided with

---

<sup>39</sup> Peter Conolly-Smith, *Translating America: An Immigrant Press Visualizes American Popular Culture, 1895-1918* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 16.

<sup>40</sup> Nancy Mitchell, *The Danger of Dreams: German and American Imperialism in Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 218.

the Kaiser were now forced to change their allegiance. Anti-German sentiment ran wild in the United States. Most German speakers were suspected of being spies for the Kaiser. German terms were purged from American English—sauerkraut for example was re-named “liberty cabbage.” The Trading-With-The-Enemy Act broke the backs of many German-American newspapers, as historian of journalism George H. Douglas remarks.<sup>41</sup>

Section 19 of the act required that,

Any news item, editorial, or other printed matter, respecting the Government of the United States, or of any nation engaged in the present war, its policies, international relations, the state or conduct of the war, or any matter relating thereto: Provided, That this section shall not apply to any print newspaper, or publication where the publisher or distributor thereof, on or before offering the same for mailing, or in any manner distributing it to the public, has filed with the postmaster at the place of publication, in the form of an affidavit, a true and complete translation of the entire article containing such matter proposed to be published in such print, newspaper, or publication and has caused to be printed, in plain type in the English language, at the head of each such item, editorial, or other matter, on each copy of such print, newspaper, or publication, the words “True translation filed with the postmaster at—on—(naming the post office where the translation was filed, and the date of the filing thereof), as required by the Act of—(here giving the date of this Act).”

Any print, newspaper, or publication in any foreign language which does not conform to the provisions of this section is hereby declared to be nonmailable, and it shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation, or association, to transport, carry, or otherwise publish or distribute the same [...].<sup>42</sup>

Requiring a costly translation of all articles pertaining to the United States government and of all nations involved in the Great War was a tall order to ask of most German-American newspapers. Only the most affluent publications could afford to comply with the act. Those who could not, quickly lost the ability to deliver their printed

---

<sup>41</sup> George H Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999), 223.

<sup>42</sup> “Trading with the Enemy Act Part II,” *Trading with the Enemy Act 1* (1917): 35.

products to their subscribers as they were cut off from the postal service. Many German-language newspapers folded due to Section 19. The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* survived World War I, but only barely. The editorship maintained an openly nationalistic stance, favoring the German Empire throughout the war. This position cost the publication most of their subscribers and incurred the disdain of the Wilson administration. During the war, the lack of subscribers caused the publishers to suspend publication, which they only picked up again in late 1918.<sup>43</sup> But the damage was done, and the *Staats-Zeitung* never recovered. Four years after the war, in 1922, the once-proud newspaper that served as a connecting cord between German-America and the German homeland for half a century was subsumed into the *Deutsch-Amerikanische Bürger Zeitung* and ceased independent publication.<sup>44</sup>

The German ethnoscape changed shape with the assimilation of most German-Americans into the broader American national identity. New immigrants from Germany still arrived in the United States, but by far not in the numbers of the mid to late nineteenth century. Also, the anti-German sentiment of the war had swept most of the German-American community establishments away. Many Turnvereine dropped the German title for English names. The German-American infrastructure largely disappeared. The German-American community no longer existed to such an extent that German immigrants could collectively put political pressure on American politics. Goods, ideas, and people still moved back and forth across national and natural

---

<sup>43</sup> Special to The New York Times, "Illinois Staats-Zeitung to Resume.," *New York Times*, 1918.

<sup>44</sup> Karl John Richard Arndt and May E Olson, *The German Language Press of the Americas = Die Deutschsprachige Presse Der Amerikas* (München: Verlag Dokumentation, 1976), 64.



boundaries, but those persons and items were detached from a greater whole, no longer constituting or contributing to a larger ethnic and cultural entity. German Americans shed their hyphenated identities in favor of a new ones: white Americans of German descent. Vestiges of the old German America survive into the present, but only at the margins, in the countryside and those parts of big cities that had the largest German settlements. The aftermath of World War II revitalized the connections between German America and Germany to some degree, as Americans of German descent engaged with their distant cousins through efforts like the CARE packages. But these endeavors did not rekindle the German-American community. Diasporic immigrant communities still exist in the United States today, but those immigrants come from other places than Germany, and populate other, new and different ethnoscapes.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Primary Sources

#### Archival Collections and Miscellanea

Brentano, Caroline Aberle, Dorothy Brentano, Lorenz Brentano, Theodore Brentano, and Wilhelmina Claussenius Brentano, eds. *Brentano Family Papers*, n.d.

“DocumentArchiv.de - Verfassung Des Deutschen Reiches [’Frankfurter Reichsverfassung’] (28.03.1849).” Accessed July 2, 2020. <http://www.documentarchiv.de/nzjh/verfdr1848.htm>.

“Flugschriften 1848 / An Mein Volk Und an Die Deutsche Nation: Mit Vertrauen Sprach...” Accessed June 25, 2020. <https://sammlungen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/1848/content/titleinfo/2231883>.

Grant, Ulysses S. “February 7, 1871: Message Regarding Unification of Germany,” October 20, 2016. <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/february-7-1871-message-regarding-unification-germany>.

Struve, Gustav von. “Antrag Gustav von Struve an Das Frankfurter Nationalparlament,” March 31, 1848. [http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage\\_id=434](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage_id=434).

“Trading with the Enemy Act Part II.” *Trading with the Enemy Act* 1 (1917): 8–36.

#### Books and Journal Articles

Ahern, M. L. *The Great Revolution: A History of the Rise and Progress of the People’s Party in the City of Chicago and County of Cook*. Lakeside Publishing and Printing Company, 1874.

Butz, Caspar. “Die Neue Partei.” *Deutsch-Amerikanische Monatshefte Für Politik, Wissenschaft Und Literatur* 1 (1864): 74–86.

Dietzsch, Emil, Max Stern, and Fred Kressmann. *Chicago’s Deutsche Männer: Erinnerungs-Blätter an Chicago’s Fünfzigjähriges Jubiläum Geschichte der Stadt Chicago*. Chicago: M. Stern & Co., 1885.

Deuss, Edmund. “Anton Caspar Hesing - Ein Charakterbild aus der Sturm- und Drangzeit der Deutschen in Amerika.” In *Deutsch-amerikanische Geschichtsblätter.*, by Deutsche-amerikanische historische Gesellschaft von

Illinois, Vol. XI. Deutsch-Amerikanische Historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, 1911. <http://archive.org/details/deutschamerikani11deut>.

Germanistic Society of America. and Deutsche-Amerikanische Historische Gesellschaft von Illinois. "Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter." *Jahrbuch Der Deutsche-Amerikanischen Historischen Gesellschaft von Illinois 1912-1937*, 1937 1901, 33 v.

Illinois State Historical Society. *Papers in Illinois History and Transactions*, 1906.

Kamman, William Frederic. *Socialism in German American Literature*. Americana Germanica Press, 1917. <http://archive.org/details/socialismingerm01kammgoog>.

Kapp, Friedrich. "Der jüngste Aufstand der Eisenbahnarbeiter in den Vereinigten Staaten." *Preussische Jahrbücher* 40 (September 15, 1877): 398–424.

Mannhardt, Emil. "Wilhelm Rapp. Geb. 14. Juli 1828, gest. 1. März 1907." In *Deutsch-amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, by Deutsche-amerikanische historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, 58–61. Deutsch-Amerikanische Historische Gesellschaft von Illinois, 1907.  
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.319510007281008&view=1up&seq=2>.

Rapp, Wilhelm. *Erinnerungen Eines Deutsch-Amerikaners an Das Alte Vaterland. In Reden Und Briefen*. Chicago: F. Gindele, 1890.

———. "The Baltimore Riots of 1861 - Translated by Fritz Caspari." *The Newberry Library Bulletin*, no. 9 (1950): 274–83.

Raster, Hermann. *Reisebriefe von Hermann Raster. Mit Einer Biographie Und Einem Bildniss Des Verfassers*. Berlin: Buchdr. Gutenberg (F. Zillessen), 1891.

———. *Wie man Ministerpräsident wird*. Leipzig: E. D. Weller, 1849.

Seeger, Eugen. *Chicago: Die Geschichte einer Wunderstadt*. Chicago: The George Gregory Printing Company, 1892.

Wagner, William. *History of the 24th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Old Hecker Regiment)*. Illinois Staats-Zeitung Publishing, 1911.  
<http://archive.org/details/historyof24thilloowagn>.

### Letters and Correspondence

Arnold, Isaac Newton. "Letter to George Schneider," July 8, 1864. George Schneider Papers. Chicago History Museum.

Breisacher. "Brentano Letter from Breisacher, Muelhausen," February 12, 1884. Brentano Family Papers. Chicago History Museum (my translation).

- Brentano, Lorenz. "Brentano Letter to Breisacher, Washington D.C.," March 6, 1884. Brentano Family Papers. Chicago History Museum (my translation).
- . "Brentano Letter to Malsch, Zurich," August 22, 1870. Brentano Family Papers. Chicago History Museum (my translation).
- Elze, Carl. "Elze Letter to Raster, Dessau," May 11, 1872. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- Hesing, Anton Caspar. "Raster Letter from Hesing," September 15, 1886. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter from Hesing, Chicago," June 16, 1873. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter from Hesing, Chicago," July 19, 1873. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- Malsch, Jakob. "Brentano Letter from Malsch, Karlsruhe," August 26, 1870. Brentano Family Papers. Chicago History Museum (my translation).
- Oppenheim, Gertrud. "Tante Gertruds Letter," April 18, 1937. Chicago fire of 1871 collection: Raster. Chicago History Museum.
- Rapp, Wilhelm. "Raster Letter from Rapp," August 6, 1886. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- Raster, Hermann. "Hermann Raster Letter to Askan Raster," December 4, 1857. The Raster Family Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter to Askan Raster," April 30, 1855. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter to Bauer, Chicago," July 12, 1870. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," July 2, 1852. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," August 1, 1857. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," December 13, 1857. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," April 6, 1862. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . "Raster Letter to Elze, New York," 1863. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).

- . “Raster Letter to Elze, New York,” August 19, 1864. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . “Raster Letter to Margarethe Raster,” September 26, 1881. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library.
- . “Raster Letter to Mathilde,” October 15, 1871. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library.
- . “Raster Letter to Sister,” October 8, 1873. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library.
- . “Raster Letter to Sister,” November 6, 1873. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library.

Schmidt, C.B. “Raster Letter from Schmidt,” May 27, 1878. Hermann Raster Papers. Chicago History Museum (my translation).

Shackford, Samuel. “Notes on A.C. Hesing,” 1859. Hermann Raster Papers. Chicago History Museum.

Sigel, Franz. “Schneider Letter from Sigel,” May 26, 1871. George Schneider Papers. Chicago History Museum (my translation).

#### Newspaper Articles

- “A. C. HESING DEAD: The Famous German Editor Called Rather Suddenly.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. April 1, 1895.
- “A Sedan for the Knownothings.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 5, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0349](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0349).
- “[A Split Among Workers].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 14, 1874.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1137](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1137).
- “[A Temperance Law].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 20, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0760](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0760).
- “A Word Concerning the Present Movement against the Temperance Fanatics.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 26, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0733](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0733).
- “Achtstunden-Bewegung: Ruhestörungen Auf Der Westseite.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 3, 1867. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Achtundvierziger Und Siebenundsiebziger.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. August 1, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Adresse des Reichstages des Norddeutschen Bundes auf die Thronrede Sr. Majestät des Königs.” *Provincial-Correspondenz*. June 20, 1870.

- “Amerikanische Neutralität.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 21, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Amerikanische ‘Republikaner’ Und Die Illinois Staatszeitung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 11, 1873, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Amerikanische Sympathien.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. August 1, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “An Die Deutschen Frauen Und Jungfrauen Chicagos.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “AN EDITOR ASSAULTED: Mr. Storey, of the ‘Times,’ Attacked On the Street by Male and Female ‘Blondes.’” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* February 25, 1870.
- “An Editorial on Strikes.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 3, 1872.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_0332](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_0332).
- “An Unsere Deutschen Freunde in Cook County.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. October 28, 1873, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “An Unsere Mitbürger!” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 8, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Analysis of Hooker’s Campaign.” *The New York Times*, May 14, 1863, sec. Archives.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/1863/05/14/archives/analysis-of-hookers-campaign.html>.
- “Angebliche Aufforderung an Lincoln Zum Rücktritt Vom Kandidatur.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 6, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Anti-Lincoln Versammlung in Uhlich’s Block.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 28, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Anton C. Hesing.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*. April 1, 1895.
- “Aschenbrödel.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. February 4, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Attempt to Create Dissension Amongst the Germans.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 8, 1873. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0725](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0725).
- “Attention Germans! Forward March! (Editorial),” August 11, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1716](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1716).
- “Augen Auf Bei Der Musterung!” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 8, 1861. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Aus Der 16ten Ward,” January 22, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Belknaps Entlarver.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 3, 1876. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Bezeichnend Für Die Bevorstehende ‘Nationalconvention’ Der Radicalissimi.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 18, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Biographie Des Rebellen Generalissimus Robert E. Lee.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. September 18, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Blumenlese Aus Den in Der Anti-Lincoln Versammlung Gelesenen Reden.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 29, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- Bradley, John J. “The Labor Market--A Warning.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* March 18, 1872.
- “BRENTANO, THE PATRIOT, AT REST.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. September 21, 1891.
- “Bundesmilitär in Der Stadt.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 26, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Burial Rites of Hermann Raster.” *The Washington Post (1877-1922)*. August 14, 1891.
- Butz, Caspar. “Letter from Caspar Butz.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* March 29, 1864.
- . “Raster Letter from Butz,” September 7, 1879. Hermann Raster Papers. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . “Zum neuen Jahre 1862.” *Anzeiger des Westens*. January 1, 1862. Missouri Historical Society (my translation).
- “Can There Be Too Much Wealth? (Editorial).” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 14, 1874. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1136](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1136).
- “Capitulation Lee’s Und Seiner Armee!” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 12, 1865, weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Caspar Butz Als Arbeiter.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 4, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Chicagoer in Der Schweiz.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “CITIZEN SOLDIERS: Organizing the First Regiment of Illinois Militin. THE CONSTITUTION. THE FIRST MEMBERS. MR. STONE.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*; *Chicago, Ill.* August 29, 1874.
- “CITY IN BRIEF.: Personal Items. Difficulty in the Coal Yards. Meteorological. Everything.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*. May 29, 1872.

- “CITY POLITICS: First Rally of the Hesing O’Hara Crowd.” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922); *Chicago, Ill.* October 5, 1873.
- “CITY POLITICS: The Machinery of the Campaign Set in Motion Last Evening. First Revolution of the Wheels of the Opposing Elements.” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922); *Chicago, Ill.* September 4, 1873.
- “CITY POLITICS: Union of the Opponents of the Hesing-C’Hara Saloon Movement. The Republican Central Committee Vote Not to Call a Convention.” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922). October 19, 1873.
- “[Coal Yard Strike].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 28, 1872.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_0156](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_0156).
- “COMMUNISM: The Anti-Fire Ordinance Demonstration Last Evening.” *Chicago Tribune* (1860-1872); *Chicago, Ill.* January 16, 1872.
- “Convention Der Bolters in Cleveland.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 9, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “COUNTY JAIL: Judge Blodgett Sentences the Second Batch. Hesing Gets Two Years and a Fine of \$5,000.” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922). June 25, 1876.
- “CRIME IN CHICAGO: The Committee of Twenty-Five Discuss Its Causes and Endeavor to Find a Remedy. Development of a Strong Feeling in Favor of Closing Saloons on Sunday.” *Chicago Tribune* (1860-1872); *Chicago, Ill.* October 1, 1872.
- “Das Amerikanische Evangelium.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 30, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Das Deutsche Einigungs (Stück-) Werk.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. December 17, 1870. Newberry Library.
- “Das Frohlocken Der Copperhead-Blaetter Ueber Das Gebahren Der Deutschen Separatisten.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 8, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Das Heckerregiment.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 13, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Das Neueste Vom Schnapps-kriege - Deputy Collector Root Zur Disposition Gestellt Und Verhaftet.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. February 29, 1876. Newberry Library, (my translation).
- “Das Pittsburger Blutbad.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 23, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Das Siegende Ticket! - Die Volkspartei in Convention.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. October 28, 1873, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).



- “Death of Herman Raster.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. July 26, 1891.
- “Den Aufocetroierten Minoritäts-Arbeiter Caspar Butz Betreffend.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 7, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Arbeiteraufuhr.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 24, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Chicago Arbeiter Verein Und Die Illinois Staats-Zeitung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 6, 1867. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Erste Paragraph Der Feuergrenz-Ordinanz.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 19, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Freiheitsmartyrer Abraham Lincoln.” *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*. April 16, 1865. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Fünfte Stand [“faulenzner”].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 27, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Postverkehr Mit Deutschland.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 26, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Sieg Der Volkspartei.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 11, 1873, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Staat.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. August 8, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Starke Wille Des Volkes.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 16, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Strike Der Eisenbahnarbeiter.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 24, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Der Unfug in St. Louis.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 27, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Despicable Revenge.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 7, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_1106](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_1106).
- “Detaillierte Beschreibung Der Großen Schlachten Bei Chancellorsville Am 2. Und 3. Mai.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 8, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Deutsche Freunde in Cook County!” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 4, 1873, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Deutsche Heraus!” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 15, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Deutscher Hilfsverein.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. October 24, 1871, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Deutschland.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 28, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Deutschland Nach Dem 2ten September.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. September 26, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Deutschland Und Bayern.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. December 30, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- Dickey, T. Lyle. “Judge Dickey’s Letters: His Reasons for Signing the Petitions for Pardon.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. September 24, 1876.
- “Die Amerikanische Presse Über Den Krieg.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 26, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Andere Seite.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 23, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Arbeiter Und Die Strolche.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 26, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Arbeiter-Massenversammlung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 24, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Baltimore Platform.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 9, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Bedeutung Des Kampfes.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Beiträge Für Die Verwundeten Und Die Waisen Im Kriege.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 28, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Bemerkungen Der Chicago Tribune Über Die Angebliche Feigheit Der Deutschen Unter Hooker.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 8, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Charakteristik Des Exgeneral McKinstry, Eines Matadors Der Clevelander Convention.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 1, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Chicago Times Und Die Verteidigung Des Meuchelmordes.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 26, 1865. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Chicago Tribune Über Die Brüderschaft Zwischen Der Chicago Times Und Dem Telegraph.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 2, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Chicagoer Volks-Bewegung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. October 14, 1873, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Die Clevelander Plattform - Ein Reaktionäres Pfschwerk.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 4, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Clevelander Und Ihre Ämter.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 2, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Collyer-Hesing’sche Correspondenz.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 23, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Deutsch-Amerikaner Und Der Krieg.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 22, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Deutsche Division in Der Acht-Stunden Prozession.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 3, 1867. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Deutsche Presse Hüben Und Drüben.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 28, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Deutschen Farmer Und Abraham Lincoln.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 28, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Deutschen in Missouri.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 4, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Drei Schreckenstage.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 28, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Einwanderung Aus Deutschland in Der Jetzigen Krisis.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 11, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Eisenbahnen,” July 25, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Ergänzung Der Regimenten.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 18, 1861. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Feuer Verordnung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 19, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Feuergrenzen.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 10, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Feuergrenzen - Demonstration Angekuendigt.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 15, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Feuergrenzen-Ordinanzsitzung Des Stadtraths.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 18, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Gestrige Wahl - Grosser Unions Sieg.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 9, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Die Glänzenden Fortschritte Der Lincoln Bewegung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 1, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Große Demonstration.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 18, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Helden Nach Der Schlacht.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 31, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Hessen Und Die Irländer.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 26, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Heutige Massenversammlung in Der Turnhalle - Gegen Den Waffenschacher.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 19, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Hunde Und Der Mond.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. September 24, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Katholiken Und Der Krieg.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 27, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Leichenfeier Des Präsidenten Lincoln (in Chicago).” *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*. April 30, 1865. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Mulattin.” *Chciago Sonntags-Zeitung*. May 11, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Newyorker Abendzeitung Ueber Die Seperatistischen Krakeeler Und Ueber Ihre Angriffe Auf Die Herausgeber Der Illinois Staats-Zeitung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 19, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Radikalen in Missouri / Radikale Stimmen Zu Gunsten Der Wieder-Erwaehlung Lincoln.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 28, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Radikalen Missouris Und Abraham Lincoln.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 12, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Streiker.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 21, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Streiker.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 23, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Turngemeinde.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 27, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Turnhalle Und Die ‘Demokratische’ National Convention.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 18, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Unterdrückung Der Chicago Times.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 4, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Die Unterstützung Und Die Deutschen.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. October 24, 1871, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Vereinigten Staaten Und Deutschland.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 14, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Vorgänge von Montag Abend.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 17, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Wacht an Der Spree.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. February 27, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Die Waffenlieferungen an Frankreich.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 28, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Durch Nacht Zum Licht.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 9, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Ed. Salomon, Carl Schurz.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “(Editorial),” September 4. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1715](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1715).
- “Ein Prophet [Gen. Sherman].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 27, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Ein Wort an Die Arbeiter.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 8, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Eine Massenversammlung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 13, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Eine Ohrfeige Fuer Die Chicago Times.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 29, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Einwanderung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 23, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “ELECTIONS: The Hesing-O’Hara Ticket Carries the Day. The Average Majority About 12,000. H. D. Colvin Elected Mayor and Daniel O’Hara Treasurer of Chicago.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*; *Chicago, Ill.* November 5, 1873.
- “Encouragement for the Chicago German Movement.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 21, 1873. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1719](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1719).
- “Fahnen Überreichung an Das Hecker Jäger Regiment.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 19, 1861. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “FEVER: Fearful Protraction of the Present Terrible Crisis.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. July 24, 1877.

- “Fight between Irish and German’s.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 17, 1872.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_1116](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_1116).
- “Frankreich’s Niedergang, Deutschland’s Aufgang.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. December 13, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Friede & Freiheit.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. February 1, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Friedensfeste.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 4, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Friedrich Kapp Über Die Auswanderung, Zur Friedens-Feier.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 6, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “(From a Reporter’s Article Describing the Progress of the Reconstruction of the North Side.)” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 7, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_1\\_0287](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_1_0287).
- “FROM THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.” *The New York Times*, May 5, 1863, sec. Archives. <https://www.nytimes.com/1863/05/05/archives/from-the-army-of-the-potomac-details-of-the-important-operations-to.html>.
- “Fuenfzig Tage.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. December 5, 1871, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Für Militärflichtige.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. August 2, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Furcht? Keine Spur Davon.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 9, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Gebt Einen Tag Eurem Lande.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. November 8, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “General Fremont Und Der Cincinnati Volksfreund.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 17, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “General Order No. 20.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 2, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0729](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0729).
- “General Ordre Nro. 95 Des Gerenal Burnside. Milde Gegen Die Verführten, Strenge Gegen Die Verführer.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 5, 1863. Newberry Library, (my translation).
- “General Schurz Durch General Howard Selbst Vertheidigt.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 13, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “GERMAN REJOICING: Celebration of the Return of Peace to Europe. Eloquent Speeches by Eminent Orators---Contributions of Money.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* February 3, 1871.
- “Go to the Polls.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* November 7, 1871.
- “Grand Jury.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 17, 1876. Newberry Library (my translation).
- Greenebaum, Henry. “Open Letter to the Committee of Twenty-Five,” October 28, 1872. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1418](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1418).
- “Grosse Massenversammlung in Der Turnhalle Der Nordseite.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. February 3, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Harvey Hoisted: The People Did Not Vote In Vain For A Mayor At The Last Election.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. May 9, 1876.
- “HERMAN RASTER’S BODY RECEIVED: Arrangements for Funeral Services in New York Today.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. August 11, 1891.
- “Herr Fremonts Bedingte Annahme Der Kandidatur.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 7, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “HESING: A Large Meeting of His German Friends.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*. June 28, 1876. <http://search.proquest.com/hnpchicagotribune/docview/171646650/928C623C7A2F4287PQ/1?accountid=12163>.
- Hesing, Anton C. “Die Feuer-Verordnung Und Herr A.C. Hesing.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 18, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . “Ein Liebesgaben-Transport Nach Verssailles.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. December 7, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . “Ein Liebesgaben-Transport Nach Verssailles (Schluss).” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. December 8, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . “MR. A. C. HESING: He Makes an Explanation.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* January 18, 1872.
- . “[The Great Fire].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 9, 1871. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0697](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0697).
- “HONOR HERMAN RASTER: IMPRESSIVE CEREMONIES AT THE GERMAN CLUB IN HOBOKEN.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. August 12, 1891.
- “How We Brought It On.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* November 1, 1871.
- “Hülfe von Deutschland.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. October 24, 1871, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Hunger Loehne.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 24, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Illinois Staats-Zeitung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 25, 1891. Newberry Library Foreign Language Press Survey.
- “Illinois Staats-Zeitung to Resume.” *New York Times*. 1918.
- “In Baltimore Fliesst Das Erste Blut.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 21, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Inspired Meeting in the 17th Ward.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 15, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0727](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0727).
- “Interessante Politische Bewegungen in New York.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. March 23, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Irish! Irish! Irish!” *The Daily Chicago Times*, February 26, 1855.
- “Irländer vs. Neger.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 15, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “IT IS HERE: General Strike Among the Chicago Railroad Operatives. Where It Began, and How Carried from Place to Place.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*; *Chicago, Ill.* July 25, 1877.
- “Kaiser Lehmann.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 23, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Kaiser Und Schirmherr.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. February 10, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Kapitulation von Paris.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 31, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Korrespondenz Aus Stuttgart.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 1, 1861. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Krieg.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 24, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “LOCAL POLITICS: The Preparations of the Helsing Crowd for Repeating, The Names of the Leaders and Field of Operations.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. November 2, 1873.
- “LORENZ BRENTANO DEAD: ONE OF CHICAGO’S GERMAN-AMERICAN CITIZENS PASSES AWAY.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. September 18, 1891.
- “Lorenz Brentano Died.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. September 18, 1891. Newberry Library Foreign Language Press Survey.



- “Massen Versammlung Der Deutschen Unionsleute in Der Neuen Turnhalle.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. September 5, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Massenversammlung Wegen Annulierung Des General Ordres.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 8, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Mittel Und Zweck.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 24, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Mosel Und Rhein.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 23, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Musterhaftes Chicago.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 24, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Nach Der Schlacht.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 30, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Neu-Chicago.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. October 24, 1871, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “No Headline.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 9, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_1110](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_1110).
- “OBITUARY - Hermann Raster.” *New York Times*. July 26, 1891.  
<http://search.proquest.com/hnpchicagotribune/docview/94872047/F9824AEF89114A86PQ/3?accountid=12163>.
- O.H. Jäger. “Vater Jahn.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 4, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “[Our Newspaper And the Great Fire].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. Accessed February 6, 2020. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_8\\_0639](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_8_0639).
- “Plain Words with Strikers.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922); Chicago, Ill.* July 27, 1877.
- “Platform Und Statuten Des Neuen Turnerbunds.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. April 19, 1865, weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “[Political Matters],” November 6, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0043](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0043).
- “[Political Matters].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 16, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_1721](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_1721).
- “Prämien Für Deutsche Soldaten.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 22, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Präsident Andreas Jackson.” *Chciago Sonntags-Zeitung*. August 5, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Priester Und Laie.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 23, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- Raster, Hermann. “(After the Destruction of Chicago No 3 Printed in the Office of the ‘Herold’ in Milwaukee).” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 13, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1140](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1140).
- . “Aus Raster’s New Yorker Zeit, II.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. September 14, 1891. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . “[Our Losses Caused by the Fire].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 12, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_8\\_0644](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_8_0644).
- . “Patriotismus.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 4, 1889. Newberry Library (my translation).
- . “[The Great Fire].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 13, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1142](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1142).
- . “[The Great Fire].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 14, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1135](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1135).
- . “[The Great Fire].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 18, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1129](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1129).
- . “WHISKY: Reproduction of a Letter by Mr. Hermann Raster to the Chicago ‘Times.’” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. January 10, 1876.
- “Reactionäre Begriffs-Verwirrung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 11, 1861. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Rebellen Panique in South Carolina.” *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*. March 15, 1865. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Rede Und Pressefreiheit Wie Sie in Der Constitution Garantiert Sind.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 5, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Republik Und Stehende Heere.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 27, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Revue.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 18, 1861. Newberry Library, (my translation).
- “Richmond, - Paris.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 31, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “RIOTOUS STRIKERS: Alarming Disorder Prevailing at Martinsburg, W. Va. Great Strike of the Firemen and Brakemen of the Baltimore & Ohio.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*; *Chicago, Ill.* July 18, 1877.
- “Schamloser Know=Nothingismus Gegen Die Deutschen Aertzte in Der Armee.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 20, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Schmerz Und Lincolns Ermordung.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 10, 1865. Newberry Library (my translation).
- Schröder, Dr. H. “Obstbau Und Temperenz.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 9, 1872, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Siding with the French.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*. July 22, 1870.
- “SIR FRANCIS PLUNKETT DEAD: He Was Secretary of British Legation at Washington 1876-77.” *The Washington Post (1877-1922)*. March 2, 1907.
- “Staaten-Souverainitaet,” July 25, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Stein Und Holz.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 16, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Sunday Drunkenness Again.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1847-1858)*; *Chicago, Ill.* June 24, 1854.
- “[Teachers of German Dismissed].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 31, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0942](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0942).
- “TEMPERANCE.: Meetings in the North and South Divisions. Temperance Addresses by Leading Clergymen.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. October 25, 1872.
- “Temperenzbestrebungen.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 9, 1872, Weekly edition. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “The Bricklayers’ Strike.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 8, 1872.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_3\\_1\\_0328](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_3_1_0328).
- “THE BRICKLAYERS STRIKE.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*; *Chicago, Ill.* October 8, 1872.
- “[The Chicago Fire and Prevention of Its Recurrence].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, January 29, 1872. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0645](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0645).
- “The Chicago Times Establishment Taken Possession of by the Military Authorities-- Meeting of Its Friends in the Evening.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*. June 4, 1863.
- “The Duty of Foreign-Born Citizens--Letter from the Rev. Robert Collyer to Mr. A.C.Hesing.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* January 19, 1872.
- “THE EUROPEAN WAR: How the Great Struggle Is Regarded in This City. The German Confident of Prussia’s Success---Committee Meeting. Despatch from ‘Billy’ Rex, King of Prussia. AMONG THE GERMANS IN THE COUNTRY.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*. July 19, 1870.
- “The Fight against the Puritans and the Knownothings.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 26, 1873. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0726](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0726).

- “The Fight against the Sunday Tyranny.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 28, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0731](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0731).
- “[The Fire Limits Problem].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 14, 1872.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0642](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0642).
- “[The Fire-Proof Ticket].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 8, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0700](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0700).
- “THE FIRST GUN: Inauguration of the Local Political Campaign. Meeting of the Germans of the Seventeenth Ward. A. C. Hesing and ‘Buffalo’ Miller Aunounce Their Departure from the Republican Party.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*; *Chicago, Ill.* May 15, 1873.
- “The German American Central Association of Chicago.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, May 31, 1873. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0354](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0354).
- “The German Society and the Immigrants.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, August 16, 1872.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_11\\_0643](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_11_0643).
- “The German-American Central Association.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, June 26, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0633](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0633).
- “[The Great Fire].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 1, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1121](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1121).
- “[The Great Fire].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 7, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0701](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0701).
- “The Hesings: That \$40,000 Loan. an Interview with Mr. Rehm.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. March 16, 1876.
- “The Hon. Thomas Hoyne for Mayor.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. April 13, 1876.
- “The Illinois Staats Zeitung Publishes the List of Candidates on Whom Both Parties Have Agreed, and Comments.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, October 31, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0045](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0045).
- “The Irish and the War in Europe.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*. July 28, 1870.
- “The Know Nothings of the Police.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, July 16, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_4\\_0936](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_4_0936).
- “THE LABOR DEMONSTRATION: Of Capitalists and Contractors Concerning the 15th of May Trades-Union Exhibition.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*; *Chicago, Ill.* May 4, 1872.

- “THE NEW FIRE ORDINANCE.: The Omitted Enforcing Clause--Penalty of Violating the Provisions of the Ordinance.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872); Chicago, Ill.* February 14, 1872.
- “The Relief Work.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, November 30, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_9\\_1115](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_9_1115).
- “[The Salonkeepers’ Meeting].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 21, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_6\\_1442](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_6_1442).
- “The Seventeenth Section of the Liquor Law.” *The Daily Chicago Times*, May 1, 1855.
- “THE SONS OF TOIL: Labor Demonstration in the Streets of Chicago Yesterday.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872); Chicago, Ill.* May 16, 1872.
- “The Staats Zeitung, Its History and New Building.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 8, 1873. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_8\\_0625](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_8_0625).
- “[The Sunday Law].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, February 15, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0736](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0736).
- “The Sunday Question (Mailed In).” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, April 26, 1873.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0734](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0734).
- “[The Temperance Question].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, December 22, 1871.  
[https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_2\\_1\\_0758](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_2_1_0758).
- “The War in Virginia.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872); Chicago, Ill.* May 6, 1863.
- “THIS IS INTEMPERANCE: Organization of the Chicago Wirtschaft Verein. A Constitution and By-Laws Adopted---"No Irish Need Apply".” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922); Chicago, Ill.* April 25, 1873.
- “To the Committee of Seventy.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922); Chicago, Ill.* October 9, 1873.
- “Trauer-Versammlung Deutscher Bürger in Der Turnhalle in Nord-Clarkstraße.” *Chicago Sonntags-Zeitung*. April 16, 1865. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “True Cause of the French War.” *Chicago Tribune (1860-1872)*. July 25, 1870.
- “Über General Howard, Den Kommandeur Des. 11. Corps.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. August 5, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Uneinigkeit Unter Den Deutschen Und Deutschen Radikalissimis Bezüglich Cleveland.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 25, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Unschuldige Zuschauer.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 27, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).

- “Verbot Der Wiedereinfuehrung Der Sklaverei.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 6, 1864. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Vermischtes [Hilfsvereine in Mehreren US Staaten Fuer Deutschland].” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 28, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Verschiedenes.” *Vossische Zeitung*. July 26, 1891. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (my translation).
- Vick, Brian E. *Defining Germany : The 1848 Frankfurt Parliamentarians and National Identity*. Harvard Historical Studies ; v. 143. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002.
- “Vom Kriegschauplatz.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 23, 1877. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Vor Der Schlacht.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 29, 1870. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Wedding Announcements.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. September 26, 1886.
- “Wer Sagt Die Wahrheit? Ein Beitrag Zur Geschichte Des Widerrufs Der Burnside’schen Ordre.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. June 6, 1863. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Whisky: Text of the Pardon Granted to Hesing Et Al.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*. September 25, 1876.
- “WHISKY: Messrs. Rehm and Hesing Appear and Plead Guilty.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*; *Chicago, Ill.* March 18, 1876.
- “Wilbur F. Storey Als Mordbrenner.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 19, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Wilhelm Rapp.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 30, 1872. Newberry Library (my translation).
- “Wilhelm Rapp (Husband of Mdme. Schumann Heink).” *Abendpost*. March 1, 1907. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_11\\_1500](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_11_1500).
- “William Vocke Dead.” *Abendpost*. May 14, 1907. [https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474\\_11\\_1500](https://flps.newberry.org/article/5418474_11_1500).
- “Wohin?,” July 25, 1877. Newberry Library, (my translation).
- “Yesterday’s Proletarian Riot.” *Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922)*; *Chicago, Ill.* May 9, 1876.
- “Zahlen Beweisen.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. July 8, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).

“Zur Ehre Des Deutschtums - Deutsch-Amerikanischer City Collector Legt Amt Nieder.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. May 21, 1862. Newberry Library (my translation).

“Zur Feier Der Einnahme von Paris.” *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. January 28, 1871. Newberry Library (my translation).

### **Secondary Literature**

Allen, Robert C, and Alan Trachtenberg. *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991.

Anbinder, Tyler, Cormac Ó Gráda, and Simone A. Wegge. “Networks and Opportunities: A Digital History of Ireland’s Great Famine Refugees in New York.” *The American Historical Review* 124, no. 5 (2019): 1591–1629. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhz1023>.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London; New York: Verso, 2006.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Public Worlds ; v. 1. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Arenson, Adam. *The Great Heart of the Republic: St. Louis and the Cultural Civil War*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Arndt, Karl John Richard, and May E Olson. *The German Language Press of the Americas = Die Deutschsprachige Presse Der Amerikas*. München: Verlag Dokumentation, 1976.

Bales, Richard F. *The Great Chicago Fire and the Myth of Mrs. O’Leary’s Cow*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013. <https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=219813>.

Binder-Johnson, Hildegard. “Adjustment to the United States.” In *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker, 43–78. New York, Russell & Russell, 1967.

Bodnar, John E. *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.

Brubaker, Rogers, and Frederick Cooper. “Beyond ‘Identity.’” *Theory and Society* 29, no. 1 (2000): 1–47. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1007068714468>.

“Butz, Caspar – Lexikon Westfälischer Autorinnen und Autoren – 1750-1950.” Accessed June 24, 2020. <https://www.lexikon-westfaelischer-autorinnen-und-autoren.de/autoren/butz-caspar/>.

Conolly-Smith, Peter. *Translating America: An Immigrant Press Visualizes American Popular Culture, 1895-1918*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2004.

- Dobert, Eitel W. "The Radicals." In *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker, 157–81. New York, Russell & Russell, 1967.
- Douglas, George H. *The Golden Age of the Newspaper*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999.
- Düding, Dieter. *Organisierter gesellschaftlicher Nationalismus in Deutschland (1808-1847): Bedeutung und Funktion der Turner- und Sängervereine für die deutsche Nationalbewegung*. München: R. Oldenbourg, 1984.
- Efford, Alison Clark. *German Immigrants, Race, and Citizenship in the Civil War Era*. Publications of the German Historical Institute. Washington, DC: German Historical Institute ; Cambridge, 2013.
- Fivush, Robyn, Tilmann Habermas, Theodore E.A. Waters, and Widaad Zaman. "The Making of Autobiographical Memory: Intersections of Culture, Narratives and Identity." *International Journal of Psychology* 46, no. 5 (October 2011): 321–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207594.2011.596541>.
- Freitag, Sabine. *Friedrich Hecker: Biographie eines Republikaners*. Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998.
- . *Friedrich Hecker: Two Lives for Liberty*. St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006.
- Friedrich, Carl J. "The European Background." In *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker, 3–26. New York, Russell & Russell, 1967.
- Geitz, Henry and Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies (University of Wisconsin--Madison). *The German-American Press*. Madison, Wis.: Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1992.
- Görtemaker, Manfred. *Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert: Entwicklungslinien*. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1996.
- Green, James R. *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement, and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2006.
- Hawgood, John A. *The Tragedy of German-America*. New York: Arno Press, 1970.
- Hockerts, Hans Günter. *Neue deutsche Biographie* 21, 21,. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2003.
- Hodes, Martha Elizabeth. *Mourning Lincoln*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.
- Hofmeister, Rudolf. *The Germans of Chicago*. Champaign, Ill.: Stipes Pub. Co., 1976.



- Honeck, Mischa. *We Are the Revolutionists : German-Speaking Immigrants & American Abolitionists after 1848*. Race in the Atlantic World, 1700-1900. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011.
- Horsman, Reginald. *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*. Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Huntzicker, William. *The Popular Press, 1833-1865*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999.
- James, Edmund Janes, and Milo J. Loveless. *A Bibliography of Newspapers Published in Illinois Prior to 1860*. Springfield, Ill. : Phillips Bros., State Printers, 1899. <http://archive.org/details/bibliographyofne00jame>.
- Janssen, Theodor. *Geschichte der Chicago Turn-Gemeinde: Aus mündlichen Ueberlieferungen und Vereinsdokumenten zusammengestellt*. Chicago: Max Stern & Co., 1897. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.31951002377815q>.
- Jentz, John. "The 48ers and the German Labor Movement in Chicago." In *The German-American Radical Press*, edited by Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James P. Danky, 49–61, 1992.
- Jentz, John B. *Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction*. University of Illinois Press, 2012.
- Jordan-Bychkov, Terry G. *German Seed in Texas Soil; Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth-Century Texas*. University of Texas Press, 1966.
- Junger, Richard. *Becoming the Second City: Chicago's Mass News Media, 1833-1898*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=3413852>.
- Kamphoefner, Walter D. "German and Irish Big City Mayors: Comparative Perspective on Ethnic Politics." In *German-American Immigration and Ethnicity in Comparative Perspective*, by Wolfgang Johannes Helbich and Walter D. Kamphoefner, 221–42. Madison, WI: Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, University of Wisconsin, 2004.
- Karamanski, Theodore J. *Rally 'Round the Flag: Chicago and the Civil War*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006.
- Keil, Hartmut. "A Profile of Editors of the German-American Radical Press, 1850-1910." In *The German-American Radical Press*, edited by Elliott Shore, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James P. Danky, 15–30, 1992.
- Keil, Hartmut, John B. Jentz, and Chicago Project. *German Workers in Chicago : A Documentary History of Working-Class Culture from 1850 to World War I*. The Working Class in American History. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988.

- Keller, Christian B. *Chancellorsville and the Germans: Nativism, Ethnicity, and Civil War Memory*. US, UNITED STATES: Fordham University Press, 2007.  
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=3239437>.
- Kellner, Gottlieb. "Eine Rede G. Kellner's." *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. August 2, 1870.  
 Newberry Library, (my translation).
- Lenhard-Schramm, Niklas. *Konstrukteure der Nation Geschichtswissenschaftler als politische Akteure in Vormärz und Revolution 1848/49*. Münster, Westf: Waxmann, 2014.
- Levine, Bruce C. *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992.
- Lewinnek, Elaine. "Domestic and Respectable": *Property-Owner Politics after the Great Chicago Fire. The Working Man's Reward*. Oxford University Press.  
 Accessed March 2, 2021.  
<https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199769223.001.0001/acprof-9780199769223-chapter-2>.
- Lindberg, Richard C., and John Miya. *The Gambler King of Clark Street: Michael C. McDonald and the Rise of Chicago's Democratic Machine*. Carbondale, UNITED STATES: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009.  
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=1354599>.
- Lonn, Ella. "The Forty-Eighters in The Civil War Era." In *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker, 183–220.  
 New York, Russell & Russell, 1967.
- Lopez, Sarah Lynn. *The Remittance House: Dream Homes at a Distance. The Remittance Landscape*. University of Chicago Press. Accessed September 29, 2020. <https://chicago-universitypressscholarship-com.flagship.luc.edu/view/10.7208/chicago/9780226202952.001.0001/upso-9780226105130-chapter-2>.
- Mark. Wyman. *Round-Trip to America : The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993.
- Mitchell, Nancy. *The Danger of Dreams: German and American Imperialism in Latin America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Moltmann, Günter. *Deutsche Amerikaauswanderung im 19. Jahrhundert: sozialgeschichtl. Beitr.* Stuttgart: Metzler, 1976.
- Nadel, Stanley. *Little Germany : Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845-80*. Urbana : University of Illinois Press, 1990.  
<http://archive.org/details/littlegermanyeth000nade>.

- Nagel, Daniel. *Von republikanischen Deutschen zu deutsch-amerikanischen Republikanern: ein Beitrag zum Identitätswandel der deutschen Achtundvierziger in den Vereinigten Staaten 1850-1861*. St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2012.
- Olden, Peter H. "Anton C. Hesing: The Rise of a Chicago Boss." *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984)* 35, no. 3 (1942): 260–87.
- Piepkke, Susan L. *Mathilde Franziska Anneke (1817-1884): The Works and Life of a German-American Activist Including English Translations of "Woman in Conflict with Society" and "Broken Chains"*. New York: Peter Lang, 2006.
- Pierce, Bessie Louise. *A History of Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- . *History of Chicago, Volume III: The Rise of a Modern City, 1871-1893*. University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Prahl, Augustus. "The Turner." In *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker, 79–110. New York, Russell & Russell, 1967.
- Pula, James. *Under the Crescent Moon with the XI Corps in the Civil War. Volume 1: From the Defenses of Washington to Chancellorsville, 1862-1863*. Havertown: Savas Beatie, 2017.  
<https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=576041>.
- Randers-Pehrson, Justine Davis. *Germans and the Revolution of 1848-1849*. New German-American Studies ; Vol. 18. New York: PLang, 1999.
- Ripley, La Vern J. *The German-Americans*. The Immigrant Heritage of America. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976.
- Ryan, Mary P. *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century*. Reprint 2019. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997. <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520922082>.
- . "The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order." In *The New Cultural History: Essays*, by Lynn Hunt, Vol. 6. Studies on the History of Society and Culture. University of California Press, 1989.
- Sawislak, Karen. *Smoldering City: Chicagoans and the Great Fire, 1871-1874*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Schmidt, Klaus. *Mathilde Franziska und Fritz Anneke: eine Biographie ; aus der Pionierzeit von Demokratie und Frauenbewegung*. Köln: Schmidt von Schwind, 2000.

- Shore, Elliott, Ken Fones-Wolf, and James Philip Danky. *The German-American Radical Press: The Shaping of a Left Political Culture, 1850-1940*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992.
- Smith, Carl. *Chicago's Great Fire: The Destruction and Resurrection of an Iconic American City*. Newburyport, UNITED STATES: Grove Atlantic, 2020. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=6184525>.
- Stowell, David O. "Small Property Holders and the Great Strike of 1877: Railroads, City Streets, and the Middle Classes." *Journal of Urban History* 21, no. 6 (1995): 741–63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009614429502100603>.
- Straub, Jürgen. "Personale und kollektive Identität. Zur Analyse eines theoretischen Begriffs." In *Identitäten*, edited by Aleida Assmann and Heidrun Frieze, 73–104. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999.
- Tatlock, Lynne, and Matt Erlin. *German Culture in Nineteenth-Century America: Reception, Adaptation, Transformation*. Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture (Unnumbered). Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005.
- Thompson, Laurence S., and Frank X. Braun. "The Forty-Eighters in Politics." In *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, by Adolf Eduard Zucker, 111–56. New York, Russell & Russell, 1967.
- Tiemann, Conrad. *Der elektrische Telegraph - Leicht verständliche Abhandlung über das gesammte technische Telegraphenwesen - Mit 116 Holzschnitten*. Berlin: Wilhelm Baensch Verlagshandlung, 1882.
- Tóth, Heléna. *An Exiled Generation: German and Hungarian Refugees of Revolution, 1848-1871*, 2014.
- Wandel, Joseph. *The German Dimension of American History*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1979.
- Wehler, Hans-Ulrich and C.H. Beck Verlag. *Nationalismus: Geschichte, Formen, Folgen*, 2019.
- Wetzel, David. *A Duel of Giants: Bismarck, Napoleon III, and the Origins of the Franco-Prussian War*. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.
- White, Richard. *The Republic for Which It Stands: The United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896*, 2017.
- White, Ronald C. *American Ulysses: A Life of Ulysses S. Grant*. First edition. New York: Random House, 2016.
- Wittke, Carl Frederick. *The German-Language Press in America*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957.

Wittke, Carl Friedrich. *Refugees of Revolution; the German Forty-Eighters in America*. Westport, Conn, Greenwood Press, 1970.

Woellert, Dann. *Cincinnati Turner Societies:: The Cradle of an American Movement*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012.

Zucker, Adolf Eduard. *The Forty-Eighters; Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*. New York, Russell & Russell, 1967.

## VITA

Dr. Sebastian Wuepper was born in Frankfurt am Main in Germany. He grew up in southern Hesse and in Berlin. Before attending Loyola University Chicago, he attended the Freie Universität Berlin, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in North American Studies with a minor in History in 2014.

While at Loyola, Dr. Wuepper has pursued his research interest in German-American history, Native American history and Public History while serving as a Teaching Assistant, Teacher of Record, Research Assistant and Administrative Assistant, both in the History Department and the Center for Textual Studies and Digital Humanities.