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**Friedrich Ludwig Jahn:
Some Sources Anticipating and Informing His Views:
From *Menschheit* to *Deutschheit***

Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) was regarded by Turnverein organizations established in the United States in the late 1840s and early 1850s in the aftermath of the German Revolution of 1848 as their founder and ideal figure—their beloved and idolized “Turnvater Jahn.” Jahn’s impact and influence among the American Turners is exemplified by the monumental Jahn Memorial in Forest Park (St. Louis, Missouri) with an oversize bust of Jahn framed by a male and a female athlete. The monument was sculpted by Robert Cauer and paid for and installed by the North American Turner Bund in 1913 near the site of the German pavilion during the 1904 World’s Fair. In 1913, there were 12 Turnvereins located in St. Louis alone. The monument was restored and rededicated by the American Turners in 1972, and again in 1989 by the American Turners.

Jahn, a Prussian gymnastics educator and patriot, concerned with what he saw as the humiliation of his native land by Napoleon, conceived the idea of restoring the spirits of his countrymen by the development of their physical and moral powers through the practice of gymnastics and founded the first *Turnverein* to that end—a sound mind in a sound body. The first *Turnplatz*, or open-air exercise field, was established by Jahn in Berlin in 1811, and the *Turnverein* (gymnastics association) movement spread rapidly. Young gymnasts were taught to regard themselves as members of a kind of paramilitary organization for the emancipation of the German states. Some of these early Turners participated militarily in the struggle to overthrow the French domination of Prussia and the other German states in the battles of 1813.

Their patriotic spirit was nourished in no small degree by the writings and thoughts of Jahn who desired a united Germany, a constitutional system and personal freedoms, such as the right to free speech. Ultimately though, the authorities in Prussia viewed Jahn's political ideas with suspicion and he was arrested in 1819 and the *Turnplatz* in Berlin closed. By 1820 the Turnverein movement was in essence banned throughout the German states. Jahn was kept essentially in house arrest until his death in 1852. But in the years following 1840, there was a rehabilitation for the Turner movement and many then came to the fore in the "liberal" Revolution of 1848.

These "liberal" ideas were carried over to the New World by the exiles of the 1848 Revolution, but over the long term the Turner movement in Germany itself would take on a more nationalistic and even reactionary character than was the case in German-America. The following essay exposes and seeks to explain this variant in terms of the personal development of Jahn and his immediate followers in Germany.

In a letter of early 1810 addressed to a friend of his Jena years with whom he corresponded on and off throughout most of his life, Jahn observed:

We all are still the same, but deeper and more serious, and we rejuvenate ourselves in the young ones who learn from us how to love and hate. Our highest earthly good is *Volk* and fatherland, everything sublime and sacred resounds in this name Now, indeed, our youth has not been spent in vain; it has become the cradle of our manhood's deeds. The old feelings are still alive, *we still seek the ancient goal, yet no longer in Menschheit, but in Deutschheit*. This apparent limitation really is an enhancement. The merely human is common to all friendships, and the Freemasons' fraternity dissolves itself in such dissipation. Folkways [*Volkstum*] bring about the genuine and just unity on this earth. Upon that we build and in that we trust, as the confederates of the Rütli Oath.

. . . Respond posthaste, or else I deem you lost for myself, for intimate old friends, for honorable men, for *Volk* and fatherland.¹

This letter of the year that also witnessed the publication of Jahn's magnum opus, *Deutsches Volkstum*, heralds the change of disposition that resulted in the gradual deterioration of Jahn's reputation and will be the subject of this essay.²

Jahn's shift, from an initial appreciation of the commonalities of humankind to an ever sharper accentuation of national distinctiveness, must be seen in the context not only of the disastrous political and military convulsions of the revolutionary decades, but also of the larger intellectual

and cultural transition from the Enlightenment to Romanticism and the *Biedermeier* period. Jahn's lifespan from 1778 to 1852 encompasses this transition and the question arises what affect the periodically widespread popularity of his views, and of the Turner Movement he created, may have had on it. A review of his reception by contemporaries and posterity will be accompanied by an assessment of his place in the arousal of German nationalism. An examination of some of the sources of his views, with particular emphasis on Johann Gottfried Herder, will be placed in the context of selected writings by Jahn. A concluding look at Wilhelm Friedrich von Meyern's *Dya-Na-Sore* may throw some light on the singularity of Jahn's impact as well as on his tragic descent.

For an historian not specializing in Jahn studies but interested in the impact Johann Gottfried Herder may have had on him, Dieter Düding's thorough monograph of the year 1984, *Organisierter gesellschaftlicher Nationalismus in Deutschland (1808-1848)*, is an absolutely essential source.³ Given the widely varying assessments of Jahn's views and accomplishments by his contemporaries and posterity, Düding's comprehensive and commendable account serves as a useful counterweight to the sometimes acerbic and denunciatory criticisms. On the other hand, some of the negative assessments must be mentioned here to give a fully rounded presentation.

Carl Euler, Jahn's faithful biographer and the editor of his *Werke*, summed up the tenor of the Jahn reception in his "Introduction" to the first volume. After pointing out the wide diversity of views offered by admirers and critics and urging his readers to keep in mind the conditions of the time and the limitations of Jahn's education, Euler lists the names of some academic admirers, such as "the philologists Thiersch, Franz Passow, Götting, the author of *Geschichte der Pädagogik*, Karl von Raumer, the historian H. Luden, and even Steffens, who speak of him with the highest acknowledgment." But, Euler continues, ". . . on the other side there stand indeed the extremely detractive judgments by men such as Immermann, Gervinus, Julian Schmidt and, most recently by the historian Heinrich von Treitschke, who in my view have gone far beyond bounds."⁴

Dieter Düding also vigorously objects to the negative assessments of Jahn offered by Gervinus and Treitschke, attributing to them the long neglect of the Turner movement by professional historians in Germany.⁵ The fact that both Gervinus (1805-71) and von Treitschke (1834-96) intensely and elaborately criticized the early Turner movement and Jahn himself should give modern commentators pause for thought. It must be kept in mind that Gervinus's criticism was written in 1855, whereas von Treitschke's five volumes were published between 1880 and 1896. Gervinus wrote at a time when the effects of the second *Turnsperr*e were still severely impeding the

Turner movement, while by 1880 Treitschke's dream of a united Germany under Prussian leadership had come true and the Turner movement was thriving, Treitschke's own transformation is clearly demonstrated by the fact that, in August of 1863, he was the featured speaker on the last day of the Third German *Turnfest* in Leipzig, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the *Völkerschlacht*, while by 1880 he had become the movement's most severe critic.⁶

For Gervinus, Jahn was a man who selfishly stirred up young people to a state of aimless discontent and provocative-arrogant ridicule of all humanity and human affairs, who "at the time of war exercised over them an almost supernatural power."⁷ Addressing a huge throng of the reported 16,000 people assembled at the 1863 Leipzig *Turnfest*, Treitschke declared himself "overwhelmed" by the task of celebrating "the splendid battle [die herrliche Schlacht], as Father Jahn called it, which brought liberation to our people."⁸ Deeply moved, he concluded: "No, this thriving force of youth and manhood, splendidly assembled in our hospitable city, an uplifting image of the nobility and strength of our people, it will not let the labors of our fathers come to shame"⁹ (*Hirth*, 418). By the time he composed his five-volume *History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century*, Treitschke had no kind words left for Jahn, nor for his movement.¹⁰

Notwithstanding the valiant efforts of people such as Paul Piechowski in the 1920s, and Düding and Ueberhorst in the 1980s, to redeem Jahn's reputation, the negative image prevalent among German intellectuals endures to this day. No doubt, Peter Viereck's 1941 depiction of Jahn and his Turners as inspired by Herder and representing the "first storm troopers," though severely challenged by a young Jaques Barzun on its misreading of Romanticism, did its share to retard subsequent efforts at rehabilitation.¹¹ Gertrud Pfister's reminder to students of Turnerism of the enthusiastic response to Hitler's speech glorifying *Tunvater* Jahn at the 1933 *Deutsches Turnfest* highlights the movement's tendency to change with the times.¹²

While my necessarily fragmentary account of Jahn's reception could only hint at the reasons for and effects of Jahn's ever more strident stress on *Deutschheit*, an examination of some early sources anticipating and informing his views may provide some answers. Speaking of a "group of patriotic German-thinking intellectuals" who, in the half-century after the "German catastrophe" [1806] devoted themselves in a special measure to the development of a German national spirit, Dieter Düding made sure to include Jahn and his book *Deutsches Volkstum* among them.¹³ Düding's "five patriots," Arndt, Fichte, Schleiermacher, Luden and Jahn, distinguish themselves by displaying considerable "national-ideological commonalities" as well as differences. Düding asserted that his "five patriots" held in common

the view of their “evolved [gewordenen] German nation” as unique, based on a primary principle of nature and, unlike other peoples, especially the French, “having preserved their unobstructed access to their inherent genuine natural powers” as a “primary people” [*Urvolk, Stammvolk*], with a primary language [*Ursprache*].¹⁴ Holding these views, the “five patriots” were under the sway of the ideas of a German philosopher of culture and history, Johann Gottfried Herder. To be sure, Düding added, not all of the five were as fully aware of Herder’s key role in paving the way for a “natural comprehension of cultural nationhood” in German intellectual life as was Jahn, who “. . . cited Herder authoritatively in his book and certified him to be a ‘grand confidant of the secrets in the world of peoples pertaining to their language, *Volksthum*, and history.’” Düding did not neglect to point out the important distinction in Herder’s views, in that he gave all nations equal rank in his considerations, unlike the “five patriots” who were inclined less, if at all, in that direction.¹⁵

By joining Jahn to four other “patriots” who in their overall contributions to German thought and letters far exceed him in lasting significance, and by linking him—and the others—to Herder with only one—indeed important—proviso of difference, Düding creates a misleading impression. Yes, Jahn was influenced by Herder, but only insofar as his peculiar study habits, his self-absorbed *Bildung*, and his resulting insufficient grasp of Herder’s not at all “tension-free” reconciliation of opposites allowed. The introduction of Herder into a discussion of Jahn’s *Bildung* and reception calls for a brief excursion into the vagaries of Herder’s own intellectual growth and his reception over time. Not unlike Jahn, Herder too has been linked to the worst excesses of German nationalism. But there is hope, in the words of John Zammito, “. . . that some ill-founded opinions still circulating concerning Herder’s ‘irrationalism,’ and chauvinism, even racist nationalism, and his philosophical naivety and literary effrontery, might at last be put to rest.”¹⁶

Jahn’s limitations were aptly sketched by the Arndt scholar Ernst Müsebeck, who found that “the cultivation of the *Turnvater’s* mind confined itself to the detailed mastery of German *Volkstum* and German history.” To Müsebeck, Jahn was a “*Naturmensch*,” a creature of a Romanticism unable to tame its excesses by reference to the underlying classical tradition, as were Arndt and Schleiermacher and, one might add, Fichte.¹⁷

Whereas Herder has somewhat recovered from the cooptations he suffered at the hands of people from both sides of the political spectrum and is now widely considered one of the truly great figures of German thought and letters, Jahn’s legacy continues to be imperilled. That legacy consists of the vigorous and effective leadership of the early Turner movement that must be seen in the context of its philanthropic antecedents and the broadly based educational reform spirit pervading the later Eighteenth century of which

Herder was a vital part. It is likely that Jahn encountered some of Herder's works early in his life. Read selectively, Herder may well have become an important early source for him. There were elements of content and style in Herder's writings on language, the philosophy of history, education, religion, and specific subjects such as the folksong that lent themselves to the enrichment of a young mind highly motivated and acquisitive, but poorly disciplined and inclined to emotional excess. Paul Piechowski, Jahn's devoted and diligent biographer, who sees the *Turnvater's* legacy principally in his role as one of ". . . the great German popular educators" [*Volkserzieher*], has counted in *Deutsches Volkstum* a total of 350 references to "all manner of authors from all ages," including Herder.¹⁸ Piechowski's firm assertion ". . . that Herder's world of thought also was a source from which Jahn drew most valuable incentives and building blocks for the construction of his system of popular education" suggests that Herder's overriding commitment to *Humanität* and stress on the inseparable unity of thought and feeling, mind and body vitally informed the shaping of Jahn as a person. Readers of Jahn's *Deutsches Volkstum* will have been struck by his passionate evocation, in the concluding section, of Homer, Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso, El Cid, Cervantes, and Calderon, Camoens and Shakespeare, as models for a lasting German literature, as he found it advocated by A.W. Schlegel in the *Journal Europa*. Jahn's "Epilogue", punctuated by an "Afterword," dated March 14, 1810, still roots his call for a Germany united by its *Volkstum* within "the eternal bonds of humankind."¹⁹

The gradual transformation in style and substance of Jahn's post-1810 writings, shifting ever more from *Menschheit* to *Deutschheit*, to the purification of the German language and the German way of life, is often associated with the course of the war, the hardships of the occupation, and the ups and downs of the Turner movement. In his 1814 *Runenblätter*, Jahn sent his readers an unmistakable message.²⁰ By employing, for example, wilful derivations of the widely used verb "walten," to wield power, such as "Walte," "Waltung," "Waltlosigkeit," "Walterraub," "waltetescheu," and "Dauerwalte," Jahn makes his case for the purity of language as he inveighs against the prevailing shortcomings of mini-state government and "tribally alien" [*stammfremde*] Welshmen and Wends [*Wälsche und Wende*].²¹

Speaking of the "affectation" [*Maniertheit*] and "stiltedness [*Gespreiztheit*] of Jahn's later writings, with particular reference to the *Runenblätter*, Euler cites and agrees with Julian Schmidt's disparaging assessment: ". . . language which has not been spoken in any time or any place, patched together colorfully from ancient German recollections and new inventions."²² Together with his intensifying rejection of everything foreign and his hardening conviction that nations do not profit from their cultural intercourse with one another, Jahn's

later writings differ significantly from his earlier work. By 1833, when his *Merke zum Deutschen Volksthum* appeared, the combination of xenophobia, “language-sweeping,” and personal disillusionment renders Jahn’s public utterances tiresome to read. “Calamity, misfortune, disgrace, infamy, misery, cursedness, perdition and death befall anyone among any people who expects salvation and the savior to come from abroad, exclaims the “Farewell” that opens the book.”²³ The very mention of the word “Nation,” in any of its derivations, provokes an outburst about “that last resort of “foreign indulgence;” he complains of people speaking of national “stuff” as if it were “petty or sloppy stuff,” and then calling “Gypsies” [*Zigeuner*], “cheating Jews” [*Schacherjuden*], and “downtrodden rabble” [*auf den Schub gebrachtes Gesindel*] by that name. Somehow Jahn manages to bring Kant’s and Herder’s apparently unsatisfactory use of the word *nation* into his diatribe, at a later point even mentioning the German Jesuit Jakob Balde, the subject of Herder’s translation in his *Terpsichore* as exceptional among the Neo-Latin offenders. Intended to enhance his own reputation, Jahn’s excessive formulations in his *Merke* take away from whatever merit one may wish to assign to the original work.²⁴

Jahn’s 1835 *Denknisse* are useful to the historian in that they give hints to his own life under the guise of the stories told.²⁵ Significant for the purposes of this paper is Jahn’s pointed reference to Wilhelm Friedrich von Meyern’s novel *Dya-Na-Sore*. By assigning his own—and evidently unforgettable encounter with it many years earlier—to one of the figures of his third story, who supposedly read it “ten years before Tilsit,” he recalls a most significant change of direction in his own life.²⁶ According to Euler, the book had a “powerful impact” on Jahn.²⁷ The reference to the novel some thirty-five years after he read it directs the reader back to his youth.

The question remains whether Jahn’s fateful inability in his later work to temper his passionate German nationalism with considerations of an encompassing *Humanität* may be traced back to some early sources. Jahn’s early writings as well as his references to him reveal Herder as an important source. Rainer Wisbert’s outstanding edition of Herder’s *Journal Meiner Reise im Jahr 1769* and the *Pädagogische Schriften* (FHA 9/2) has documented the fact that Herder was central to the broadly-based educational reform movement within which Jahn grew up. So, when representatives of *Philanthropinismus* such as Basedow, Salzmann, Vieth and Guts Muth, or major figures concerned with educational reform such as Schleiermacher, Fichte, and Wilhelm von Humboldt are discussed as early sources for Jahn, they must be seen in the context of Herder’s pervasive “*Bildungsidee*”²⁸ (FHA 9/2, 838). Jahn’s temperamental make-up and haphazard education ill equipped him to a place alongside the great educational reformers discussed

by Wisbert. Jahn's tendency to rely on physical strength and courage to reinforce his intellectual commitment revealed itself early²⁹ (*Euler*, 25-28). He showed a preference for action over reflection, reading selectively, without taking notes, for confirmation of the objectives his inexhaustible enthusiasm compelled him to embrace, though his somewhat erratic conduct as a student seems to have been driven by a genuine search for answers.

During his years at Halle University, 1796-1800, Jahn encountered the book that by his own account changed his view of the world. Living temporarily in a cave—seeking refuge from violent fellow students—Jahn read the three-part novel still on his mind when he wrote his *Denknisse* some thirty-five years later. Eduard Dürre, an early supporter and life-long friend related Jahn's account of his reading experience when the two of them visited the cave shortly after the *Völkerschlacht* of Leipzig in October of 1813. Still in the afterglow of the grand victory over the arch-enemy, Jahn during that visit “. . . spoke mainly of reading the novel *Dya-Na-Sore* and pointed out the spot where a whole new world had appeared to him as he read the book”³⁰ If one goes by Jahn's own suggestion that he read the book in 1797 “ten years before Tilsit,” when he was nineteen, and takes into account the extent of its impact as documented by de Bruyn and Euler, it becomes clear that Jahn's own early writings must have been greatly influenced by Meyern's work. Discussing Jahn's first publication, “*Über die Beförderung des Patriotismus im Preussischen Reich*,” Euler considers it “preferable to almost all of Jahn's later writings” and concludes that “the intellectual ties of the essay to the novel *Dya-Na-Sore* are unmistakable.”³¹ Jahn writes as a passionate Prussian patriot, ascribing many of the noble qualities that had aroused his enthusiasm in Meyern's book to the *Prussian Reich* and its glorious princes. Meyern's repeated and emphatic insistence on the cultivation of physical fitness among youth as an element of military preparadness in his imaginary world (for example 578-80) will have complemented the available philanthropic texts advocating physical exercise as a vital part of education and later gratefully acknowledged by Jahn himself as preliminary labors. These texts, especially the writings of Vieth and GutsMuths, were avidly studied during the winter preceding the opening of the first *Turnplatz* in Berlin in the Spring of 1811.³² By the time of the opening of the *Hasenhaide Turnplatz*, Jahn's first two “official” publications had appeared.³³ Whereas Jahn considered his language studies a “by-product of his leisure hours,” he truly regarded his *Deutsches Volkstum* as his “major subject” [Hauptfach]. Both works hold significant promise, but they move clearly beyond the essay on Prussian Patriotism by their more explicit emphasis on *Deutschheit*. But it undoubtedly was the exhilarating experience of the *Hasenhaide Turnplatz*, interrupted by his somewhat disputed military service during the “War of Liberation” and the triumphal defeat of the arch-

enemy that brought about the fateful transformation already clearly evident in the 1814 *Runenblätter* and the 1816 *Deutsche Turnkunst*.³⁴

Jahn's change of disposition, alluded to at the outset of this paper and confirmed by reference to some of his writings, culminates in his "Swansong" to the National Assembly of 1848-1849 in the Frankfurt *Paulskirche*. Reinhard K. Sprenger insists that the speech was never given and that its text has been widely misused to stress Jahn's "anti-democratic tendencies." Nevertheless, it was for many of the Turners who fled Germany at the time and found refuge in the democratic United States, representative of Jahn's oblivion.³⁵

With the passing, both in Germany and in the United States, of the Turner generation that bore the brunt of the reaction to the failed revolution of 1848-49, a revival of Jahn's reputation as a leading proponent of German nationhood set in. Intensified by the realization of German unification in the Bismarckian *Reich*, and propagated by the appearance of Euler's *Werke* edition in the 1880s, the Jahn revival became a vital part of an emergent aggressive German nationalism. Notwithstanding Treitschke's intense critique of the Turner movement's shortcomings—undeniably effective as it was among German intellectuals—its growth during these years proceeded rapidly on both sides of the Atlantic. And it was the young Jahn of the Hasenhaide *Turnplatz*, the staunch opponent of the Napoleonic oppression and early advocate of German unity whose memory informed the image of the bearded sage now celebrated in mythic proportions. This Jahn was brought to the United States by waves of German immigrants who had no stock in the abolitionist struggle in which their antecedents had excelled. By the outbreak of WW I, a mythical *Turnvater* and prophet of German national greatness had been uncritically embraced by generations of Turners beholden to the militant folkish ideology formulated by him under the impact of Wilhelm Friedrich Meyern's *Dya-Na-Sore*.

Published in 1978, Hajo Bernett's essay "'Dya-Na-Sore'—Arousal or Corruption of Jahn?" thoughtfully examined Jahn's reception of the novel as depicted in the Jahn literature over time.³⁶ Without the benefit of Günter de Bruyn's extensive *Nachwort* to the 1979 paperback reissue of the 1787-91 edition of the novel, Bernett concluded that ". . . the corruption potentially was inherent in the arousal." Acknowledging what he sees as the enrichment of German intellectual life that came with Jahn's notion of *Volkstum* into German Romanticism and as a practical consequence produced Turnerism, Bernett nevertheless draws a devastating conclusion: "But the militant *Volkstum* ideology which makes its appearance in Meyern and Jahn and was radicalized in the folkish Turner movement [*völkische Turnbewegung*] of the waning 19th century, must be considered as a grave

historical error with heavy consequences [*folgeschwer*].”³⁷ Bennett begins his assessment by surveying the reception of the novel in the Jahn literature, finding its impact on the *Turnvater* emphatically affirmed even though it was only “. . . casually examined.”³⁸ Bennett’s biographical sketch of Wilhelm Friedrich Meyern, mainly based on Ernst von Feuchtersleben’s (1806-49) introduction to his posthumous edition of Meyern’s unpublished writings, is supplemented by reference to Hermann Fürst von Pückler-Muskau’s (1785-1871) observations. Taken together, these recollections by contemporary and astute admirers present to Bennett in the author of *Dya-Na-sore* a polarized personality “living a double existence as a soldier and philosophizing artist.” Stressing masculinity and the heroic to excess and living in Spartan simplicity, Meyern appears to Bennett as a troubled man who ultimately was bound to arouse the ill will and suspicion of Arno Schmidt.³⁹ Confirming the personal contacts between Meyern and Jahn after the latter’s transformational encounter with the novel, and accounting for its uneven reception in—if not virtual disappearance from—German literary history, Bennett turns to the conspicuous vehemence of Arno Schmidt’s reaction. For readers concerned with Jahn’s “arousal and corruption” by Meyern’s tome, Bennett’s detailed examination of the novel’s text and guiding motives (*Leitmotive*), leading up to his sharp critique of Schmidt’s methodology, provides a most valuable service. Meyern’s frequently reiterated view of the male as “the crown of creation,” with the corresponding diminution of the female in the counter image, his all-pervasive stress on the primacy of fatherland, *Volk*, and state, his reverence for the sacredness of war connected with the emphasis on “the body as the teacher of the soul” and the indispensability of physical exercise, anticipate the major themes that governed Jahn’s life and works.⁴⁰

Given Bennett’s exemplary analysis of Jahn’s fateful submission—during the high tide of German thought and letters—to Meyern’s unbalanced world view, and in the light of Günter de Bruyn’s almost simultaneous and insightful Nachwort to the 1979 reissue of the text, it seems strange that the impact of the novel on the *Turnvater* is not more frankly acknowledged in the more recent literature. The enduring effects of a militant *Volkstum* ideology continues to imperil the rightful primacy of *Menschheit* over *Deutschheit* advocated by Johann Gottfried Herder and his peers.⁴¹

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Notes

1. “An Feuerstein,” Wahrscheinlich nach Neujahr 1810, in Wolfgang Meyer, ed., *Die Briefe F. L. Jahns*, rev. ed., Quellenbücher der Leibesübungen (Dresden: Wilhelm Limpert Verlag,

n.d.), 5: no. 20, 53-54. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the author. I am deeply indebted to Rainer Wisbert and Heinrich Clairmont for consultation and suggestions of critically important sources.

² Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, *Deutsches Volkstum* (Lübeck: Niemann und Comp., 1810) in Carl Euler, ed., *Friedrich Ludwig Jahns Werke*, 2 vols. (Hof: Verlag G. A. Grau, 1884, 1885-87), hereafter *Werke* [Google e-books]. Thanks to the courtesy of Hans Sammer of the American Turners New York, I have had, during the latter part of my research, recourse to hardcover editions of *Deutsches Volkstum*, 2nd unrevised edition (Leipzig: Wilhelm Rein, 1817), hereafter *D.V.* 1817, the Meyer edition of the letters cited in note 1, and Georg Hirth's anthology *Das Gesammte Turnwesen* (Leipzig: Ernst Keil, 1865), hereafter *Hirth*. The spelling of *Volkstum* varies throughout the literature. All references to Herder's writings are to Johann Gottfried Herder, *Werke in zehn Bänden*, ed. Günter Arnold et al. (Frankfurt a.M.: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985-2000), hereafter abbr. *FHA*.

³ Düding's subtitle, *Bedeutung und Funktion der Turner und Sängervereine für die deutsche Nationalbewegung* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1984) neatly sums up his ambitious undertaking. I want to thank Frank Baron for making parts of the book available to me before I was able to obtain the entire text. Hereafter cited as *Düding*.

⁴ Euler, "Charakteristik Jahns und seiner schriftstellerischen Thätigkeit im allgemeinen," in *Werke I*, xxv-xxxv, xxv. See also, Carl Euler, *Friedrich Ludwig Jahn* (Stuttgart: Verlag von Carl Crabbe, 1881) hereafter cited as *Euler*.

⁵ "Daß die Turnbewegung sich für lange Zeit dem Interesse der universitären Fachhistoriker entzog, hing ausserdem mit der schlechten Reputation zusammen, die ihr Gründer in Fachhistoriker Kreisen genoß. Auf zwei herausragende Historiker des 19ten Jahrhunderts, Georg Gottfried Gervinus und Heinrich von Treitschke, war dieser Umstand hauptsächlich zurückzuführen. Sie hatten in ihren säkularen Geschichtswerken—ohne sich auf eigene Jahn Forschungen berufen zu können—F.L. Jahn nicht nur eine eigenständige politische Denkfähigkeit rundweg abgesprochen, sondern auch Jahns Persönlichkeit und seine politisch-gesellschaftlichen Aktivitäten und Hervorbringungen—insbesondere die von ihm gegründete Turnbewegung—durch eine Vielzahl von Negativurteilen gründlich diskreditiert" (*Düding*, 7).

⁶ Georg Gottfried Gervinus, *Geschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts seit den Wiener Verträgen*, 8 vols. (Leipzig, 1855-66), II:366-68. Heinrich von Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 5 vols. (Leipzig: F.W. Hende Verlag, 1927) I:293-310; II: 67-83, 376-436, 510-18; III: 426-27. Treitschke, "Rede zur Erinnerung an die Leipziger Völkerschlacht, gehalten am letzten Tage des dritten deutschen Turnfests" (August 1863), in *Hirth*, 413-18.

⁷ Gervinus, 367, 368.

⁸ Hirth, 413.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 418.

¹⁰ In Chapter 7 of Vol. II, entitled "Die Burschenschaft," Treitschke goes on for page after page, sarcastically lambasting the Turners' rudeness and vulgarity and their "barbaric" language inspired by their master's poor example, berating them repeatedly for their ill-conceived *Deutschheit*, their teutonic excesses, and their political incompetence. Contemptuous references to the *Turnvater's* writings undergird an indictment that, given the celebrity and influence of the author at the time of its publication and thereafter, indeed left a lasting mark on a movement that rapidly outgrew Jahn's control even though his name and contributions, for the most part, continued to be honored.

¹¹ Paul Piechowski, *Friedrich Ludwig Jahn: Vom Turnvater zum Völkserzieher* (Gotha: Leopold Klotz Verlag, 1928), a thoughtful and thorough account of Jahn's life and work by a devoted but not uncritical admirer, earning high praise even from Peter Viereck. Hereafter cited as Piechowski. For Düding see notes 3 and 4. Horst Ueberhorst, *Turner Unterem Sternenbanner: Der Kampf der deutsch-amerikanischen Turner für Einheit, Freiheit und soziale Gerechtigkeit*,

1848-1918 (München: Heinz Moos Verlag, 1978). But note Ueberhorst's warning when discussing the gradual approximation of ideas and values embraced by American Turners and those in Imperial Germany: ". . . the reverence shown to Jahn as a 'political' Turner, freedom fighter and patriot, proclaimer of German unity and greatness. To the narrowness and peril of Jahn's nationalist ideology eyes were closed on both sides of the ocean" (182); Peter Viereck, *Metapolitics: From the Romantics to Hitler* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941); Jacques Barzun, "Review of *Metapolitics* by Peter Viereck," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3/1 (Jan. 1942), 107-10; "Reply by the author of *Metapolitics*," *ibid.*, 110-12. From the distance of seventy years, both authors show striking insights and flaws.

¹² "Frisch, fromm, fröhlich, frei," in Etienne Francois and Hagen Schulze, eds., *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* II (München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2000), 202-19, 214, 216. It so happens that the Francois/Schulze volume has bearing on and provides valuable insights regarding the issues in question in contributions by Hagen Schulze (28-46), Wolfgang J. Mommsen (47-66), and Etienne Francois (154-70). For Hitler's speech at the 16th *Deutsches Turnfest* in Stuttgart on July 30, 1933, see Max Domarus, *Hitler: Reden und Proklamationen 1932-1945*, 2 vols, vol. I, *Triumph*, 291. See also Norman H. Baynes, *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler: April 1922-August 1934*, 2 vols. (London-New York-Toronto: Oxford U. Press, 1942), I:539-40, 539: "In his speech at a gymnastic display at Stuttgart on 30 July 1933 Hitler said: '. . . If today we recognize once again an ideal of beauty which opens our eyes to an understanding of the picture presented by the ancient world, that is only because a great German [Ludwig Jahn] showed us through gymnastics the way to restore the balance between mind and body . . .'"

¹³ Düding, 23.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 24-25.

¹⁵ "Wenn die fünf Patrioten Natur, Geschichte und Kultur als jene Kräfte ausmachten, denen das deutsche Volk seine gewachsene nationale Individualität verdanke, und wenn sie seine Sprache als die lebendigste Ausdruckform seines durch die Natur gestifteten und durch Geschichte und Kultur bekräftigten und befestigten Gemeinschaftsgeistes interpretierten, so standen sie ohne Unterschied im Banne eines deutschen Kultur- und Geschichtsphilosophen des 18. Jahrhunderts, nämlich Johann Gottfried Herders. Nicht jeder der fünf Patrioten mag sich der Schlüsselstellung Herders in der deutschen Geisteswelt des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts und seiner Wegbereiterfunktion für ein 'natürlich'-kulturelles Nationsverständnis unter deutschen Intellektuellen voll bewußt gewesen sein, wie dies für Jahn zutraf, der Herder in seinem Buch mehrfach im autoritativen Sinne zitiert und ihm bescheinigt, ein 'großer Vertrauter der Geheimnisse der Völkerwelt in Sprache, Volkstum und Geschichte' zu sein. . . . Aber von dem bei Herder gültigen, spannungsfreien Nebeneinander des Menschheits- und Humanitätsgedanken einerseits und der natürlich-organischen Nationsidee andererseits war nicht mehr viel zu spüren" (*Düding*, 26, 28). In addition to pointing out Jahn's reference in *deutsches Volkstum* (*D.V. 1817*, 182) to Herder's *Ideen*, Düding refers to and cites extensively from other pertinent writings of Herder, such as the *Briefe zu Beförderung der Humanität* (*FHA 7*), the *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* and *Über die neuere deutsche Literatur. Fragmente*, (*FHA 1*, 695-810, 161-694), to demonstrate his impact on Jahn's and the other Patriots' conception of the nation ["Nationsverständnis"]. To this reader, these writings show persuasively that for Herder *Menschheit* held primacy over *Deutschheit*. See for example, nos. 107-10 of the *Humanitätsbriefe* (*FHA 7*, 569-97).

¹⁶ John H. Zammito, Karl Menges, and Ernest A. Menze, "Johann Gottfried Herder Revisited: The Revolution in Scholarship in the Last Quarter Century" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 71/4 (October 2010): 661-84, 661-62. For a recent account of a nationalism in need of detoxification, linking ". . . Herder over Wagner up to Hitler," see Ernest A. Menze, "Herder's Shakespeare Essay: A Retrospective and Recent Trends," *The Shakespeare Newsletter* 61/1, no. 283 (Spring/Summer 2011): 15-18, 32. For a survey of Herder's lifelong efforts to reconcile national aspirations with the overriding mandates of a common humanity, see Ernest A. Menze, "Johann Gottfried Herder—Nationsbegriff und Weltgefühl," *Aus Politik*

und Zeitgeschichte: Beilage zur Wochenschrift *Das Parlament* B 1/86 (4 January 1986): 31-46.

¹⁷ Ernst Müsebeck, *Ernst Moritz Arndt: Ein Lebensbild*, vol. I (Gotha, 1914), 269-72, in Reinhard K. Sprenger, *Die Jahnrezeption in Deutschland 1871-1933: Nationale Identität und Modernisierung* (Schorndorf: Verlag Karl Hofmann, 1985), 53: "Die Durchbildung des Turnvaters beschränkte sich auf die genaue Kenntnis des deutschen Volkstums und der deutschen Geschichte. Ihm fehlte jene innere Durchdringung des ganzen eigenen Lebensinhalts mit dem klassischen Geiste des deutschen Idealismus, . . . wie sie Schleiermacher und Arndt sich errungen hatten. Die Harmonie des Individuums war nie Jahns Lebensideal. Schleiermacher und Arndts Geschichte hatte sich eng mit der Romantik verflochten, beide verdanken ihr eine wesentliche Bereicherung ihrer Eigentümlichkeit, aber sie waren über sie durch die Lebensgemeinschaft mit dem sittlich-ästhetischen Ideale der Antike hinausgewachsen, das dem Naturmenschen Jahn durchaus fremd blieb. Sein Wesen hörte gerade, mochte es auch in ganz anderen Ausdrucksformen wie bei den ästhetischen Vertretern der Romantik in die Erscheinung treten, doch in ihre Lebensrichtung hinein, in jene absolute Selbstoffenbarung des Eigenen, die sich kühn über das Gegebene in Sitte und Unsitte hinwegsetzte und voll impulsiven Dranges nach der Neuschöpfung sich sehnte." In addition to this revealing Müsebeck citation, Sprenger provides a rich harvest of the critical reception period from 1871 to 1933. His conclusion that the German Jahn literature from 1871 to 1933 was overwhelmingly shaded towards the right side of the political spectrum gives food for thought. See Sprenger, 108 and 194.

¹⁸ Piechowski, XVIII, 172, 92-93.

¹⁹ *D.V.* 1817, 298-99, *Schlußrede* (351-56), *Nachschrift*, (357-58): "So ist nun ewig umschlungen das Menschengeschlecht vom ewigen Bande der Menschheit" (355). A final reference to p. 98 of the text calls attention to the subchapter "Aussichten und Ahnungen," a summary of Jahn's philosophy of history (95-98). There are echoes here of the young Herder's *Journal meiner Reise*, a segment of which was first published in 1810 (Wisbert, *FHA* 9/2, 889).

²⁰ *Werke*, I, 405-420.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 413-14.

²² *Ibid.*, xxxiv.

²³ Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, *Merke zum Deutschen Volksthum* (Hildburghausen: Verlag von J. C. H. Knopf, 1833). "Abschied" (vii-xxviii): "Unheil, Unglück, Schmach, Schande, Elend, Fluch, Verderben, und Tod über jedermann in jeglichem Volk, der vom Ausland das Heil und den Heiland erwartet. Am Jahrestag des kgl. Aufrufs, 1833. F. L. J. (xxviii).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 10, 11, 106.

²⁵ Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, *Denknisse eines Deutschen oder Fahrten des Alten im Bart*, ed. Karl Schöppach (Schleusingen: Verlag von Conrad Glaser, 1835). The editor of the "little book" [*Büchlein*] alerts the reader to the peculiar style and the often strange sounding terms, explaining that Jahn finds new words in "the inexhaustible treasure of the people's language" [*Volkssprache*] to take the place of the invasive foreign words (xii-xiv).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 173.

²⁷ Euler, 29-34, 29. W. Fr. Meyern, *Dya-Na-Sore, oder die Wanderer: Eine Geschichte aus dem Sam-skritz übersetzt* (Frankfurt a.M.: Zweitausendeins, c 1982), 3 Theile, based on the first edition (Vienna-Leipzig: Stahel, 1787-91), with a *Nachwort* by Günter de Bruyn. In a note to the 1810 edition of *Deutsches Volksthum*, Euler mentioned Meyern: "Und hier nennt Jahn die beiden Männer, welche den hervorragendsten Einfluß auf seine ganze Lebensrichtung gehabt: Luther und Friedrich Wilhelm von Meyern . . ." (*Werke* I, 346-47).

²⁸ Wisbert Commentary, *FHA* 9/2, 838.

²⁹ Euler, 25-28.

³⁰ Euler, 28. The reader of the 1979 paperback edition is greatly aided by Günter de Bruyn's *Nachwort* and the reviews, poetry, and scholarly apparatus appended to it (935-95). Few readers will have the patience to plow their way through the nearly thousand pages of this strange mix of fact and fiction—let alone the greatly expanded and revised 2nd and 3rd editions (1800, 1841). Nevertheless, looked at with its effect on Jahn in mind, Meyern's book

offers a number of remarkable passages about noble principles governing public and private lives, love of duty and honor, fierce loyalty to the fatherland etc., that evidently deeply stirred and inspired young Jahn. De Bruyn's biting *Nachwort* is informed by, but also takes issue with, two earlier assessments of Meyern's work: Arno Schmidt's 1957 Radio Interview discussing the book as prefiguring the worst features of fascism and Wolfgang Harich's reading of it as a vision of democratic revolution (Arno Schmidt, "Dya na sore: Blondeste der Bestien," in *Arno Schmidt, Zur deutschen Literatur* II (Bargfeld, 1988), 111-36. Wolfgang Harich, *Jean Pauls Revolutionsdichtung: Versuch einer Deutung seiner historischen Romane* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag/Reinbeck: Rohwolt, 1974), 167-68 (cited in de Bruyn, 951-52, 986-87). On the whole, de Bruyn concurs with Arno Schmidt's allusions to the fascist anticipations that one may read into Meyern's text, which echo the even more visceral indictment of Jahn on that score written by Peter Viereck under the immediate impact of the WW II horrors (n. 11).

³¹ De Bruyn provides his readers with a number of citations from Jahn's writings that testify to his high and lasting regard for Meyern's work, culminating in a dedication he wrote for a friend in 1799, celebrating the "immortal" word *Pflicht* [duty]: "These thoughts from the masterpiece of the Eighteenth Century contain the confession of faith of your friend. Thus he will always act [...]" (969-97). Jahn's first publication appeared under a name other than his own, Q. C. C. Höppfner (Halle: J.C. Hendels Verlag, 1800), in *Werke* I, 2-21. After explaining the incongruity of Höppfner's name on the title page—a privilege supposedly sold to him by Jahn for 10 Thaler, Euler calls it "[...] fast allen späteren Schriften Jahns vorzuziehen" (Euler, 35), and he concludes "Unverkennbar ist der geistige Zusammenhang der Schrift mit dem Roman *Dya-Na-Sore*" (46).

³² Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, "Begründung der Turnkunst," Vorbericht zur *Deutschen Turnkunst* (Berlin, 1816), in *Hirth*, 265-67. "Im Winter wurde nachgelesen was über die Turnkunst habhaft zu werden. Dankbar denken wir noch an unsere Vorarbeiter Vieth und GutsMuths."

³³ *Bereicherung des Hochdeutschen Sprachschatzes versucht im Gebiete der Sinnverwandtschaft, ein Nachtrag zu Adelung's und eine Nachlese zu Eberhard's Wörterbuch* von J.F.L.Ch. Jahn (Leipzig: Adam Friedrich Böhme, 1806) and his *Deutsches Volkstum* (1810). [*The Enrichment of the High German Treasure of Language endeavored in the Field of Synonymy: An Addendum to Adelung's and a Gleaning of Eberhard's Dictionary* by J. F. L. Ch. Jahn]

³⁴ For *Runenblätter* see p.7; for *Deutsche Turnkunst* see *Hirth*, "Geist der Turngesetze," esp. the virtual enshrinement there of xenophobia (100-1).

³⁵ Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, "Schwanenrede," (Eine Vertheidigung seines Auftretens im Parlament, 1848"), *Jahrbücher der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Turnerei* I/V (New York: Oct. 1891): 193-99. Sprenger, 103.

³⁶ Hajo Bernett, "'Dya-Na-Sore'-Erweckung oder Verführung Jahns?" *Sportwissenschaft* 8 (1978): 350-65.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 367.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 350-52.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 352-54, 354; for Schmidt see n. 30.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 361-67.

⁴¹ The recent DTB publication *200 Jahre Turnbewegung: 200 Jahre soziale Verantwortung*, ed. Annette Hofmann (Frankfurt a.M., 2011) came into my hands too late for sustained analysis. However, a preliminary examination reveals earnest efforts on the part of the contributors to cope with some of the flaws detected in the Turner movement over the past two centuries. Splendidly illustrated and superbly produced, the volume presents a vibrant and forward looking movement, proudly recalling the achievements of two centuries. It is encouraging to see that Guthsmuth is given equal billing with Jahn from the outset.