

**Peter Kaupp, ed..** *Stamm-Buch der Jenaischen Burschenschaft: Die Mitglieder der Urburschenschaft 1815-1819*. Cologne: SH-Verlag, 2005. 192 pp. EUR 29.80, cloth, ISBN 978-3-89498-156-3.



**Eckhard Oberdörfer.** *Der Heidelberger Karzer*. Cologne: SH-Verlag, 2005. 176 pp. EUR 29.80, cloth, ISBN 978-3-89498-132-7.

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"It is questionable if the world's criminal history can show a custom more odd than this." [1] So wrote Mark Twain in *A Tramp Abroad*, the chronicle of his 1878 travels through Central Europe. The quote made reference to the Heidelberg student prison (*Karzer*), an institution whose origin and purpose continued to fascinate Twain during his three-month stay in the city. Twain's account is included in its entirety (pp. 68-74) in Eckhard Oberdörfer's enjoyable introduction to the Heidelberg student prison, a companion volume of sorts to his monograph, *Ein fideles Gefängnis: Greifswalder Karzergeschichten in Wort und Bild* (1991). Oberdörfer, the current editor of the *Ostsee-Zeitung*, has also written extensively on the history and development of the University of Greifswald, as well as the relationship between professors and students in the Weimar Republic. Here, by combining text and pictures, both contemporary and historical images, with the poetry and literature created by Heidelberg's student

prisoners, Oberdörfer allows us to see inside the prison's doors and hear its "inmates" thoughts.[2]

The book begins with a brief synopsis of academic jurisdiction in Heidelberg, describing how the relationship among the city, the university and its students evolved over the years. Oberdörfer also provides a brief review of the history of the prison itself and the legislation that governed its operation and its jurisdiction. By the nineteenth century, the university held both disciplinary and policing authority over its students for a wide range of infractions, including crimes related to dueling. Punishments, however, were frequently minor and always required the agreement of the guilty party prior to incarceration. It was this remarkable degree of freedom from coercion that the usual criminal justice system exercised upon Heidelberg's student body that so intrigued Twain.

The most informative chapters, for both historian and lay reader, "Prison History," "Art in Prison" and "The Prison Today," include primary source accounts by visitors and prisoners and numerous photographs of the prison's walls. Here one gets a clear sense of the privileged position of Heidelberg's student body, of the overriding importance of the *Burschenschaft*, whose silhouettes cover the walls, as well as the more mundane preoccupations of nineteenth-century university students. A brief poem captures the latter: "Die Damen geliebt, manch Liedlein gesungen, Polypen gefoppt, den Säbel geschwungen, in Karzer geflogen, eh ich's gedacht, da hab ich die lustigen Tage verbracht" (p. 155).

Oberdörfer's book concludes with a very useful guide to Heidelberg's student organizations, including their names, foundation dates, colors and insignia. Though the book's informal approach does not lend itself to detailed footnotes, it does include a detailed listing of archival and secondary resources for those interested in further research on the university or its student prison. Finally, for the lay reader, Oberdörfer includes a helpful glossary explaining terms such as *Burschenschaft*, *Fideikommiss*, and the like. Though the book does not pretend to be a comprehensive study of the Heidelberg student prison, it does offer an informative, entertaining, yet carefully researched introduction to a fascinating chapter in the history of Heidelberg's student body.

In contrast, the *Stamm-Buch der Jenaischen Burschenschaft*, edited by Peter Kaupp, is clearly intended for the specialist historian of German universities and, in particular, the Jena Burschenschaft. The work is a meticulously annotated membership list from the "Urburschenschaft"--Jena--which builds upon a membership list compiled in 1935 by Rudolf Hanow. Hanow transcribed the names of 863 members who joined the Jena Burschenschaft between 1815 and the Karlsbad Decrees of 1819; additional research by

Kaupp has added a further fifty members. Each entry includes a full name, birthplace, date of birth, and faculty of study. In addition, Kaupp has added a carefully researched biography wherever possible for each member. More detailed information is included for the numerous prominent members of the Burschenschaft, including Ernst von Schiller, Wilhelm Wesselhöft, Heinrich Leo, Karl Ludwig Sand, August Julius von Kotzebue (the son of dramatist August von Kotzebue, whose assassination at the hand of Karl Sand in 1819 triggered the repressive Karlsbad Decrees) and President of the Frankfurt Parliament Heinrich von Gagern.

Entries are included in chronological order, according to Hanow's original list, with the additional fifty entries appended at the end of Hanow's 863 members. For ease of use, Kaupp has also added an alphabetical index of persons, which links the reader to the numbered biographical entry, rather than a specific page number, and a geographical index which lists places of birth and death. The editor also provides a brief review of the archival and secondary sources related to the Burschenschaft and its members. The membership list itself is preceded by a rather short introduction to the founding of the Jena Burschenschaft, since, as the author notes, this topic has been thoroughly discussed. Given that this monograph targets a very specific readership, the decision to omit a more comprehensive history of the Jena Burschenschaft seems reasonable.

In all, Kaupp's annotated membership list should serve as an invaluable source of information for anyone interested in the history of the Jena Burschenschaft during the vitally important era between the Congress of Vienna and repression of the Burschenschaft by the Karlsbad Decrees. One can only hope that the surviving membership lists for other Burschenschaften will be transcribed and annotated with equal care and attention.

Notes

[1]. Mark Twain, *A Tramp Abroad* (E-Text Project Gutenberg), Appendix C; <http://www.gutenberg.net/1/1/119/> (accessed January 15, 2007).

[2]. Heidelberg's former student prison is now a popular tourist attraction; the prison's walls are covered in drawings, poems and varied inscriptions telling tales of its many inhabitants.

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