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## **Horace Greeley and German Forty-Eighters in the Kansas Free State Struggle**

Pre-Civil War United States history occurred on tumultuous political terrain that is still highly contested academically. One of its most controversial episodes is the struggle for a slavery-free Kansas. This essay will show how crucial aspects of this history have been marginalized in conventional scholarly accounts, and will build an interpretive framework with widened cultural and political scope. This will derive from its close examination of the unique contributions of three key social change agents: (1) Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*; (2) German forty-eighter freedom fighters relocated to the Kansas Territory after 1855; and (3) a forty-eighter journalist working from London for Greeley, Karl Marx.

Following the perspective of Frederick Douglass, discussed in more detail below, this essay acknowledges the abiding residual effects of racism among many (perhaps most) of the otherwise politically progressive whites of the day. Nicole Etcheson has recognized this explicit Kansas Free State capitulation to white privilege in her recent history of Bleeding Kansas.<sup>1</sup> My studies however disclose the manner in which a variety of vanguard white radicals stood in alliance with the leading voices of radically egalitarian African Americans, anti-slavery Native Americans, and Kansas German-Americans engaged in the Free State struggle. By focusing on the emancipatory political praxis emergent during this epoch, we find that a significant white leadership had formed that was radically committed to racial equality.<sup>2</sup> This view adds important context to Etcheson's depiction of the white racial discrimination as it existed within even the Kansas Free State struggle.

Scholarship such as I am undertaking here must first of all recognize the formative African American self-liberation effort that occurred in the period leading up to the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. A record of radical publications<sup>3</sup> illumines the nineteenth-century anti-slavery movement as built by African American editors, writers, and intellectuals.

White abolitionists worked during this period in strategic solidarity with this movement. In 1854 the New England Emigrant Aid Society was founded to encourage the Free State settlement of the Kansas Territory. In the years immediately prior, Frederick Douglass had issued the following challenge to white radicals and liberals, moving many to action. His address referred to the 1848–49 revolutions across Europe as a vivid inspiration toward freedom, but expressed his pained regret at the lack of attention to the pressing and urgent abolition issue in America:

You invite to your shores fugitives of oppression from abroad, honor them with banquets, greet them with ovations, cheer them, toast them, salute them, protect them, and pour out your money to them like water, but the fugitive from your own land you advertise, hunt, arrest, shoot and kill. . . . You are all on fire at the mention of liberty for France or for Ireland, but are cold as an iceberg at the thought of liberty for the enslaved of America. You discourse eloquently on the dignity of labor; yet you sustain a system which, in its very essence, casts a stigma upon labor.<sup>4</sup>

The solidarity that Frederick Douglass called for resonated deeply with Horace Greeley, the mid-nineteenth-century publisher of the *New York Tribune*, America's first nation-wide newspaper. He responded energetically to this challenge and editorialized explicitly for the freedom of the black American slave and for racial justice.<sup>5</sup> Yet Greeley's customary schoolbook image obscures his radical anti-racist ideas and activism. Everyone knows his most memorable aphorism as "Go west, young man—Go west!"

Still he never said exactly that. This over-simplified and politically sanitized slogan—which became prominent during the Jim Crow period—is the product of the historiography of the latter nineteenth century under the spell of the expansionist frontier thesis. The awareness of abolitionist endeavors is marginalized in that historical approach.<sup>6</sup> We shall see below that his concrete advice needs to be situated within the actual Kansas Free State struggle, and may be paraphrased with more authentic warrant as: Go West to *Kansas* and save the soul of the nation!<sup>7</sup>

Recent research into the history of Free State Germans in the Kansas Territory during the nineteenth century's abolitionist movement opens up perspectives different from the customary view of Greeley.<sup>8</sup> The text of a then-contemporary account by August Bondi, a German-Jewish veteran of the 1848 uprisings in Austria, reveals the particular context from which we can see that Greeley's advice was much more than a simple "Go west." Greeley's directive, in August Bondi's words, appealed "to the freedom loving men of the states to rush to Kansas and save it from the curse of slavery."<sup>9</sup> Inspired by the *New York Tribune*, Bondi acknowledges Greeley's advocacy of the abolitionist cause in the Kansas Territory during the months (January and March



1855) immediately prior to Bondi's own action in support of abolition, i.e., setting out in May 1855 from St. Louis for Kansas as a Free State proponent. Greeley's editorials cried out:

Men and brethren! There is imminent danger that Kansas will be lost to freedom, but as yet it is danger only. She is not lost, but is sorely beset, and those who can should fly to the rescue. Thousands of hardy pioneers who do not cower before work and hardship ought to find homes on her broad expanse. . . .<sup>10</sup>

The Anti-slavery movement is no longer at the mercy of spasmodic and irregular forces. It has got a prodigious momentum from its own action that secures it against obstruction from opposing influences forever hereafter. It cannot be arrested or again subordinated to other political issues.<sup>11</sup>

Coming from the radically democratic European uprisings of 1848–49, Bondi had previously criticized “the degradation of labor,” but had not expressed explicit anti-slavery sentiments.<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, Bondi's radical social analysis prepared him intellectually to understand Greeley's abolitionist advice. “Greeley's fervent admonitions touched the revolutionary part of August Bondi's soul.”<sup>13</sup>

In 1909 the African American Marxist sociologist, W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, built upon August Bondi's autobiography and Bondi's political perspective when writing his own book on the life and work of John Brown.<sup>14</sup> In June 1856 Bondi rode as a freedom-fighter with Brown's small force in the Kansas Free State victory in the first battle between bands of armed men in what was ultimately to become the U.S. Civil War.<sup>15</sup> During this episode John Brown, Sr., and his company of eleven white abolitionist partners, two of whom were Free State Kansas Germans (Bondi and another forty-eight, Charles Kaiser), confronted a much larger group of Missouri border ruffians at Black Jack, Kansas Territory, capturing twenty-four of the invaders. Brown was intensely motivated because two of his sons had been taken hostage by this same Missouri band. Bondi's account of the fight testifies that a Mr. Phillips, writer for Greeley's *New York Tribune*, was on the scene later that day. The Kansas State Historical Society possesses a rare photograph of another radical abolitionist Greeley journalist, James Redpath, proudly posing with a Sharps rifle in one hand and his *New York Tribune* in the other.<sup>16</sup>

The *Tribune*, like John Brown and now August Bondi, was committed to fuller racial equality. Other Territorial forces were in favor of Kansas as a Free State, but against the emancipation of slaves in areas where slavery already existed, as in Missouri. Political divisions of this sort would also lead to Lincoln's tactical compromises with Union forces not committed to abolition. Frederick Douglass knew such a strategy well, and on this question he also challenged even Lincoln.<sup>17</sup> As we shall see below, Greeley likewise called upon Lincoln in 1862 for an immediate and categorical proclamation of emancipation, while Lincoln bided his time.



**Go West to Kansas: Defy the Degradation of Labor and the Slave Power!**

There is a real controversy over the exact origin of Greeley's ostensible admonition to "Go west!" According to Thomas Fuller, "no researcher has yet been able to locate an instance of the phrase in any of Greeley's written works,"<sup>18</sup> and the first attribution of this phrase to Greeley was by Joshua Bushnell Grinnell, the abolitionist founder of Grinnell, Iowa. Several other scholarly sources, however, do trace Greeley's ostensible slogan to the line "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country" from an editorial in the *New York Tribune*, 11 July 1865.<sup>19</sup>

Until recently, the generally prevailing view has been reflected in textbooks of the sort that were used back in the mid-1960s when I was an undergraduate; for example, Thomas A. Bailey's *The American Pageant*.<sup>20</sup> Bailey's most prominent reference to Greeley is the epigram "Go west, young man, and grow up with the country" at the top of his Chapter 29 on "The Great West and the Agricultural Revolution 1865–1890." In a separate section, explicitly treating "Journalistic Giants" and lauding Greeley's idealism, anti-slavery sentiments, and wide influence, Greeley's radical views are nonetheless diminished by Bailey as a type of personal journalism in a pre-professional, penny press era when "[n]ewspaper publishing had not yet become a big business and editors like Horace Greeley of the *New York Tribune* owned and published their own newspapers."<sup>21</sup> When the radical Greeley ran for president in 1872 with the support of forty-eighter Carl Schurz and other anti-Grant, German-Americans, Bailey informs us that he "was denounced as an atheist, a communist, a free-lover, a vegetarian, a brown-bread eater, and idiot."<sup>22</sup> Bailey himself dismisses Greeley with a snide ad hominem: "He did not even look like a president. With a cherubic face and innocent blue eyes peering through steel rimmed spectacles, he would amble along in a white coat and hat, clutching a green umbrella—like a character stepping from the pages of Dickens."<sup>23</sup> Greeley had nowhere near the public stature as did the former war hero and incumbent President, Grant, but Bailey's treatment, characteristic of conventional history writing, was clearly dismissive.<sup>24</sup>

According to one uniquely important yet generally overlooked source, Greeley's slogan is said also to have appeared as a reaction to the crisis of unemployment brought about by the Panic of 1837. At that time Greeley wrote:

Do not wait to share and increase its horrors. Fly—scatter through the country—go to the Great West—anything rather than remain here. . . . Away then, hardy adventurers, to Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin . . . the West is the true destination.<sup>25</sup>

David Fennimore also contends that Greeley's westward perspective was derived from Fourier's model of socialism and ran counter to the racist and Christian chauvinist notion of manifest destiny:

Unlike many of his fellow nineteenth-century Americans, Greeley's agrarianism was rooted in no idea of manifest destiny, no God-given mission to blaze a trail to the Pacific. He vigorously criticized the Mexican War as wasteful and imperialistic, and spoke out against the annexation of California and later, against his old friend Seward's purchase of Alaska. When he founded his *Tribune* in 1841, Greeley's 'West' was still just west of the Appalachians, not west of the Mississippi, and certainly not the Great Basin or the arid Southwest. . . . His version of homesteading replaced the individual pioneer with a cooperative organization of farmers and light manufacturers, modeled to some degree after the theories of the French socialist Charles Fourier.<sup>26</sup>

Greeley and his newspaper bitterly denounced the nakedly imperial United States war against Mexico in the 1840s believing it would lead to the expansion of slave-holding territory.<sup>27</sup> This war did complete the annexation by the United States of one-third of the Mexican nation, a portion of which would also be included in what became the state of Kansas. No less a figure in the history of U.S. socialism than Eugene Victor Debs,—writing in 1908 for the Girard, Kansas, publication *The Appeal to Reason*—emphasized Greeley's politics as committed to the emancipation of labor and economic socialism. Debs lamented that Greeley was insufficiently honored for his ethical and political radicalism.<sup>28</sup>

Greeley was concerned with the plight of the laboring classes, and delivered lectures on the "Emancipation of Labor" and the "Organization of Labor."<sup>29</sup> As did Frederick Douglass,<sup>30</sup> he spoke out against the services American religion furnished to militarism and slavery: "Our Democracy has now, with a corrupt Christianity reduced the United States to a great conspirator against human liberty. Aggression, annexation, slave extension are all contained and approved in the so-called Democracy and so-called Christianity which coalesces with it."<sup>31</sup> He was an explicit advocate of socialism, especially that of Owen, Fourier, and the American Fourier proponent, Albert Brisbane, who advertised his views on socialism in a regular front page column in the *Tribune*. Greeley was clear about it: "We never objected to the term Socialist when it was a term of reproach and opprobrium, and we adhere to the convictions under which we earnestly fought."<sup>32</sup> On the question of abolition he was likewise adamant:

Slavery is palpably at war with the fundamental basis of our government,—the inalienable rights of man. It is a chief obstacle to the progress of republican institutions throughout the world. It is a standing reproach to our country abroad. . . . For these and other reasons, I am among those who labor and hope for the early and complete abolition of human, but especially of American slavery.<sup>33</sup>



Greeley promoted land reform for the unemployed in the West in a manner analogous to the way abolitionist Gerrit Smith promoted it in upstate New York. Smith was a supporter of John Brown and the anti-slavery Liberty Party, and offered from his own extensive holdings 3000 grants of land to blacks, both free and slave, and to other abolitionists like John Brown and Oberlin College administrators (then in Virginia) who were committed to the vision of a world free of slavery.<sup>34</sup> Greeley supported the Liberty Party's land reform measures, and sought to use the public domain for the benefit of the landless laboring classes, not the railroads or land speculators. According to Algie Martin Simmons, Greeley saw the Homestead Act in a humanitarian manner that was an extension of his other socially and politically radical causes: "Greeley advocated the homestead law as a means of granting all an equal share in the earth."<sup>35</sup>

Despite his genuine commitment to general human equality, it must be acknowledged that Horace Greeley, like others of his time, was nonetheless insensitive to indigenous cultures and the plight of the American Indians caused by eviction, forced sale, or military confiscation of their lands; likewise he sometimes expressed biased views. Of course, Native Americans originally possessed their lands in common, free of the concepts that land could be bought or sold, or be held as an individual's private property.<sup>36</sup>

One major reason the Wyandot Indians in the Kansas Territory opened their lands to purchase was that they were against slavery and wished to cooperate with abolitionists. Several of these Free State abolitionists were Germans, notably Charles Morasch and Phillip Knoblock, who in 1857 helped establish from within the holdings of the Wyandot the first and only Free State entry on the Missouri river, at Old Quindaro City and Landing, Kansas Territory.<sup>37</sup>

Many of the fighting men and political leaders during the Free State struggle were the Germans in the Kansas Territory.<sup>38</sup> Loren Taylor emphasizes: "Without question the new Irish and German settlers had 'Free State' sympathies. . . . The Germans and Irish immigrants joined [the Union army] in percentages unequalled by any other group in Wyandotte County. The only exception would be the African Americans. . . . 18 Germans from Wyandotte County joined the company of Captain Zesch in Leavenworth."<sup>39</sup>

Germans formed "the largest single ethnic group in this area [the eastern edge of Kansas, Wyandot, Quindaro, Lawrence] at the beginning of the Civil War."<sup>40</sup> Phillip Knoblock rose from the ranks to become a Union captain ultimately in charge of twenty-eight companies when attacking the forces of Confederate General Sterling Price at the Battle of Westport.<sup>41</sup> George Washington Deitzler (born in Pennsylvania of German descent) became a Union colonel (later general) and commanded Kansas troops, overseeing also



Charles Jennison's fearsome Jayhawkers.<sup>42</sup> Colonel Jennison was appointed acting brigadier general for his dramatic 1862 activities liberating slave "property" in Missouri, but was passed over for the official commission to this rank. When Jennison's ferocious military form of "practical abolitionism" was criticized by conservatives as "premature interference with slavery" and his tactics as too much committed to foraging (decried as plunder by Missourians), he resigned from the military believing he was being slandered and that he could not conduct the war with honor under a high command hostile to Jayhawker radicalism. General Deitzler became an antagonist, and Jennison was imprisoned for a short while at St. Louis. He was visited there by the sympathetic German forty-eighter General Franz Sigel. President Lincoln soon ordered Jennison's reinstatement to his former command, yet Jennison withdrew from military service. In the view of militant Unionists, General William T. Sherman's scorched earth policies in his famed March to the Sea vindicated the ruthlessness with which both Jennison and John Brown, Sr., prosecuted their campaigns against Missouri bushwhackers, slave owners, and their supporters.<sup>43</sup>

At one point during the war preparatory to a possible military offensive into Texas, Jennison's company was posted to Humboldt, Kansas Territory. Humboldt had been named for the great German natural scientist and staunch abolitionist Alexander von Humboldt by the forty-eighter Kansas German physician Dr. Moritz Harttmann.<sup>44</sup> Similarly George Washington Deitzler planned as early as 1857 to found a town near Humboldt to be called Guttenberg [*sic*]. These German settlements were explicitly conceived by the Kansas German abolitionists Dr. Karl Friedrich Kob (another forty-eighter) and Dr. Harttmann as components of a strategic "belt of freedom" intended to restrain the expansion of slaveholding lands. The new settlements would accomplish this in a peaceful and passive manner. Prior to the Civil War, Dr. Kob explained the linkage between the Germans of the Kansas Territory and Texas, both groups having abolitionist inclinations, in the descriptions of Humboldt and Guttenberg in his *Guide for German Settlers in the Kansas Territory* (1857):<sup>45</sup>

In western Texas there is already a strong, prosperous German anti-slavery settlement of 50,000–80,000 Germans. If we are successful in establishing German settlements in southern Kansas, we will be able to extend our hands to our brothers in Texas in a matter of a few years, and be able to build a belt of freedom around those unfortunate southern states afflicted with slavery.<sup>46</sup>

John Speer published the first abolitionist newspaper in the Kansas Territory.<sup>47</sup> His descendents have identified their heritage as Scots, and I am not

arguing that his inclusion in this essay derives from his ethnicity but rather his radical efforts against racism. The first issue of his *Kansas Pioneer* actually had to be printed in Ohio because he was refused the only available printing services in the Kansas Territory and Missouri which were controlled by pro-slavery forces. Because a pro-slavery paper in Kickapoo, Kansas Territory, was also called the *Kansas Pioneer*, Speer quickly changed his paper's name to *The Kansas Tribune*.<sup>48</sup> This indicated his respect for the *New York Tribune* and Greeley. For his many Territorial readers who also tilled the soil Speer promoted Greeley's views on farming. These were thought to be as important as his views on politics. He also editorialized staunchly on behalf of the "The German Vote".<sup>49</sup>

The German vote has constituted a new and important element in the South and West. This fact has until recently escaped attention, but is destined to become more and more prominent with the steady and rapid increase of this class of our population. It is a gratifying feature of this fact, that the German vote is almost invariably cast on the side of Freedom and antislavery. . . . Especially here in Kansas has this influence contributed materially to swell the preponderance on the side of the Free Institutions.<sup>50</sup>

Speer emphasized that "the Germans of Texas . . . are already so strong as to leave little doubt that, whenever a new State shall be formed in Western Texas, it will be a Free State."<sup>51</sup> When in 1855 a fraudulent election resulted in a pro-slavery legislature in the Kansas Territory, Speer opposed it fiercely. The election was controlled by Missouri mobs and at least one thousand non-residents came to Lawrence to vote. "It seems incredible in this age," Speer wrote, "that men should have come from other States armed with revolvers, knives, shot guns, rifles, and artillery, with tents and camp equipage, encamping the night before and striking their tents the morning after election, carrying the returns of their own fraudulent election with them. But such is the fact."<sup>52</sup> This legislature then decreed that it was a crime to deny the legality of slavery in the Territory. John Speer immediately published the following direct challenge to this decree in *The Kansas Tribune's* largest and boldest type face:

**Now we DO ASSERT and declare, despite all the bolts and bars of the iniquitous Legislature of Kansas, that 'PERSONS HAVE NOT THE RIGHT TO HOLD SLAVES IN THIS TERRITORY.'**

This has become known in Kansas Territorial history as "John Speer's Defy."<sup>53</sup> John Speer and his family thus became prime targets of Quantrill's pro-slavery Missouri death squad during the Civil War, and he lost two sons as a result



of Quantrill's notorious 1863 raid on Lawrence in which every male found was murdered in cold blood. Counts of the dead vary between 150 and 180 men and boys.<sup>54</sup>

Speer personally identified his own cultural heritage in print as a "Son of Pennsylvania," referring to an association of the many Free State pioneers who had emigrated from that state.<sup>55</sup> Of these Pennsylvanians very many were of German background. But because there was no "Germany" as such until its many regions were unified by Bismarck in 1871, descendents of earlier German-speaking immigrants to a place like Pennsylvania called Pennsylvania their home and "never really thought of themselves as Germans but as 'Pennsylvanians with a difference.'"<sup>56</sup>

Just as Speer stood with the German vote, Thomas Nast<sup>57</sup> clearly depicts Greeley and the *Tribune* in a post Civil War editorial caricature as standing with the "German Papers" and the "German Vote," fighting on for justice behind one of the Union's most prominent German-American generals, Franz Sigel. The political perspectives articulated in the anti-racist Civil War journalism of both Speer and Greeley resound with the Free State German voice and display this German forty-eighter intellectual genealogy<sup>58</sup> as well as the explicit anti-racism of Frederick Douglass.

It is an important yet little-known fact that the New England Immigrant Aid Society, the key force for Free State cultural transformation, sought particularly to increase German immigration to the Kansas Territory.<sup>59</sup> Evidence of this is their financial support for the publication of forty-eighter Dr. Karl Friedrich Kob's German language abolitionist newspaper, the *Kansas Zeitung*,<sup>60</sup> at Atchison, Kansas Territory, and their subvention of Kob's *Guide for German Settlers in the Kansas Territory*.<sup>61</sup> Its readers would find advertised in it several German businessmen already in the Territory: a German newspaper publisher (Kob); two German physicians (Kob and Harttmann); two German bakers; a German stationer; a German hotelier, a German pharmacist, a German brewer and barkeep, a German real estate agent (again Kob), and a German lawyer.

The Bavarian veteran of the 1849 democratic revolution in Hungary, Charles Kaiser, is one of the Territorial Kansas Germans remembered for riding with John Brown (in addition to August Bondi).<sup>62</sup> Usually called Dutch Charley, Kaiser fought along side Brown and Bondi at Black Jack. Six months after the battle, in December 1856, Kaiser, who had been murdered in cold blood by Missourians following the battle of Osawattomie three months earlier, and Brown were memorialized by Bondi and others (co-founders Benjamin, Cochran, Poindexter, and Mannes) who named streets<sup>63</sup> after them when they laid out the town of Greeley, Kansas Territory.<sup>64</sup> This town, named in honor of the great abolitionist journalist and defender of the rights of



labor, became a station in the Underground Railway. John Brown, who represented the same ideals, once secreted there eleven slaves he had liberated from Missouri for one month (January 1859).<sup>65</sup>

There is in Kansas also a Greeley County, on the Kansas/Colorado border. Within it there is a town of Horace and a town of Tribune with its Horace Greeley Museum. Greeley, Colorado, was founded as a utopian religious, agricultural, and temperance community—also as a tribute to the radical social philosophy and politics of Horace Greeley.

It has been said that at that time Horace Greeley was the nation's most powerful opinion maker,<sup>66</sup> and that no newspaper in America wielded as much influence as did the *New York Tribune*.<sup>67</sup> Greeley's paper was widely read in the Kansas Territory, where he visited in 1859.<sup>68</sup> His purpose was to attend the Territorial Republican Convention in May of that year in Osawatomie. Although Greeley was given an exceptionally warm reception in Lawrence,<sup>69</sup> the Osawatomie Republicans "Sat Down on" Greeley, suppressing his radical egalitarian advocacy of the ballot for all black Americans. They wished to restrict the right to vote in Kansas to white males. In contrast a year earlier on 13 May 1858, the more radical Kansas residents of Quindaro, many of them Kansas Germans, had approved African American suffrage in their municipal elections.<sup>70</sup>

Attempting to explain the general motivation and behavior prevalent within the Kansas Free State element, Nicole Etcheson curiously valorizes the (Northern Democratic) logic of Stephen Douglas and the stratagem of popular sovereignty as if these were the only operative forces behind the Kansas Free State movement. She sees white interest in popular sovereignty in a manner rather detached from humanitarian interest in the rights of blacks. In her account, Free State interests in white racial superiority and white economic and political advancement were the chief goods sought even by most anti-slavery Kansans. While many Free Staters certainly articulated and acted upon such feelings, radicals like John Speer denounced this mentality as characteristic of "pseudo free state" men and the "trembling cowardly conservatives."<sup>71</sup> Etcheson's account tends to contest and diminish the historical influence of the Kansas radicals whose authentic opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act and whose role as catalysts within the Republican party and in Kansas Territorial history was absolutely pivotal. In contrast to Etcheson, the present essay makes an intercultural and historiographical point of the Kansas Territorial vanguard commitment to racial equality and anti-racist solidarity with black Americans: for example, in the struggle for the black franchise in Quindaro and Osawatomie, in the Kansas Territorial branches of the Underground Railroad, and in the formation of black units in the Kansas militia. Note also the Free State anthem of the Territorial Germans, "Hurrah—Frei Kansas!" which



proclaims that liberty belongs to “Dem schwarzen und dem roten, Sowie dem weißen Mann! [The black and the red, as well as the white man].”<sup>72</sup>

Later, Greeley pressed Lincoln in a famous open letter, “Prayer of Twenty Millions,” published in the *New York Tribune* 20 August 1862, to move boldly forward toward emancipation, but Lincoln deflected the challenge. Greeley clearly found an explicit egalitarianism, anti-racism, and advocacy for international workforce solidarity more congenial, and his consistent position is reflected in his relationship to a prominent German forty-eighter in exile in England, Karl Marx. Greeley enlisted Marx to write for his paper as early as 1851.

### “When Karl Marx Worked for Horace Greeley”<sup>73</sup>

The *New York Tribune's* editorial of 25 October 1851 drew attention to the contribution of a new foreign correspondent—from Germany—whom Greeley extolled as “one of the clearest and most vigorous writers that country has produced—no matter what may be the judgment of the critical upon his public opinions in the sphere of political and social philosophy.”<sup>74</sup> This first article was a long piece on the 1848–49 revolution and counter-revolution in Europe under the byline of Karl Marx. Articles by Marx would appear almost weekly in a collaboration that continued for ten years.<sup>75</sup> The journalistic partnership with Greeley and the *Tribune* “sustained Karl Marx over the years when he was mapping out his crowning tract of overthrow, *Das Kapital*.”<sup>76</sup>

Although he was not directly involved in the abolitionist movement, Marx was highly excited and impressed by this movement. He articulated the economic implications of the anti-slavery struggle waged in the Kansas Territory and then in the larger context of the U.S. Civil War. Much of the material from over 500 dispatches by Marx to the *Tribune* actually made its way into *Capital*, and Marx vividly connected an analysis of American slavery with lessons for the European and American labor force in the first volume of his opus magnum. Slavery, of course, was primarily a forced labor system with implications also for the labor market.<sup>77</sup> Marx draws the overall lesson of the anti-slavery struggle for the American workforce in a memorable section of *Capital*:

In the United States of North America every independent movement of the workers was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. *Labour cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded.* But out of the death of slavery a new life at once arose. The first fruit of the Civil War was the eight hours' agitation.<sup>78</sup>

These passages from *Capital* are significant even if brief.<sup>79</sup> Marx's conclusions and observations here undergird his general notions of dialectics,

learning, and cultural transformation, and furnish the Marxist warrant for the ongoing strategic importance of an explicitly anti-racist politics of liberation for labor. He explicitly refers to Greeley's *New York Tribune* in the pages of *Das Kapital*.<sup>80</sup> Marx wrote quite substantively in the *Tribune* about American slavery and the importance of the Free State struggle in Kansas. He also wrote about these topics and about the subsequent Civil War for European publications.<sup>81</sup> Marx's Civil War articles have been (in at least three different editions) collected into a volume of their own,<sup>82</sup> and are also found in the *Marx-Engels Collected Works*, Volume 19.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, the writings of Marx (and Engels) on the United States of America are seldom taken up as a research project.<sup>84</sup>

### **Kansas and Germans in the Civil War Journalism of Karl Marx: 1861–62**

During the 1850s and 1860s Marx became Greeley's collaborator and spokesman for radical German politics. On the one hand, he was an observer, but, on the other hand, he was also an authoritative voice in favor of the fundamental changes that Greeley hoped for. It is little known how extensively Marx wrote about the struggle in the Kansas Territory. One of his earliest and most lengthy articles emphasizes the "armed emissaries of the slaveholders, border rabble from Missouri" who "fell upon Kansas:"

For hardly had the Kansas-Nebraska Bill gone through, which wiped out the geographical boundary-line of slavery and made its introduction into new Territories subject to the will of the majority of the settlers, when armed emissaries of the slaveholders, border rabble from Missouri and Arkansas, with bowie-knife in one hand and revolver in the other, fell upon Kansas and sought by the most unheard-of atrocities to dislodge its settlers from the Territory colonised by them. These raids were supported by the central government in Washington.<sup>85</sup>

As Marx saw it, the U.S. federal government clearly desired the extension of slavery into the Kansas Territory by violent means. He took special note of the countervailing fact that "a relief organisation was formed to support Kansas with men, arms and money."<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, "[w]hat they [the Southern party] had attempted by way of example with regard to Kansas, to force slavery on a Territory through the central government against the will of the settlers themselves, they now set up as law for all the Territories of the Union."<sup>87</sup>

In the *New York Tribune* Marx presented the South as the aggressor<sup>88</sup> in the Civil War and pointed to the complicity of James Buchanan and the federal government in the run up to this conflict. He wrote: "[I]t ought to be remembered that it was not the North, but the South, that undertook this



war . . . the South, on its part, inaugurated the war by loudly proclaiming 'the peculiar institution' as the only and main end of the rebellion."<sup>89</sup> In addition, he specifically spoke to the "lot of the German and Irishman" in America in explicit connection to any expansion of the influence of the slave states:

What would in fact take place would be not a dissolution of the Union, but a *reorganisation* of it, a *reorganisation on the basis of slavery*, under the recognised control of the slaveholding oligarchy. The plan of such a reorganisation has been openly proclaimed by the principal speakers of the South at the Congress of Montgomery and explains the paragraph of the new Constitution which leaves it open to every state of the old Union to join the new Confederacy. The slave system would infect the whole Union. In the Northern states, where Negro slavery is in practice unworkable, the white working class would gradually be forced down to the level of helotry. This would fully accord with the loudly proclaimed principle that only certain races are capable of freedom, and as *the actual labour is the lot of the Negro in the South, so in the North it is the lot of the German and the Irishman, or their direct descendants.*

The present struggle between the South and North is, therefore, nothing but a struggle between two social systems, the system of slavery and the system of free labor. The struggle has broken out because the two systems can no longer live peacefully side by side on the North American continent. It can only be ended by the victory of one system or the other.<sup>90</sup>

In "the Kansas war" Marx, however, emphasized the positives for the North and that the North had the vision and the will to prevail in this conflict.

The Kansas war, the formation of the Republican party, and the large vote cast for Frémont during the Presidential election of 1856, were so many palpable proofs that the North had accumulated sufficient energies to rectify the aberrations which United States history, under the slaveowners' pressure, had undergone, for over half a century, and to make it return to the true principles of its development.<sup>91</sup>

Marx's praise for "the true principles" of American democracy represented by the North contrasts sharply with his criticisms of England and the English press. In the same *Tribune* article he wrote: "Anti-Slavery England cannot sympathize with the North . . . because . . . the North . . . had its Democratic institutions tainted by the slave driver's prejudices . . . because its war is no Abolitionist war. . . ."<sup>92</sup> Marx dismisses this position as ingenuous.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, "The English press is more Southern than the South itself."<sup>94</sup> Marx points out that the English press vituperates not only against the North and its President, but against German-Americans fighting in its Union troops:

English journalism . . . has broken its own record this past year by its "malignant brutality" against the United States. . . . *The Times* [of London],

in bold Garamond type, called President Lincoln “a respectable buffoon,” his cabinet ministers “a gang of rogues and ruffraff,” and the army of the United States “an army whose officers are Yankee swindlers and whose privates are German thieves.”<sup>95</sup>

Just a few months earlier Marx reported on the source of an account of developments in the U.S. Civil War he had lately received (as it happens, not from a German private, but) from “[o]ne of my friends, a German officer, who fought under the star-spangled banner in Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Tennessee in turn”<sup>96</sup> namely, Colonel Joseph Weydemeyer, a member of the Communist League in Germany 1848–49 and later said to be the first person to propagate Marxism in the United States.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, Marx (with Engels) underscored the German name of a Union general and gives an explicit nod to his German ethnicity:

After a march of about twelve miles (English) in a twenty-four hours’ down-pour and through veritable seas of mud, 8,000 Union troops under General *Heintzelman* (of German descent, but born in Pennsylvania) arrived. . . . If the Congress at Washington wanted to pass a vote of thanks, it should have been to General Heintzelman, who saved the Yankees from a second Bull Run.<sup>98</sup>

The national military even in the North was generally controlled by the pro-slavery faction. The German-American forty-eighters infused an anti-slavery element into the upper ranks out of all proportion to their numbers in the military overall. In addition to Heintzelman, there were also the prominent German-American Generals Carl Schurz, Franz Sigel, Alexander von Schimmelpennig, August Willich, Adolf von Steinwehr, Max von Weber, Friedrich Salomon, Julius Stahel, Peter Osterhaus, Ludwig Blenker, and the immensely popular Colonel Friedrich Hecker. German-American cultural leaders like Emil Praetorius, Friedrich Kapp, Adolf Douai, Reinhold Solger, and Karl Heinzen also had significant political impact.<sup>99</sup>

Marx also had immense respect and praise for Colonel Charles Jennison who succeeded Captain John Brown, Jr.,<sup>100</sup> as leader of the ardently abolitionist Jayhawkers, the 7th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry. Marx read of Jennison’s abolitionist politics from an article titled “Camp Jennison. Kansas City, Tuesday, Nov. 12, 1861” published in Greeley’s *New York Tribune*<sup>101</sup> and passed the information on to Europe through the press in Vienna:

Colonel *Jennison* in Kansas has surpassed all his military predecessors by an address to his troops which contains the following passage: “No temporising with rebels and those sympathising with them. I have told General Frémont that I would not have drawn my sword had I thought that slavery



would outlast this struggle. The slaves of rebels will always find protection in this camp and we will defend them to the last man and the last bullet. I want no men who are *not Abolitionists*, I have no use for them and I hope that there are no such people among us, for everyone knows that slavery is the basis, the centre and the vertex of this infernal war. Should the government disapprove of my action it can take back my patent, but in that case I shall act on my own hook even if in the beginning I can only count on six men." The slavery question is being solved in practice in the border slave states even now, especially in *Missouri*.<sup>102</sup>

Inspired by what he read of Jennison's Jayhawkers, Marx conveyed this important information to European readers, whom he also believed would appreciate Jennison's recognition of the direct relationship of emancipatory politics to emancipatory practice. Marx also communicated European sentiments to U.S. readers through the *Tribune*:

The peoples of Europe know that the Southern slaveocracy commenced that war with the declaration that the continuance of slaveocracy was no longer compatible with the continuance of the Union. Consequently, the people of Europe know that a fight for the continuance of the Union is a fight against the continuance of slaveocracy—that in this contest the highest form of popular self-government till now realized is giving battle to the meanest and most shameless form of man's enslaving recorded in the annals of history.<sup>103</sup>

Marx and Europe were learning from the U.S. experience; they were not leading it, which is not to say there was not some give and take. As for example when Greeley published statements of opinion by Marx and Engels as his own editorial positions. Likewise, Karl Friedrich Kob's *Kansas Zeitung* published explicit front page discussions of communism and socialism as these were advocated by the Boston-based German-American socialist, free thinker, and abolitionist Adolf Douai.<sup>104</sup> Like other socialists, Douai was driven out of Texas by racist slaveholders around 1856. In 1883, Douai was so prominent in America that he was chosen to deliver the eulogy for Karl Marx at Cooper Union in New York City.<sup>105</sup> But it is precisely from the perspective of Europe that Marx concludes "The first grand war of contemporaneous history is the American war."<sup>106</sup>

Marx was crediting the U.S. Civil War with even more democratic potential than the European uprisings of 1848–49. One of the Civil War's chief lessons is that Lincoln had to make tactical compromises along the way with conservative Unionists who did not support emancipation, yet emancipation was the key goal that (however painfully postponed) Lincoln never abandoned. Lincoln's "manifesto abolishing slavery" is, according to Marx:<sup>107</sup>

The most important document in American history since the establishment of the Union, tantamount to tearing up the old American Constitution. . . . Lincoln's place in the history of the United States and mankind will . . . be next to that of Washington! . . . The New World has never achieved a greater triumph than by this demonstration that, given its political and social organization, ordinary people of good will can accomplish feats which only heroes could accomplish in the old world!<sup>108</sup>

Marx's journalistic writing did pay close attention to events unfolding around the U.S. Civil War. This was also a reflection of Marx's ultimate respect for Greeley,<sup>109</sup> Bleeding Kansas, and Germans fighting for the Union. He carefully articulated and supported the abolitionist goals of this struggle in his profession as a multilingual and multicultural journalist, and he engaged explicitly in building international solidarity for the war's most radical cause: emancipation.<sup>110</sup> In a similar vein, Frederick Douglass would likewise evaluate Lincoln's strategy dialectically. In his carefully considered retrospective comments<sup>111</sup> Douglass furnished a confirmation of the evaluation of Lincoln published earlier by Marx indicating his admiration for Lincoln as a world-historical figure and the emancipation struggle as a world-historical struggle.

Horace Greeley's journalistic work and influence, reflected in the German forty-eighters like August Bondi and Karl Marx, represented a significant transformative force in American history. It was likewise consistent with the African American liberation agenda articulated by Frederick Douglass. The movement for greater racial and political equality in Kansas set this Free State history apart from what some recent historians have depicted as a mere acceptance of white privilege by many liberals in the struggle for a slavery-free Union. Future generations of radical Americans—facing resurgent racism and cultural backlash in an era of intensifying economic and political polarization—can find a genuine precedent here. Political radicalism and the defense of racial equality were indispensable catalysts at that time for the advancement of human rights in the United States. If that international and intercultural movement also required immense strategic patience, this history clearly vindicates the vanguard political praxis<sup>112</sup> that Frederick Douglass put forward and which was modeled by Horace Greeley, the Kansas German forty-eighters, and Karl Marx. Without their radical egalitarianism, the pragmatism of Lincoln and much of the Kansas Free State struggle would not have achieved its fullest potential.

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Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Nicole Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> The heterodoxy of this essay derives from its academic appreciation of intercultural issues in historical research and writing as well as the need for a reconstructed multicultural curriculum in the humanities and social sciences in higher education today. I am indebted to the scholarly excitement widely generated on these and related themes by Fred Whitehead, long-time Kansas editor of the *Freethought History* newsletter and the historical anthology *Freethought on the American Frontier* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1992). Steve Spartan likewise first evoked my interest in Free State history with visits years ago to the Old Quindaro site of German abolitionist immigration to the area near Kansas City, Kansas. This account is especially indebted to several kind suggestions from Frank Baron and the anonymous reviewers for the *Yearbook of German-American Studies*. I am of course solely responsible for any weaknesses that might remain in this report of my ongoing research.

<sup>3</sup> See for example: Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwurm's "The First Negro Newspaper's Opening Editorial, 1827" (16 March 1827) that emphatically argued the necessity of blacks pleading their own cause; Henry Highland Garnet's "Address to the Slaves of the United States of America" (16 August 1843) which was a radical call to black and slave resistance; Jermain Wesley Loguen's bold assertion of black manhood and black pride in "I am a Fugitive Slave," (1850); and Frederick Douglass's "What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of July?" (1852). All collected (some in abridged form) in Herbert Aptheker [ed.], *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States* with a Preface by Dr. W. E. B. DuBois (New York: Citadel Press, 1969). I thank Melanie J. Scott for turning my attention to these pivotal African American materials.

<sup>4</sup> Douglass in James Daley, ed., "What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of July?" [unabridged] *Great Speeches by African Americans* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2006), 30.

<sup>5</sup> Boston abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison also emphasized the attention German radicals began to give to abolition. Two years after Douglass's call, he published a piece in the *Liberator* by German abolitionists criticizing forty-eighter Louis Kossuth's refusal to take a stand on abolition. Kossuth "the man who pretends to represent in his person the European Democracy . . ." was considered by these German abolitionists derelict in his emancipatory duty toward slaves in America. See "The German Radicals, Kossuth and the Germans" in *The Liberator*, Friday, 21 July 1854 [reprinted from the *Commonwealth*].

<sup>6</sup> An excellent overview of the central historiographical controversies in the past century's welter of published scholarly accounts addressing the meaning of Bleeding Kansas is offered by Gunja SenGupta, "Bleeding Kansas: Review Essay" in Virgil W. Dean, ed., *Territorial Kansas Reader* (Topeka, KS: Kansas State Historical Society, 2005), 319–54.

<sup>7</sup> A recent Greeley biographer also acknowledges this contention about the centrality of Kansas and abolition in the life of Greeley, though the title of his account still persists in the conventional wisdom with regard to "Go west." In a chapter on Greeley's battle against slavery, Coy F. Cross asserts: Greeley "encouraged brave men, whom neither self-interest nor threat of violence could divert from their purpose to emigrate to Kansas." See Coy F. Cross II, *Go West Young Man!* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 82.

<sup>8</sup> University of Kansas [Lawrence] Germanist, Frank Baron, has recently presented key testimony with regard to the abolitionist aspect of Horace Greeley's philosophy and politics. See Frank Baron, "German Republicans and Radicals in the Struggle for a Slave-Free Kansas: Charles F. Kob and August Bondi," *Yearbook of German-American Studies [YGAS]* 40 (2005): 3–26. Thanks also to *YGAS* editor, William Keel, for featuring in this volume key materials on Free State Germans in Kansas including the "German-American abolitionist song," *ibid.*, ix–x.

<sup>9</sup> August Bondi, *The Autobiography of August Bondi 1833–1907* (Galesburg, IL: Wagoner Printing Company, 1910). See excerpts edited by Frank Baron in *YGAS* 40 (2005): 116. I owe this insight to Frank Baron, *ibid.*, 12–13.

<sup>10</sup> Greeley, *New York Daily Tribune*, 27 January 1855. Quoted in Baron, *ibid.* 12–13.

<sup>11</sup> Greeley, *New York Daily Tribune*, 6 March 1855. Quoted in Baron, *ibid.*, 13.

<sup>12</sup> Baron, *ibid.*, 12.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *John Brown* (New York: International Publishers, [1909] 1996), 117–28.

<sup>15</sup> See Bondi, *Autobiography*, 131–33.

<sup>16</sup> Craig Miner, “Historic Ground, The Ongoing Enterprise of Kansas Territorial History,” *Kansas History* 27, 1–2, (Spring-Summer 2004): 12. Redpath, however, came to advocate the emigration of black Americans to Haiti.

<sup>17</sup> See the reflections of Frederick Douglass, “Oration In Memory Of Abraham Lincoln, Delivered At The Unveiling Of The Freedmen’s Monument In Memory Of Abraham Lincoln, In Lincoln Park, Washington, D.C., April 14, 1876.” <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?documentprint=39>.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Fuller, “‘Go West, young man’—An Elusive Slogan,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 100, no. 3 (November 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Some historians also contend that this statement was derived from a published utterance fourteen years earlier by John Soule, rather than Horace Greeley, in a *Terra Haute*, Indiana newspaper. Fuller, *op. cit.* concludes that the phrase did not come from Soule.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas A. Bailey, *The American Pageant* (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1961).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 338.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 491.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 490.

<sup>24</sup> Multicultural educational theorists today are well aware of the fact that U.S. history textbooks, especially those used in high school, have tended to be sanitized and slanted especially playing down resistance to entrenched class, race, and gender privilege. See especially James Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me* (New York: Touchstone, 1995); Howard Kahane and Nancy Cavender, *Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric* (Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth, 2006), 313–49; John Marciano, *Civic Illiteracy and Education* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997); Michael W. Apple, *Education and Power* (New York: Routledge, 1995); William L. Griffen and John Marciano, *Teaching the Vietnam War* (Montclair, NJ: Allenheld Osmun, 1979); Frances Fitzgerald, *America Revised: History School Books in the Twentieth Century* (Boston: Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1979); Richard O. Boyer and Herbert M. Morais, *Labor’s Untold Story* (New York: United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America [UE], 1976).

<sup>25</sup> Horace Greeley, *The New Yorker*, 3 June 1837. This citation from Roy Marvin Robbins, “Horace Greeley: Land Reform and Unemployment, 1837–1862,” *Agricultural History*, VII, 18 (January 1933): 18–41.

<sup>26</sup> David Fennimore (1996) on “Horace Greeley and the Shiftless State of Kansas,” <http://wolfweb.unr.edu/homepage/fennimore/greeley2.html#west>.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Eugene Victor Debs, “The American Movement” in *DEBS: His Life, Writings, and Speeches* (Girard, KS: The Appeal to Reason Press, 1908). See <http://www.marxists.org/archive/debs/works/1898/america.htm>.

<sup>29</sup> See Charles Sotheran, *Horace Greeley and other Pioneers of American Socialism* (New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1915) 29, 40.



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<sup>30</sup> “[T]he church of this country is not only indifferent to the wrongs of the slave, it actually takes sides with the oppressors . . . and this horrible blasphemy is palmed off upon the world for Christianity. . . . For my part, I would say Welcome infidelity! Welcome atheism!”—Douglass in James Daley, ed., “What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of July?” [unabridged] *Great Speeches by African Americans* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2006), 27.

<sup>31</sup> Sotheran, 87.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 55–56.

<sup>34</sup> See Chester G. Hearn, *Companions in Conspiracy: John Brown and Gerrit Smith* (Gettysburg, PA: Thomas Publishers, 1996), 11, 17.

<sup>35</sup> Algie Martin Simmons, *Social Forces in American History* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1911; New York: the International Publishers, 1926; Lawrence, KS: Carrie Books, 2003), chapter 21. See [http://vlib.iuc.edu/carric/texts/carric\\_books/simons/21.html](http://vlib.iuc.edu/carric/texts/carric_books/simons/21.html).

<sup>36</sup> Although Native Americans held their lands in common, they could exchange hunting rights and of course did eventually sell land to early European developers such as the Holland Land Company in New York State.

<sup>37</sup> See Loren Taylor, *Consolidated Ethnic History of Wyandotte County* (Kansas City, KS: Kansas Ethnic Council, Inc., 2000), 38–40.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 342.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Marx has some notable remarks on Jennison, see below. Also see Stephen Z. Starr, *Jennison's Jayhawkers* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 141.

<sup>43</sup> Such was the explicit view of the German abolitionist, Charles Leonhardt, a general in the Kansas militia. See Todd Mildfelt, *The Secret Danites: Kansas' First Jayhawkers* (Richmond, KS: Todd Mildfelt Publishing, 2003), 103.

<sup>44</sup> See Frank Baron and G. Scott Seeger, “Moritz Harttmann (1817–1900) in Kansas: A Forgotten German Pioneer of Lawrence and Humboldt,” *YGAS* 39, (2004): 1–22.

<sup>45</sup> Karl Friedrich Kob, *Wegweiser für Ansiedler im Territorium Kansas* (New York: Teubner, 1857); reprinted in *YGAS* 40 (2005): 29–74.

<sup>46</sup> Karl Friedrich Kob, *Excerpts from Guide for Settlers in Kansas Territory* (translated by Julia Trumpold and William Keel) *YGAS* 40 (2005): 80. Ralph Waldo Emerson also wrote on this point: “We intend to set & to keep a *cordon sanitaire* all around the infected district, & by no means suffer the pestilence to spread.” See Len Gougeon and Joel Myerson, eds., *Emerson's Antislavery Writings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), xlvi.

<sup>47</sup> John Speer, born in the United States with a characteristically German surname, was also notably involved in the Kansas Free State struggle from the beginning. See also Sidney Clarke, “The Work of John Speer,” *Kansas State Historical Society Collections*, V. 10, 482–83, *Kansas State Historical Society locator*: S. P. 906 K13, v.10, 480. Clarke very correctly stresses that “No history of Kansas would be complete that failed to record his [Speer's] long and conspicuous identification with all that is good and true in building up the progressive institutions of that great commonwealth.” *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> See John Speer's 1878 letter, “Pennsylvania's Sons in Kansas History,” in *The Champion*, Atchison, Kansas, 6 March 1878, *Kansas State Historical Society locator*: 978.1 –At2.

<sup>49</sup> Frank Baron provided primary source materials from *The Kansas Tribune* on the German vote and Greeley. See: “Agriculture: Horace Greeley's Address” *The Kansas Tribune*, Lawrence, Kansas, 24 October 1855.

<sup>50</sup> *The Kansas Tribune*, Lawrence, Kansas, 8 May 1858.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> "Address by Hon. John Speer," in *The Kansas Memorial: A Report of the Old Settlers' Meeting held at Bismarck Grove, Kansas, September 1879* (Kansas City, MO: Press of Ramsey, Millet & Hudson, 1880), 177.

<sup>53</sup> Speer's historic challenge to slave power is reproduced in Sidney Clarke, "The Work of John Speer," 483.

<sup>54</sup> See also John Speer's latter-day reflections on this as President of the Kansas State Historical Society, 17 January 1899, "The Burning of Osceola, Mo., by Lane, and the Quantrill Massacre Contrasted," *Kansas State Historical Society Collections*, 6: 305–12.

<sup>55</sup> See John Speer's 1878 letter, "Pennsylvania's Sons in Kansas History," in *The Champion*, Atchison, Kansas, 6 March 1878, Kansas State Historical Society locator: 978.1 –At2. See also "Pennsylvania and Kansas" and "The Pennsylvanians" in *The Champion*, Atchison, Kansas, 23 February 1878, Kansas State Historical Society locator: 978.1 –At2. Speer's letter was a response to his exclusion from the Atchison newspaper's account of accomplishments in Kansas by the "Sons of Pennsylvania."

<sup>56</sup> See David L. Valuska and Christian B. Keller, *Damn Dutch: Pennsylvania Germans at Gettysburg* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2004), 3.

<sup>57</sup> *Harpers Weekly*, 6 November 1869 (720). Nast was very negative, however, about Greeley's 1872 presidential campaign.

<sup>58</sup> One important indication of this was Greeley's appeal to the German-American audience. His massive two-volume history of the Civil War was published in German translation by a U.S. company for German-American consumption in 1865. Greeley's respect for German-Americans involved in the Kansas Free State struggle is reflected in his depiction of Quantrill's destruction of Lawrence. "They laid low every Negro and German they could get their hands on"—Horace Greeley, *Der Große Konflikt in Amerika* (Hartford: Verlag von O.D. Case und Compagnie, 1865), 2:444. Quantrill did have every Lawrence male adult killed who could be found.

<sup>59</sup> We owe it to Frank Baron, William Keel, and the *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 40 (2005), published in 2006, that we have at hand today the names of several not-to-be-forgotten Free State Germans of Kansas. Mention has already been made of Dr. Karl Friedrich Kob, Dr. Moritz Hartmann, General George Washington Deitzler, and August Bondi. Other prominent figures also included: Charles Leonhardt, Jacob Benjamin, and Charles Kaiser. It is noteworthy that of these Bondi and Benjamin were of German-Jewish heritage, as was Theodor Wiener, a close friend of Bondi who also served with John Brown, who had emigrated from the nineteenth-century Prussian province of Posen (Poland).

<sup>60</sup> Eleanor L. Turk, "The Germans of Atchison 1854–59," in Virgil W. Dean, ed., *Territorial Kansas Reader* (Topeka, KS: Kansas State Historical Society, 2005), 303.

<sup>61</sup> Baron, "German Republicans and Radicals," 7.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 13. Further, according to "The German Immigration," a front page article in the *New York Daily Times* of 6 January 1855: "It is very interesting to know that the Emigrant Aid Association have accomplished so much in introducing sturdy New England settlers into the Kansas Territory . . . but . . . the true policy of those associations in Massachusetts and New-York is not to induce New England or New-York settlers to emigrate, but to turn to Kansas the great currents of German Immigration."

<sup>63</sup> Which persist to this day.

<sup>64</sup> *The Autobiography of August Bondi 1833–1907* (Galesburg, IL: Wagoner Printing Company, 1910). See excerpts edited by Frank Baron in *YGAS* 40 (2005): this reference 147.

<sup>65</sup> Mildfelt, 74–76.

<sup>66</sup> See Christopher Corbett, *Orphans Preferred: The Twisted Truth and Lasting Legend of the Pony Express* (New York: Broadway Publishers, 2003).



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<sup>67</sup> See Roy M. Robbins, *Our Landed Heritage: The Public Domain, 1776–1936* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1932) who cites Willard G. Bleyer, *Main Currents in the History of American Journalism* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1927), 228.

<sup>68</sup> Martha B. Caldwell, "When Horace Greeley Visited Kansas in 1859," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 9, 2 (May 1940): 115–40. [http://www.kshs.org/publicat/khq/1940/40\\_2\\_caldwell.htm](http://www.kshs.org/publicat/khq/1940/40_2_caldwell.htm).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>70</sup> See Taylor, 106. See Henry Ketcham's chapter "Lincoln and Greeley" in *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (1901), <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext04/lflcn10.txt>.

<sup>71</sup> John Speer, "Address by Hon. John Speer," in *The Kansas Memorial*, 181.

<sup>72</sup> See William Keel, "From the Editor," *YGAS* 40 (2005): ix–x.

<sup>73</sup> This apt and memorable phrase comes from an extraordinary article (for a Cold War year like 1957) published in the *American Heritage Magazine* by William Harlan Hale from which much of the following account is drawn. Actually Marx was engaged by Greeley's foreign editor Charles A. Dana who had met Marx in Cologne. See Karl Obermann, *Joseph Weydemeyer: Pioneer of American Socialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1947), 27.

<sup>74</sup> William Harlan Hale, "When Karl Marx Worked for Horace Greeley," *American Heritage Magazine* 8, 3 (April 1957). Much of what follows is drawn from Hale. [http://www.americanheritage.com/articles/magazine/ah/1957/3/1957\\_3\\_20.shtml](http://www.americanheritage.com/articles/magazine/ah/1957/3/1957_3_20.shtml).

<sup>75</sup> According to Hale, many of "Marx's" contributions, including this first one were ghost-written by Frederick Engels. Hale contends that Greeley also published Marx's (and Engels's) opinions in the *Tribune* as his own editorials! Saul K. Padover contends there are 84 of these. Saul K. Padover, *Karl Marx: On America and the Civil War* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1972), xviii.

<sup>76</sup> Hale, "When Karl Marx." Rather than "overthrow" *Capital* deals with an economic, sociological, and historical analysis of capitalism.

<sup>77</sup> On this point Marx includes the following heading in *Capital* volume one, chapter ten, part 7: "Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur [Change but the name, and the story is told of yourself]." See Karl Marx, *Capital*, translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), 293: "It is a maxim of slave management, in slave importing countries, that the most effective economy is that which takes out of the human chattel in the shortest space of time the utmost amount of exertion it is capable of putting forth. . . ." "Change but the name, and the story is told of yourself." For slave trade read labor market, for Kentucky and Virginia, Ireland and the agricultural districts of England, Scotland and Wales, for Africa, Germany . . . the London labor market is always over-stocked with German and other candidates for death."

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 329, emphasis added.

<sup>79</sup> See also *Capital* vol. three, part 5, chapter 23 and other excerpts in Padover, 21–27.

<sup>80</sup> Karl Marx, *Das Kapital* in *Marx-Engels Werke* Bd. 23:758n. In this context Marx also mentions the name of Harriet Beecher Stowe.

<sup>81</sup> In particular the Viennese liberal newspaper, *Die Presse*. See articles collected in *Marx-Engels Collected Works [MECW]*, vol. 19 (New York: International Publishers, 1984).

<sup>82</sup> See Padover and also Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Civil War in the United States* (New York: International Publishers, 1961). Also Henry M. Christman, *The American Journalism of Marx and Engels* (New York: The New American Library, 1966), and most recently, James Ledbetter, *Dispatches for the New York Tribune: Selected Journalism of Karl Marx* (London: Penguin, 2007).

<sup>83</sup> *MECW*, vol. 19.

<sup>84</sup> Malcolm Sylvers, "Marx, Engels und die USA—ein Forschungsprojekt über ein wenig beachtetes Thema," *Marx-Engels Jahrbuch* 2004, 31–53.



<sup>85</sup> Karl Marx, "The North American Civil War," *Die Presse* [Vienna, Austria], no. 293, 25 October 1861; in *MECW*, 19:38.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 41. Ralph Waldo Emerson had earlier expressed similar sentiments: "There is this particularity about the case of Kansas, that all the right is on one side. . . . [T]he people of Kansas ask for bread, clothes, arms and men, to save them alive, and to enable them to stand against these enemies of the human race. . . . Who doubts that Kansas would have been well settled, if the United States had let it alone? The government armed and led the ruffians against the poor farmers. I do not know any story so gloomy as the politics of this country." Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Kansas Relief Meeting, 10 September 1856" in *Emerson's Antislavery Writings*, Len Gougeon and Joel Myerson, eds. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 111, 113.

<sup>88</sup> Frederick Douglass saw a Southern reorganization of the U.S. economy on the basis of slavery coming (almost nine years earlier) after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law: "By an act of the American Congress, not yet two years old, slavery has been nationalized in its most horrible and revolting form. By that act, Mason and Dixon's line has been obliterated; New York has become Virginia; and the power to hold, hunt, and sell men, women, and children as slaves remains no longer a mere state institution, but is now an institution of the whole United States. The power is coextensive with the star spangled banner and American Christianity." Douglass, 25–26. Douglass's phrase "New York has become Virginia" also presages Marx's formulations in *Capital* about "changing the name, but the story is told of yourself" (cf. Note 77, above).

<sup>89</sup> See Marx's "The American Question in England," *New York Daily Tribune*, No. 6403, 11 October 1861; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:8.

<sup>90</sup> Karl Marx, "The Civil War in the United States," *Die Presse*, no. 306, 7 November 1861; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:50, emphasis added.

<sup>91</sup> Karl Marx, "The American Question in England," *New York Daily Tribune*, no. 6403, 11 October 1861; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:10.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 11–12. Marx emphasizes the hypocrisy of the British, who formally abolished slavery in 1807, yet traded profitably for decades thereafter with the American slaveocracy.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>94</sup> Karl Marx, "Symptoms of Disintegration in the Southern Confederacy," *Die Presse*, no. 313, 14 November 1862. *MECW*, 19:260.

<sup>95</sup> Karl Marx, "Russell's Protest Against American Rudeness," *Die Presse*, no. 233, 24 August 1862; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:230–31.

<sup>96</sup> Karl Marx, "The Situation in North America" *Die Presse* no. 309, 19 November 1862; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:257.

<sup>97</sup> Editors, *MECW*, 19:427. See also Karl Obermann, *Joseph Weydemeyer: Pioneer of American Socialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1947).

<sup>98</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "The Situation in the American Theater of War," *Die Presse* no. 148, 30 May 1862; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:207–8. Emphasis in original.

<sup>99</sup> See Ella Lonn, "The Forty-eighters in the Civil War," in A. E. Zucker [ed.], *The Forty-eighters* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1950); also Carl Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution: The German Forty-eighters in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952); see also Don Heinrich Tolzmann, ed., *The German-American Forty-eighters, 1848-1998* (Cincinnati: Max Kade Center, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, 1998); see further Fred Whitehead, "The Legacy of 1848" *Freethought History* 25 (1998) and "August Willich," *Freethought History* 23 (1997).

<sup>100</sup> John, Jr. was the eldest son of John Brown, Sr.

<sup>101</sup> *New York Daily Tribune*, no. 6441, 25 November 1861. See editors' comment *MECW*, 19:116.



## Horace Greeley and German Forty-Eighters in the Kansas Free State Struggle

<sup>102</sup> Karl Marx, "The Crisis over the Slavery Issue," *Die Presse*, no. 343, 14 December 1861; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:116. Emphasis in original.

<sup>103</sup> Karl Marx, "The London *Times* on the Orleans Princes in America," *New York Daily Tribune*, no. 6426, 7 November 1861; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:30.

<sup>104</sup> See *Kansas Zeitung. Ein Organ für freies Wort, freien Boden und freie Männer*, Atchison, Kansas Territory, 22 July 1857.

<sup>105</sup> See Jim Lane [*sic*], "No Texas Is Not all about Bush," *Texas National Press*, 24 March 2007. See also Justine Davis Randers-Pehrson, *Adolf Douai, 1819–1888: The Turbulent Life of a German Forty-eighter in the Homeland and in the United States*. New German American Studies; Neue Deutsch-Amerikanische Studien (New York: Peter Lang, 2000).

<sup>106</sup> Karl Marx, "The London *Times* on the Orleans Princes in America," *MECW*, 19:30.

<sup>107</sup> See also Kevin B. Anderson on the Marx's view of the Civil War as a "Second American Revolution" in his forthcoming monograph by on the multicultural dimension of Karl Marx addressing all the key issues including his Civil War journalism. Many thanks also to Anderson for stressing the fine "Introduction" in Saul K. Padover.

<sup>108</sup> Karl Marx, "Comments on the North American Events," *Die Presse*, no. 281, 12 October 1862; reprinted in *MECW*, 19:250.

<sup>109</sup> Marx's private view of Greeley and the *Tribune* was at times critical. He skewered both in personal letters, though not in public: "The *Tribune* blows the trumpet for Carey's book with puffed cheeks. Both, of course, have this in common: that under the form of Sismondian-philanthropic-socialistic-antiindustrialism they represent the pro-protective tariff, that is the industrial bourgeoisie, of America. This is also the secret of why the *Tribune*, for all its 'isms' and socialistic pretenses, can be the 'leading journal' in the United States." Further, Marx compares the deficiencies of General Scott to those of Greeley: "He seems to be as much a great general as the many-sided Greeley is a great philosopher." Both of these quotations from Marx's letters in Padover, 39, 41.

<sup>110</sup> "When you think . . . that three and a half years ago, at the time of Lincoln's election, the problem was *making no further concessions to the slaveholders*, while now the *abolition of slavery* is the avowed and in part already realized aim, you must admit that *never* has such a gigantic transformation taken place so rapidly. It will have a beneficent effect on the whole world." See Karl Marx, "Letter to Lion Philips, London, November 29, 1864" in Padover, 272. See also Karl Marx, "Abolitionist Demonstrations in America," *Die Presse*, 30 August 1862, in *MECW*, 19:233.

<sup>111</sup> "I have said that President Lincoln was a white man, and shared the prejudices common to his countrymen towards the colored race. Looking back to his times and to the condition of his country, we are compelled to admit that this unfriendly feeling on his part may be safely set down as one element of his wonderful success in organizing the loyal American people for the tremendous conflict before them, and bringing them safely through that conflict. His great mission was to accomplish two things: first, to save his country from dismemberment and ruin; and, second, to free his country from the great crime of slavery. To do one or the other, or both, he must have the earnest sympathy and the powerful cooperation of his loyal fellow-countrymen. Without this primary and essential condition to success his efforts must have been vain and utterly fruitless. Had he put the abolition of slavery before the salvation of the Union, he would have inevitably driven from him a powerful class of the American people and rendered resistance to rebellion impossible. Viewed from the genuine abolition ground, Mr. Lincoln seemed tardy, cold, dull, and indifferent; but measuring him by the sentiment of his country, a sentiment he was bound as a statesman to consult, he was swift, zealous, radical, and determined." Frederick Douglass, "Oration In Memory Of Abraham Lincoln, Delivered At The Unveiling of the Freedmen's Monument in Memory of Abraham Lincoln, in Lincoln Park, Washington, DC, April 14, 1876." See <http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=39>.

<sup>112</sup>See also James Oakes, *The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics* (New York: Norton, 2007).