



Collection 3022

**The American Association of Teachers
of German, Inc.**

Records

1969-1981

1 box, 0.4 lin. feet

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Abstract

The American Association of Teachers of German, Inc., (AATG) was founded in 1926 by several German professors and teachers who wished to promote and improve the teaching of German language and culture, and to foster friendship between the United States and German-speaking countries. The association offered programs to stimulate interest in German studies, facilitate occasional student and teacher exchange, foster international education, provide audio-visual language teaching aids, and produce publications. Beginning in 1964 the AATG worked closely with the National Carl Schurz Association, Inc. In 1968 they both established the American Council on German Studies, Inc. as an umbrella organization. In 1972, these three organizations founded Educational Services International, Inc. In the mid-1970s, an increasingly problematic relationship developed among the partners, due to competitive bidding for funding. A state of tension and lack of cooperation over several years ultimately resulted in litigation. The AATG has survived and in December 2003 remains in existence as an independent organization.

The majority of the collection consists of internal correspondence among the partners. There is also an agreement between the AATG and the National Carl Schurz Association, and a certificate of incorporation of the National Carl Schurz Association. Correspondence that pertains to two legal cases and lawsuit notes are also included. Early materials of the AATG can be found in the collection of the National Carl Schurz Association at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Background note

The American Association of Teachers of German, Inc. was established in 1926 by German language teachers and professors. The association's purpose is to improve the teaching of the language, literature, and culture of German-speaking people. To achieve this goal, the AATG offers educational and professional services, teaching aids, and official publications. The AATG encourages, supports, and conducts research in the field of German studies. Local chapters support a variety of projects, such as summer

campus, immersion weekends, German language fairs, and awards ceremonies. They also offer workshops and seminars on the latest topics of pedagogical significance.

From 1964, the AATG, an independent organization incorporated in New York, worked closely with the National Carl Schurz Association, Inc. (NCSA), which was originally established as the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation in 1930, changing its name in 1962. The goals of both associations were similar, focusing on promoting intercultural relations between the citizens of the United States and the people of German-speaking countries. The first agreement between the AATG and the NCSA, signed in 1964, established an AATG-NCSA Service Center to expand audio-visual teaching aids previously distributed by the AATG Service Bureau. The AATG, according to its charter and bylaws, took responsibility for programs and projects in the area of curriculum, pedagogy, and linguistics. The NCSA emphasized programs in the field of student motivation, and the general promotion of public interest in German studies.

In 1968, Hans Werner Deeken, executive director of the National Carl Schurz Association since 1961, became the executive secretary of the American Association of Teachers of German as well. Bonds between the two organizations were strengthened when, also in 1968, the AATG together with the NCSA formed the American Council on German Studies, Inc. (ACGS) as an umbrella organization, with Hans Deeken as its secretary. The ACGS was incorporated in Delaware and established its purpose as the coordination of the efforts of its two founding members in promoting German studies in the United States, and assisting in raising the necessary financial support for these purposes. Contributions had been received both from the United States and from overseas. Both organizations, the AATG and the NCSA, then submitted program requests to the council directors requesting the allocation of funds, in accordance with priorities and within the limitations set by the fund donors.

With this funding the AATG was able to publish the *German Quarterly* and support a teacher placement service. In partnership with the NCSA, the AATG continued maintaining the Service Center. At the same time, the AATG maintained the Teaching Aid Project (TAP) that was developed in the mid-1960s by the NCSA. This was a special intensive overseas study program for updating language facility and knowledge of contemporary German culture for American teachers of German.

Another AATG project begun in the 1970s, and named the North-Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), included a special program offering American teachers of German an opportunity to teach English in the German state of North-Rhine-Westphalia. Also during the early 1970s, the AATG's Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)/German Academic Exchange Service program offered grants for graduate studies, research in connection with doctoral dissertations, and postdoctoral studies in the Federal Republic of Germany.

In 1972, three not-for-profit organizations, NCSA, AATG, and ACGS, founded Educational Services International, Inc., (ESI), with Hans Deeken as the chief executive officer. At first authorized on an experimental level and later on a permanent basis, ESI was to concentrate on the promotion of German language books and travel to Germany.

In June 1973, the AATG and the NCSA signed another agreement to share office space, personnel, expenses, and programs. The AATG moved its executive offices to 339 Walnut Street in Philadelphia space rented by the NCSA, assuming the NCSA rent obligations. Later, when the NCSA's and the AATG's activities were expanded – thanks to funding from the German Foreign Office – an additional space was rented at 320 Walnut Street, directly across from headquarters.

In 1975, the growing tension between the three partners about the disbursement of funds coming from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany and directed to ACGS left the ACGS unable to function. In 1977, German government funding was decreased as a response to their fighting, and then, in September of the same year, discontinued, leaving all partners with large commitments and no means of covering them. Both AATG and NCSA were overextended, and as a result dissolved their cooperative agreement. The AATG stopped paying rent to the NCSA, forcing the NCSA to sell almost all of its assets to meet its debts. Both organizations moved out of the joint headquarters on Walnut Street, Philadelphia, to separate offices.

All hope was not lost, however. On October 15, 1977, the AATG took possession of its current offices in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. On November 16, 1977, the German Embassy informed the AATG that it would grant funding for some programs, including TAP and the publication of *Newsletter, German Quarterly*, and *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*. By 1978, NCSA and AATG were mired in various legal suits against each other from which the NCSA apparently never really recovered, forcing them to disband sometime in the early 1980s. The AATG succeeded in reestablishing itself.

In 2003, the American Association of Teachers of German remains in existence, with a membership of 5,600 teachers of German at all levels in the United States, Europe, and Canada. The Association continues programs and services that include professional development, stipends and scholarships, and awards. The AATG publishes four issues of *The German Quarterly* per year, which features literary and philological scholarship. Issues also include book reviews, special reports, and forums. The pedagogical journal *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German* for teachers at all levels is published twice a year, and includes articles on classroom strategies, research, practical hints, and tested techniques. The quarterly *Newsletter* provides an update on the association, events in the profession, and opportunities of interest for all teachers of German. The *Infoblatt* presents programs of special interest such as “Kinder Lernen Deutsch/Children Learning German” and “German in Business and Engineering,” and publishes information about summer seminars for teachers and programs for students.

AATG is a member of the Joint National Committee for Languages/National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL/NCLIS), the Foreign Language Collaborative, the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations (NFMLTA), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), and the Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband (IDV). The AATG is an allied association of the Modern Language Association (MLA).

Scope & content

The collection includes materials that pertain to sister organizations, AATG, NCSA, their umbrella organization: ACGS, and their jointly founded affiliate: ESI. The materials cover the period from 1969 to 1981, which is particularly significant because these years were the most complicated for the partners. The materials of the AATG from 1938 to 1979 are included in another collection: MSS 167, the National Carl Schurz Association Records.

The core of the collection is correspondence that provides information on the background of the organizations and presents a picture of their early cooperation and subsequent litigation. The correspondence also provides information on the basis for the aggravation, including lawsuit materials as well. In addition, the collection includes correspondence and the 1977 Annual Report of Gustave Mathieu, president of the AATG in 1976-1978. Some correspondence in this collection is supplemented by financial statements, meeting agendas, minutes, and agreements. Materials are in English and German.

Overview of arrangement

Series I	General, 1969-1981, n.d.	Folders 1-10
Series II	President's Office, 1976-1978	Folders 11-19

Series description

Series 1. General, 1969-1981, n.d. (Folders 1-10)

These records are mostly incoming and outgoing correspondence, but also include a 1973 agreement between AATG and NCSA regarding sharing office and operational facilities, services, and personnel; and a copy of an undated NCSA certificate of incorporation. The correspondence illuminates the organizational partnership and the growing aggravation in their relationship. Materials contain background information about the Educational Services International and its status and activities in 1973. The financial and administrative status of the ESI was an issue, as it was created as an entity to generate income for the tripartite organizations. The activities of ESI in that year were mostly book sales, travel programs, and the distribution of teaching materials.

Of interest is a copy of an undated document with the heading "Proposed Questions to Which Proposed Audit Should Obtain Answers." This document contains a long list of questions regarding AATG's and NCSA's accounts at Durener Bank in Germany, the status of the ESI, investments of AATG funds in ESI, the status of the NRW program funds, and more.

Particularly interesting is a memorandum attached to a packet of documents from CEO Hans W. Deeken to members of the ACGS Board of Directors. The packet includes a chronology of ESI activities and material that "serves to document the consistency of

the planning of ESI.” These documents illuminate the complicated financial interconnectedness of all partners, but especially AATG and NCSA, after a sudden withdrawal of the AATG’s North-Rhine-Westphalia project funds and their transfer to an ESI account in the Durener Bank in Germany. This circumstance presented “a discouraging outlook for any person with ambition and awareness of inflationary pressures...” and threatened the careers of the joint staff.

The same packet contains a proposed solution that included dissolving the cooperative agreement between AATG and NCSA. It was also proposed that, “all administrative staff members resign from membership and official positions in NCSA/AATG. Staff members will form a non-restricted, i.e. commercial service operation.” Moreover, these documents describe “effects on AATG, NCSA, and ACGS, and benefits to staff.” The packet also includes copies of related documents, such as minutes from 1972 of the ACGS, other letters from 1972 to 1973, and an undated management agreement between ESI, ACGS, AATG, and NCSA.

Various other topics are illuminated in the correspondence, including AATG’s membership drive and budget plan for 1977, a 1976 opinion survey concerning the promotion of German studies in the United States, the presentation of personnel expenses for 1977, a financial statement of the certified public accountant examination of the ESI in 1977, and the meeting agendas. Other letters also contain investigation into the sudden anonymous withdrawal of \$100,000 from the AATG deposit account at Girard Bank, in 1973.

The central figure of the correspondence is CEO H. W. Deeken, as he served several key roles in organizations. In an atmosphere of increasingly strained partnership between the AATG and NCSA, H. W. Deeken and Matthew J. Hayes, assistant treasurer of AATG, both of whom had signatory powers over monies donated by the German Embassy, were under pressure. Hayes was dismissed, and H. W. Deeken resigned as executive director of NCSA.

Some letters provide glimpses of the German Embassy’s position “in view of a very complicated legal situation” and the decision “to cut off the funds to the three organizations AATG, ACGS, and NCSA.” At the same time, the Embassy explored the possibility of continuing to support the AATG projects as “appreciation of the AATG’s good work and its importance as one of our [Embassy’s] major partners in the field of German language and culture in this country.”

Through the records in this subseries it is possible to observe the litigation process in lawsuits from 1977 to 1981. In 1977 the AATG was accused of improper actions of “unilaterally disassociating itself from the NCSA,” after which the NCSA had “incurred considerable costs, debts and expenses, on behalf of AATG.” Included is the defendants’ answer that contains new matter and counterclaims, particularly, that the NCSA “through its officers, agents, and employees deliberately, willfully and maliciously has engaged in a plan and course, the purpose of which is to harm, danger, and destroy the AATG and to gain funds, contributions, membership and support as a result of such conduct.”

In the second case of June 1978, the AATG was listed as a plaintiff against the ESI. However, the overall Board of ACGS, as an umbrella organization, did not authorize this lawsuit. There is also a memorandum that pertains to an interview with Hans Deeken given on October 3, 1978, regarding the lawsuits. Finally, there is an official law office general release form, which was signed in 1981. Rounding out the subseries is AATG's and ACGS's statement of resolutions concerning the results of more than five years of conflict.

Series 2. President's Office, 1976-1978 (Folders 11-19)

Materials in this series include correspondence of Gustave Bording Mathieu, the AATG president, elected for the 1976-1978 term. The majority of correspondence concerns business issues, such as budget problems and planning, structural and procedural reform of management, appointments to fill administrative vacancies, activity planning, and analyzing results and achievements.

Particularly interesting are two sets of letters and articles, copies of which Gustave Bording Mathieu sent to three professors, the Presidential Action Committee, and legal counsel. The packages have a curious title, "You'll be damned if you do, and damned if you don't." Included are materials from 1974-1977 that seem to be related to the investigation of the lawsuits between AATG and NCSA. Some of these materials are copies of documents that may be found elsewhere in this collection.

Rounding out the series is an Annual Report given by Gustave Bording Mathieu at the AATG business meeting in 1977. The report contains explanations of the administrative solutions taken by the ACGS Board of Directors and the termination of H. W. Deeken and M. J. Hayes.

Separation report

None

Related materials

National Carl Schurz Association, Inc. Records, Collection MSS 167. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Subjects

Booksellers and bookselling – Pennsylvania – Philadelphia – 20th Century
Education – Pennsylvania – Philadelphia – 20th Century
Education – Study and teaching
Education & culture– 20th Century
German Americans– 20th Century
German language– 20th Century
German teachers– 20th Century
Language and culture– 20th Century
Language teachers– German – 20th Century
Travel agents– 20th Century

Deeken, Hans W.

Mathieu, Gustave B.

American Association of Teachers of German
American Council of German Studies
Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation
Educational Service International
National Carl Schurz Association

Administrative Information

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Acquisition information

The collection was donated to the HSP with the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies by Helene Zimmer-Loew, executive director of the AATG, April 10, 2002.

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Alternative format

None.

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Processing note

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Box and folder listing

Series 1. General

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder
Agreement between AATG and NCSA and certificate of incorporation of NCSA	1973, n.d.	1	1
Correspondence, general	1969-1975	1	2
Correspondence, general	1976	1	3
Correspondence, general	1976	1	4
Correspondence, general	1978, 1981	1	5
Correspondence, litigation	1977	1	6
Correspondence, litigation	1978	1	7
Correspondence, litigation	1979	1	8
Correspondence, litigation	1981	1	9
Statement of resolutions & an announcement	1971, 1977, n.d.	1	10

Series 2. President's Office

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder
Correspondence	1976	1	11
Correspondence	1977, Jan-Feb.	1	12
Correspondence	1977, Mar.-Apr.	1	13
Correspondence	1977, May-Aug.	1	14
Correspondence	1977, Sep-Dec.	1	15
Correspondence	1978	1	16
Mailgrams	1977, Jan.-Aug.	1	17
Mailgrams	1977, Sep-Dec.	1	18
Annual Report	1977	1	19

Appendix 1. Acronyms/Abbreviations

AATG	American Association of Teachers of German
ACGS	American Council on German Studies
ACTFL	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
ESI	Educational Services International
JNCL	Joint National Committee for Languages
IDV	Internationaler Deutschlehrerverb
NCLIS	National Council for Languages and International Studies
NCSA	National Carl Schurz Association
NFMLTA	National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations
NRW	North-Rhine-Westphalia
MLA	Modern Language Association
TAP	Teaching Aid Project