David Luebke

German Exodus: Historical Perspectives on the Nineteenth-Century Emigration

In the century that has elapsed since the crest tide of mass emigration from Germany, historians on both shores of the Atlantic have struggled to understand the causes and patterns of that exodus. Early on their work was motivated by concerns of public policy, which led them, unconsciously perhaps, to overlook the fundamentally international nature of migration. These national perspectives outlived the topicality of their subject, and continued to define migration scholarship until well into the 1950s. Since then, however, the interpretations of German and American historians have converged. National perspectives have given way to structural analyses of the trans-Atlantic migration as a social process unto itself. For German historians, this trend has coincided with a return of emigration scholarship to the service of policy discussions. With an eye to clarifying the problem of foreign guest workers in the Federal Republic, they have helped their fellow citizens to recognize that theirs is less a country of emigration than their national myths suppose.

Already in 1912 Wilhelm Mönckmeier observed that the "various forms of migration have much in common and therefore would best be investigated . . . in terms of their common characteristics," as if to suggest that migration should be treated as an international process, rather than to deal with its constituent categories—emigration, immigration, internal migration, and so forth—in isolation from each other.[1] But he was unwilling to do so. Instead, Mönckmeier chose to examine overseas emigration alone, and to weigh its implications for German colonial policy.[2]

Mönckmeier's volume showed two related historiographical trends that dominated migration research for the ensuing forty years. First, he drew sharp distinctions between emigration, immigration and internal migration. Second, he limited his study to German conditions—he was only mildly interested in Germans once they had left the homeland, and with emigrants of other countries not at all. The scope and content of migration research crystalized around the nation-state, not around

migrants themselves, or around the social and economic changes that propelled their movements. European scholars operating from national perspectives tended to evaluate emigration negatively, as a drain on the life blood of their fatherlands. Their colleagues in America tended to consider immigration in a positive light, as central to their country's national heritage and character.

In succeeding decades several studies challenged the validity of American and European national perspectives. Not until 1960, however, was Mönckmeier's declared preference for a comprehensive view of European migration made an open demand on the academic community. In that year the British historian Frank Thistlethwaite suggested that migration scholars should approach their subject

> . . . as a whole, from a different point of view; from neither the continent of origin nor from the principal country of reception; [they] should try to think neither of emigrants nor immigrants, but of migrants, and to treat the process of migration as a complete sequence of experiences whereby the individual moves from one social identity to another.[3]

He called for a reworking of migration historiography in which the focus would shift to small groups of migrants and to non-normative analysis of the causes, occasions, patterns and consequences of their movements. This effort would lift the "salt-water curtain" separating European from American historians and would constitute "an achievement of the highest order; no less than a study of liberty in the modern setting."[4]

Since 1960 historians have struggled to answer Thistlethwaite's challenge, but this "study of liberty" has proceeded unevenly. Scandinavian historians have led the effort. In Germany, however, where migration research lay in near dormancy since Mönckmeier's day, the "salt-water curtain" has, in one observer's estimation, hardly been rent.[5] Still, some progress has been made. Several historians (American and German alike) have freed themselves from older limitations and have come to interpret the *Auswanderung* in a broader context involving social, economic and demographic developments in both the Old and New Worlds. Moreover, their work has provided the basis for a more refined understanding of German emigration than even Thistlethwaite's, and for a more educated discussion of problems now confronting the Federal Republic of Germany.

Positivist idealization of the state was already coming into question as a leitmotiv of German historiographical traditions when in the 1890s emigration emerged to attract the attention of German scholars.[6] The national perspective took immediate hold on them nonetheless. The state in abstraction guided research, defining its content and arranging its goals in the initial period of emigration scholarship.

Because the *Auswanderung* necessarily involved transit across national frontiers, it drew attention to the German state, its policies and prestige. Thus the international character of emigration prevented discussion of it in any but narrowly national terms. Moreover, it caused emigration to receive more attention than regional migrations within the

empire, even though these involved far more people, at least in the second half of the nineteenth century.[7] In the initial phase, then, concern revolved around questions of policy and administrative history. Only one work from the nineteenth century can be considered a comprehensive, historical overview of German emigration: *Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik in Deutschland* (1892), edited by Eugen von Philippovich.[8]

Even so, *Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik* was designed to advocate a unified imperial code on emigration that might restrain the human flow across German frontiers. Philippovich maintained that, although strains in Germany's system of rural land tenure lay at the root of emigration, any attempt to rectify inequalities in land distribution would be illusory. Rather, the government should try to divert emigration by improving employment opportunities in Germany's industrial areas.[9] Emigration was thus of interest to Philippovich and his colleagues as an object of policy, not as a social process.

By the time Mönckmeier published *Die deutsche überseeische Auswanderung* in 1912 the last great wave of German emigration lay twenty years in the past, and questions of emigration policy were no longer of burning interest. This waning topicality might have stimulated a broader interpretive vision, but Mönckmeier, like his predecessors, stuck to rigid distinctions among the varieties of migration. His aims perhaps best illustrate the stranglehold of nationalism on emigration scholarship. In contrast to his contemporaries, Mönckmeier saw in emigration a great potential benefit for the fatherland. With the help of colonial policy, emigrants could become a positive force and establish for Germany a worldwide economic empire. ''Then,'' he wrote:

> one will have in Germany fewer and fewer occasions to look upon the . . . overseas emigration as a pure loss, and [we] will be able to obtain from it benefits in the interest of strengthening and enlarging our native political economy and the economic and national vitality of our people.[10]

Although he came to an uncommon evaluation of emigration, Mönckmeier's primary concerns remained tethered to national interest.

It would be unfair to discount the contributions these books made toward greater understanding of the mechanics of migration.[11] Philippovich's book has considerable value in the geographical comprehensiveness of its view, albeit within Germany, and despite the varying quality of the articles in it. F. C. Huber's monograph on Württemberg, for example, overemphasized the attractive pull of the United States, while overlooking the pressures of rural overpopulation caused by Württemberg's system of land inheritance. Still, Huber observed that economic hardship of artisans in Württemberg compounded emigration from that kingdom, a point lost on most later historians.[12] By contrast Lindig's interpretations of emigration from Mecklenburg as a function of pressures in rural society associated with the system of *Gutsherrschaft* have stood ever since.[13]

Mönckmeier, to his credit, emphasized causal factors that more recent historians have accepted *prima facie*. Discounting the attractive

power of America and the effects of emigration agents and propagandists, he chose instead to seek the determinants of emigration in demographic relationships. He found them in overpopulation, which he defined as relative to agrarian productivity and subjective variables.[14] This definition transcended regional distinctions of rural social order and inheritance law, and could account for crises in handworker trades confronting industrialization.[15] Furthermore, Mönckmeier provided a statistical basis for his arguments that became an invaluable source for later historians.

Mönckmeier's volume ended the first phase of German historical interest in the *Auswanderung*, and no book since has attempted to offer so complete a picture.[16] The topic of emigration went into a forty-year historiographical hiatus in Germany. The sole significant exception was Friedrich Burgdörfer's statistical essay, "Migration across the Frontiers of Germany," first published in 1930.[17] Although he refined and expanded some of Mönckmeier's analyses, Burgdörfer offered few new interpretations. Even more than his forebears, he saw emigration "with nationalist blinders,"[18] and even tried to assess the human loss it posed to Germany in capital value, arriving at a figure (with interest compounded to 1927) of 182 billion marks for the period 1820-1926.[19] On the whole, emigration remained for Germans "an embarrassing subject, best ignored."[20] Advances in migration research were made elsewhere during these decades, but in Britain and the United States, not in Germany.[21]

National perspectives also influenced American scholars, though with different consequences. North America had dominated among nations receiving European immigrants throughout the nineteenth century—after 1830 better than half of all German overseas emigrants went to the United States.[22] Immigration was central to the American national experience and American historians preferred to view the migration process from the standpoint of immigrant assimilation. They tended to argue the causes of migration from its effects, and many American-made myths about European emigration resulted, such as the notion that, because many German immigrants settled in urban areas, they had come from German cities, or that their economic success in the United States indicated middle-income backgrounds in the fatherland. Neither of these observations were accurate.[23] On a higher interpretive plane, Americans emphasized fluctuations of the American economy and the availability of cheap, frontier farmland as primary determinants of the course of immigration. American "pull-factors," in their view, outweighed factors of "push."[24]

No scholar represented the "American-centered" interpretation better than the economist Harry Jerome. In *Migration and Business Cycles* (1926), he compared fluctuations in the American economy with rates of immigration from Europe.[25] He identified a close correlation in the cyclical oscillations of both trends, with a one-year lag between them. He also found that correlations between European business cycles and emigration were weaker. This led him to a two-fold conclusion: first, that employment opportunity fueled immigration from Europe and

second, that the American market trend governed its rate.[26] Jerome's findings were confirmed by Dorothy Swaine Thomas' study of Swedish-American migration.[27] Pull, in their opinion, was more powerful than push.

While espousing determinants of the American marketplace, Jerome neglected the European emigrant. Argument from effects led him to see in trans-Atlantic migration a rather amorphous search for jobs, which assumed detailed knowledge of conditions in the American labor market on the part of individual Europeans, and the sufficiency of that knowledge to motivate emigration. Moreover, he failed to examine emigrants' backgrounds. A look at data in Mönckmeier's volume would have revealed to him that most German emigrants were of rural origins, and that they emigrated with their families, intending to farm.[28] Moreover, his analyses did not account for emigration to countries other than the United States. Finally, he did not account for the effects of changes in the industrializing European labor market.[29] Still, his linking of Old and New World economies encouraged an international perspective on migration.

Two scholars, one British and one American, challenged the American national perspective. In 1954 Brinley Thomas expanded on Jerome's thesis, refuting much of it in the process.[30] Thomas compared long cycles in the flow of American and British capital investment with migrations both inside Britain and across the Atlantic. He discovered that surges of British emigration preceded bursts of economic activity in the United States, at least in the second half of the nineteenth century; the opposite, in other words, of Jerome's correlation. This relationship was tied to the impact of British capital investment trends: when investments were heavy in Britain, migrations tended to be directed toward native centers of production. When they shifted to the United States, migration followed capital. Once the American investment and labor markets were saturated, migration shifted back to British foci, and the cycle began anew.[31]

In effect, Thomas had replaced Jerome's static, monocausal hypothesis with a dynamic, interactive model that better accounted for the periodic oscillations in business activity and investment. Also, he phrased his conclusions in terms of an "Atlantic economy" that so closely tied the American and British markets as to render them virtually indistinguishable. He revealed the inadequacies of the old push-pull concept[32] and, as Thistlethwaite observed, "demonstrated that the mechanism [of migration] is at least a two-way process" that "can only be understood by taking into account conditions in both the country of origin and the country of destination."[33] Inevitably the distinction between internal and overseas migrations waned, since both were expressions of international currents in industrialization, urbanization, and capital-flow. Though limited to only two countries, Thomas' "Atlantic economy" was heavy-laden with implications for other nations, including Germany.

While Thomas examined migration in relation to international economic development, Marcus Lee Hansen concentrated on the human

element in European emigration as an important facet of the American experience.[34] Hansen sought to discover how conditions in Europe caused the attractive power of America to vary. Like Thomas, he imagined an interactive mechanism governing trans-Atlantic migration, in which "American conditions determined the duration and height of the waves; European the particular source."[35] His posthumously published *Atlantic Migration* (1940) was an effort to chronicle how these variations were perceived in the minds of individual Europeans and how they were translated into action.

Hansen's work demanded a shift of focus from immigrant to emigrant, it required seeing "the exodus to America" as "one aspect of the growth and spread of the population of Atlantic Europe."[36] His view thus constituted a break with "American-centeredness." But not too great a break: Hansen's interest in trans-Atlantic migration lay in its implications for American history. Greatly impressed with the frontier thesis of his mentor at Harvard, Frederick Jackson Turner, he expanded it to hemispheric proportions. Just as Turner's frontier regulated his understanding of American history, so now an "American magnet" governed trans-oceanic migration.[37] His history "was American, not universal," his departure one of practice, not one of design.[38]

Still, Hansen's work marked an important step toward an understanding of the social and psychological processes by which Europeans transferred their "allegiance to an alien land."[39] He was aware that migration required much of the migrant, materially and mentally, and that conditions at home molded his ability and will to move. By describing these processes Hansen introduced a sociological element to migration history that was alien to the "American-centered" tradition.

In demonstrating the obsolescence of the American national perspective, however, the theoretical achievement of Thomas and Hansen was negative. It remained for Frank Thistlethwaite to translate their refutation into a positive statement of conceptual reorientation. In an address to the Eleventh Congress of Historical Sciences in Stockholm (1960), he suggested two guidelines, one conceptual, the other methodological, by which the full complexity of nineteenth-century migrations might be appreciated. Study of migration should be denationalized (especially de-Americanized), he advised, and should center on the process itself, "supranational in manifestation."[40] Furthermore, historians should view migrants "through a magnifying glass" to discover the mechanics of migration at large. They should, "like good ornithologists," ring individual "birds of passage" to discover migratory patterns.[41] Within a global conceptual construct research should proceed at a microscopic level.

Thistlethwaite offered several new insights and debunked some old ones. First, he suggested that rates of re-emigration might reveal a significant proportion of "repeaters."[42] Second, the effects of immigration should be measured in proportion to host populations. Argentina, for example, received far heavier proportional immigration than the United States.[43] Moreover, he wanted to dispel the "peasant-mass" stereotype of European emigration. Most migrants sought jobs, he

thought, and therefore following technical skill as a "radioactive tracer" through the bloodstream of migration would be more revealing than study of migrants as an "inchoate ethnic mass."[44] These suggestions were designed for a double purpose: first, that the ebbs and flows of migration be understood in the broadest social and economic context and second, that they be interpreted (in accordance with his belief that migrations were motivated primarily by employment needs) in their relation to the industrial and demographic revolutions of the nineteenth century. "The great overseas migration," he wrote, "is in a very broad sense to be treated as a major, but subordinate aspect of European population growth and European industrialization."[45]

Though some of Thistlethwaite's conclusions were proven inaccurate by later research, he succeeded in revolutionizing migration historiography. The stimulus he delivered finally discredited national perspectives, animated a new wave of interest in migration history, and awakened German scholarship from the dormancy it had experienced since Mönckmeier's day.

Two diverse bodies of work since Thistlethwaite's address have also enlivened German emigration scholarship by refining notions of psychological factors in the migration process. In design and content, Mack Walker's book, *Germany and the Emigration, 1816-1885,* is somewhat apart from the mainstream of migration historiography. Walker openly disavows connections to either American or "Atlantic" history. He follows Hansen's impressionistic, narrative style, in contrast to the social science writing of Thistlethwaite's Scandinavian devotees. His book is not about the causes and structures of the *Auswanderung* as such, although its larger point is concerned with them. Nor is it intended for comparative value. Rather, Walker is interested in "the relation between what the emigration was on the one hand and what people thought and did about it on the other."[46] His is a history of ideas on two levels, administrative and popular.

As an intellectual history of emigration policies, *Germany and the Emigration* is of limited value to the study of emigration as an element of international social or economic processes, though as a whole it has been acknowledged as the best recent treatment of nineteenth-century German emigration.[47] Possibly this is because, in analyzing the popular level of perception, Walker offers excellent descriptions of psychological forces at work that only his lively narrative style permits. While charting the wax and wane of the 1816-1817 emigration hysteria in Baden, for example, he illustrates vividly how popular fever could exaggerate highs and lows on long-term emigration trends, an accomplishment that most economic and sociological models cannot equal.[48] Walker's contribution has been to add life and color to otherwise dry, quantitative approaches.

The research project "Sweden and America after 1860: Emigration, Remigration, Social and Political Debate" at Uppsala University has elaborated on Thistlethwaite's ideas using Swedish data.[49] Its members have advocated quantitative social science methods and attempted to shift focus "from studies dealing predominantly with external migrations to internal and seasonal migrations and finally to social and

demographic structures in general, especially the history of the family."[50] In the area of theory, project leader Sune Akerman has warned against reliance on models of economic determinism in favor of interpretive schemes that emphasize the "behavioral aspects of migration."[51] These, he claims, are elastic enough to account for often erratic, short-term fluctuations in emigration rates. While the Uppsala Group has had little direct impact on German scholars, their research has followed similar patterns of emphasis. Scandinavian and German historians together have endorsed a structural analysis of emigration.[52]

In Germany, research of the *Auswanderung* since Walker has emphasized connections between industrialization and social mobility in the broadest sense, meant to include urbanization, emigration and what has been described as long-distance internal migration.[53] Underlying these efforts is a fundamental concern with the evolving structures of production that has directed attention to the late nineteenth century, when Germany changed from "an agrarian state with strong industry" to an "industrial state with strong agrarian basis."[54] Accordingly, German scholars have focused on the third wave of emigration, between 1880 and 1893. True to Thistlethwaite's demands, they have interpreted industrialization and migration as intertwined events, with international causes, mechanisms and patterns. Also, new insights have been applied to the current problem of foreign guest-workers in the Federal Republic.

Several years elapsed after Thistlethwaite's speech and the appearance of Walker's book before scholarly interest in German emigration revived. The first to address the topic were two sociologists, Wolfgang Köllmann and Peter Marschalck, whose collaboratory article "German Emigration to the United States" is still the best concise overview of modern scholarship available in English.[55] Partly in reaction to the vague universality of general behavioral theories and typologies of migration,[56] they devised a tripartite theory to explain the causes, motivations and structures of nineteenth-century German emigration that is bound to the "spatio-temporal" particularities of that process.[57] Central to their understanding of causes is demographic pressure produced by the crisis of agrarian society and industrialization and, intentionally or not, closely resembles Mönckmeier's emphasis on the causal role of overpopulation.[58] To illustrate the social mechanism by which these pressures (themselves capable only of producing "latent" readiness for emigration) are transformed into actual migration, Köllmann offers a behavioral typology of migrations that includes religious, political and economic motivations, to various immediate stimuli of migration and its structures and goals.[59]

Their most influential contribution is a structural characterization of the *Auswanderung*. On the basis of secondary occupational and familial data Marschalck devised a three-stage periodization of structural transformation in the emigration.[60] During the first period to 1865 the *Auswanderung* consisted predominantly of small, independent farmers, artisans and their families, intending to settle rural areas overseas. The majority of these were refugees from overpopulation in Swabia and the Palatinate, where extreme land parcelization had robbed many peasants

of the means to subsistence. To illustrate the severity of these pressures, Marschalck compares the proportion of emigrants to overall populations in the regions affected by *Auswanderung;* in these relative terms the first wave (ca. 1846-1853) was heaviest, even if the most localized.[61] The second period (1865-1895) was dominated by urban and rural proletariats, the latter fleeing the social consequences of rationalized cereal production and seasonalized agricultural labor in East-Elbia. These groups still emigrated in family units with dreams of rural settlement. This is not true of the third phase (1895-1914) when individual emigrants seeking industrial employment overseas predominated.

Marschalck sees an overarching structural change from emigration for settlement *(Siedlungswanderung)* to one for industrial employment *(Arbeitswanderung).*[62] Many historians since have adopted this characterization, but not without qualification, for the causal mechanism used to explain the change suffers from two faults. First, the end of *Siedlungswanderung* is explained away by the so-called "German Frontier Thesis."[63] In it the diminishing availability of cheap farmland on the American plains redirected German emigration to American industrial centers. This explanation, however, assumes that frontier "closure" occurred with sufficient rapidity and finality to cause an abrupt structural change, when in fact it was a slower process spanning several decades.[64] It also does not account for the consequences of retarded industrialization in East Elbia, or for emigrants' unfulfilled intentions.[65] A large proportion of the *Arbeitswanderung* may have been little more than frustrated *Siedlungswanderung.* Second, the scheme relies on proportional rather than absolute statistics. Certainly a higher percentage of German emigrants took industrial jobs in America after 1895; it is also true that in 1895 the volume of emigration had dropped to a third of its level in 1891, a mere sixth of the 1882 crest tide.[66] Thus the structural change corresponded with an absolute reduction in emigration so sharp as to cast doubt on the meaningfulness of Marschalck's characterization. Its faults notwithstanding, the model recognizes and successfully describes a feature of the *Auswanderung* that stands out in the statistics of Mönckmeier and Burgdörfer, namely, that the dominant proportion of Germany's emigrants had rural, agrarian origins, that they were indeed a "peasant mass."[67]

Klaus J. Bade, the first historian consciously to apply Thistlethwaite's ideas to German material, expands on Marschalck's notions of emigration for work and settlement.[68] By emphasizing the ebbs and flows in the international labor market as it responded to industrialization, he overcomes the old, historian's distinction between emigration, immigration and internal migration. These various forms are an interdependent system of human movements inextricably linked to the industrial and demographic revolutions.[69]

Bade extrapolates from the example of East-Elbian Germany in the 1880s and 1890s. Here industrialization and international competition for grain sales shattered the status quo of agrarian society and production.[70] This collapse created an unemployable rural proletariat that, lacking opportunities for permanent jobs elsewhere in Germany, was

compelled to emigrate—and did so overwhelmingly to the United States. In Prussia, demand for seasonal labor caused a continental immigration, mostly from Poland and the Danube Monarchy.[71] Once industrialization in Germany had acquired enough momentum to sustain its own growth, the domestic labor market expanded and emigration was transformed into "long-distance internal migration" to the Rhineland and the Ruhr.[72] Bade's emphasis on industrialization and international labor markets brings with it perils and benefits. On the one hand, it shifts attention to the later stages of German industrialization and, by extention, to the third wave of *Auswanderung*. Earlier waves tend to be neglected. On the other hand, it places German emigration squarely within economic changes of international dimensions.

Bade's work is closer to Thistlethwaite's concepts than his methodological recommendations. He defines a three-fold obligation of social historians to migration studies. First, they should always keep the total migration process in mind as the appropriate field of investigation, second, their analysis should proceed from overarching determinants of "latent migratory readiness" to, third, investigation of specifiable, social and regional variables that transformed "latent" into actual emigration.[73] By study on a grand scale, Bade maintains Thistlethwaite's conceptual holism but departs from his endorsement of the "ornithological" method.[74] This adjustment has the advantage of filling the gap between microscopic investigation and macroscopic context and allows analysis of trends on an intermediate regional or national scale. Thus may the German be filtered from the multitude of nineteenth-century migrations as one, partly unique element of international developments.

More consistent with Thistlethwaite's practical recommendation is the work of Walter D. Kamphoefner. In *Westfalen in der Neuen Welt,* he applies the "ornithological" approach to a group of one hundred families from the Westphalian villages of Tecklenburg and Melle, analyzing local causes of their emigration, following their movements overseas and examining their progress in America. This case study produces some surprising discoveries. First, the effects of inheritance laws were less important as determinants of Westphalian emigration than a critical recession in rural cottage manufacture, or "proto-industry," during the 1840s and 1850s.[75] Next, his findings indicate that the revolutionary events of 1848 aggravated class tensions and provided occasion, if not cause, for the departure of many Westphalian peasants, which suggests that historians ought to reconsider the long-neglected role of political upheaval in the *Auswanderung*.[76] Finally, his comparison of data from Tecklenburg and St. Charles, Missouri, reveals a spectacular increase in prosperity among the migrants, a low rate of return migration, and strong evidence of chain migration, involving temporary residence in American cities en route to farmsteads on the plains.[77] Ironically, these findings refute several of Thistlethwaite's ideas: Westphalian emigrants did not, as a rule, return to Germany, and the ultimate goal of their movements was rural settlement.[78]

Not all research, of course, has been influenced by Thistlethwaite. The work of the research project "German-American Migration during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" at the University of Hamburg led by Günter Moltmann has continued to generate studies that eschew social science methods in favor of more traditional political histories and biographies.[79] The overall impact of the Hamburg project, however, has been limited by a reluctance to transcend description and apply conclusions to larger trends or theoretical refinements, although Kamphoefner sees in its more recent work an effort to correct such shortcomings.[80]

In light of the trend away from national perspectives, it is perhaps ironic that recent work in German emigration should once again be employed by historians in service of policy debate. In numerous publications Klaus Bade has sought to dispel popular myths about place of migration in Germany's past, and to place public discussion of Germany's guest-worker problem in an appropriate historical dimension.[81] Because Prussia successfully enforced a defensive immigration policy against seasonal laborers from Poland and elsewhere during the period of 1880 to 1914, Germany never experienced large-scale immigration like the United States.[82] These actions reinforced the perception of Germany as a "land of emigration," not immigration. The consequences of this notion have not been happy. German governments of all sorts have filled their labor needs by exploiting foreign laborers, while denying them access to citizenship, a practice that Bade believes carries strong racist overtones.[83] Since the 1960s a disparity has arisen between the status and social reality of Germany's guest workers. The social needs of second- and third-generation resident foreign laborers can no longer be met by a "guest worker" policy so-conceived. In Bade's view, Germans must discard their myths, and re-address the problems of foreign laborers in terms of immigration and assimilation.[84]

Bade envisions a more active role for historians in society and politics. In this way he shows the influence of the Frankfurt School and critical social theory. But unlike many of his fellow historians, who advocate the use of history-writing to promote a reformed social order,[85] Bade wants merely to contextualize public debate, to "build a bridge between past and present," not to "offer patent political recipes."[86]

Nonetheless, his present concern brings one aspect of emigration historiography full-circle. In the 1890s and early twentieth century histories of the German emigration were written to answer policy questions raised by the *Auswanderung* itself. History-writing served the clarification of current social problems. After the first years of this century emigration ceased to be a grave concern, but continued to be an embarrassment to Germany's ever-touchy national self-image. Accordingly, interest in emigration history lapsed. Today problems of migration again confront Germany and, building on conceptual advances made in America and Britain, German historians are again applying their energies to clarify an immediate policy issue. Of course, current emigration historians analyze problems that are separate from those underlying the debate they wish to inform. In this sense their mission is more didactic than one of advocacy, at least in Bade's case. A larger

historiographic cycle is nonetheless evident. In his hands, historical scholarship has returned to the service of public debate.

Histories of the *Auswanderung* have changed greatly in one hundred years. They have moved away from the nation-state as a touchstone of interpretation and toward a global view of migration that incorporates business cycles, revolutions both industrial and demographic, social mobility and the oscillations of international labor markets. National perspectives have given way to holistic, thematic approaches to emigration. States and institutions have receded from view as economies, societies and cultures have come to dominate the imagination of historians. Now scholars strive to write a social history of the *Auswanderung,* its total history. This task has barely begun.

Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

Notes

[1] Wilhelm Mönckmeier, *Die deutsche überseeische Auswanderung* (Jena, 1912), p. 1.

[2] Ibid., pp. 1-3.

[3] Frank Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Europe Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in Stanley Katz and Stanley Kutler, eds., *New Perspectives on the American Past* (Boston, 1972), pp. 48, 51.

[4] Ibid., pp. 48, 70. Perhaps Thistlethwaite was thinking of Forty-eighter Carl Schurz's motto, "ubi libertas, ibi patria" (quoted in Mönckmeier, *Überseeische Auswanderung,* p. 49.) Thistlethwaite himself contributed little to this grand endeavor after initiating it.

[5] Walter D. Kamphoefner, *Westfalen in der Neuen Welt* (Münster, 1982), p. 1.

[6] Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History* (Middletown, Conn., 1983), pp. 174-95, 229-38. Certainly there had been many scholars interested in emigration before the 1890s. They include, among others, Alexander von Bülow (*Über Organisation der Auswanderung und Colonisation,* [Berlin, 1852]), C. F. W. Dieterici (*Über Auswanderungen und Einwanderungen,* [Berlin, 1847]), Julius Fröbel (*Die deutsche Auswanderung und ihre culturhistorische Bedeutung,* [Leipzig, 1858]), Emil Lehmann (*Die deutsche Auswanderung* [Berlin, 1861]), and Friedrich List ("Die Ackerverfassung, die Zwergwirtschaft und die Auswanderung, [1842]" in *Friedrich List: Schriften, Reden, Briefe* [Berlin, 1928], V, 418-547.) Still, the decade of the 1890s serves as a useful starting point for this paper because only then did the topic of emigration make the transition from its earlier status as a social problem to its new role as an object of historical analysis, a change directly tied to the abrupt end of mass emigrations overseas after ca. 1892. See Peter Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1973), p. 27, and "Zur Entwicklung der historischen Wanderungsforschung in Deutschland," in Willi Paul Adams, ed., *Die deutschsprachige Auswanderung in die Vereinigten Staaten. Berichte über Forschungsstand und Quellenbestände* (Berlin, 1980), pp. 1-9.

[7] Wolfgang Köllmann, "Bevölkerungsgeschichte 1800-1970" in Hermann Aubin and Wolfgang Zorn, eds., *Handbuch der deutschen Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte* (Stuttgart 1976), II, 20. Köllmann describes Germany's late nineteenth-century internal migrations as the greatest mass movement of population in its history—from 1860 to 1914 between fifteen and sixteen million crossed provincial boundaries to settle permanently elsewhere in Germany, while roughly 3.7 million emigrated during the same period. Wolfgang Köllmann and Peter Marschalck, "German Emigration to the United States," in Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn, eds., *Perspectives in American History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), VII, 518, table 2.

[8] Eugen von Philippovich, ed., *Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik in Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1892). Philippovich's volume can be considered historical because, though it dealt with emigration as a social problem requiring governmental response, its editor

perceived that after 1880 the emigration had undergone a fundamental transformation. From then on Germans left their country in sharply decreasing numbers. Philippovich phrased this change in racial terms: from 1890 on what had previously been a "teutonic" immigration acquired a new "romance" and "slavic" character. That the *Auswanderung* was ebbing did not miss his attention. (See his "Einleitung: Die Auswanderung als Gegenstand der Reichspolitik," pp. vii-ix).

[9] Ibid., p. xxiv. An imperial emigration law was promulgated in 1897, well after the emigration had diminished.

[10] Mönckmeier, *Überseeische Auswanderung*, p. 269. Mönckmeier's desire to coordinate emigration with colonial policy relates to intellectual trends that, according to Mack Walker, drew conclusions from the emigration experience to propel notions of Germany's colonial mission and destiny. Mack Walker, *Germany and the Emigration, 1816-1885* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp. 195-246, passim. Further Klaus J. Bade, *Friedrich Fabri und der Imperialismus der Bismarckzeit* (Freiburg, 1975), pp. 54-68, passim.

[11] It is a failing of German historiographical writing on emigration that little attention has been devoted to the historians of this initial phase. Exceptions to this disinterest are the work of Peter Marschalck (see chapter entitled "Die deutsche Auswanderung in der öffentlichen Meinung und wissenschaftlichen Ausdeutung des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts" in his book *Deutsche Überseewanderung*, pp. 16-29, and "Zur Entwicklung der historischen Wanderungsforschung") and Günter Moltmann (see his "Die Deutsche Auswanderung in überseeische Gebiete: Forschungsstand und Forschungsprobleme," in Willi Paul Adams, ed., *Die deutschsprachige Auswanderung*, pp. 10-27).

[12] F. C. Huber, "Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik im Königreich Württemberg," in Philippovich, ed., *Auswanderungspolitik*, pp. 252-58. Walter Kamphoefner later incorporated these notions under the rubric of a "protoindustrial crisis" constituting the primary "push-factor" of German nineteenth-century emigration. See Kamphoefner, *Westfalen*, pp. 22-56.

[13] Lindig, "Entwicklung und gegenwärtiger Zustand des Auswanderungswesens in Mecklenburg" in Philippovich, ed., *Auswanderungspolitik*, pp. 306-17. Mönckmeier relied on his findings (see *Überseeische Auswanderung*, pp. 77, 80, 120, passim) as has Mack Walker (*Germany and the Emigration*, pp. 166-67, passim).

[14] Mönckmeier, *Überseeische Auswanderung*, p. 27.

[15] Ibid., pp. 27-38, 45.

[16] To be sure, lesser works addressed the same questions as Mönckmeier and Philippovich, such as Fritz Joseephy (*Die deutsche überseeische Auswanderung seit 1871* [Berlin, 1912]) and August Sartorius von Waltershausen ("Auswanderung" in *Handbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, 4th ed. [Jena, 1924], II, 60-115). None of these approached the same thoroughness of content.

[17] Friedrich Burgdörfer, "Migration across the Frontiers of Germany" in Walter F. Wilcox, ed., *Interpretations*, Vol. II of *International Migrations* (New York, 1931), pp. 313-89. The original German version appeared in the *Allgemeines Statistisches Archiv*, 20 (1930), 161-96, 383-419, 536-51.

[18] Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Europe," p. 49.

[19] Burgdörfer, "Migration across the Frontiers," p. 370.

[20] Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Europe," p. 50.

[21] Under the Third Reich emigration history received renewed attention, now polluted by official Nazi racial doctrines. The only lasting contribution from this period came from Joseph Scheben, "Die Frage nach der Geschichte der deutschen Auswanderung," *Rheinische Vierteljahresblätter*, 5 (1935), 175-82 and *Untersuchung zur Methode und Technik der deutschamerikanischen Wanderungsforschung* (Bonn, 1939), who elaborated a genealogical method for emigration research. See Kamphoefner, *Westfalen*, p. 10, and Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung*, p. 26, notes 41-46.

[22] Köllmann and Marschalck, "German Emigration," p. 519.

[23] Kamphoefner, *Westfalen*, pp. 16, 55-56. Thistlethwaite also erred in this way. "Migration from Europe," p. 57.

[24] A related trend developed among scholars of ethnic European backgrounds: filiopietist literature tended to emphasize aspects of immigrant culture most in contrast to the American. For a mild example see Walter O. Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi* (St. Louis, 1953), a thorough study of the tiny group of Saxon Old Lutherans who established the

Missouri Synod and their experiences on both sides of the Atlantic. See also Kamphoefner, *Westfalen*, pp. 2, 14-15.

[25] Harry Jerome, *Migration and Business Cycles* (New York, 1926). "American-centeredness" is a notion of Thistlethwaite's invention. "Migration from Europe," p. 52, passim.

[26] Ibid., pp. 239-44.

[27] Dorothy Swaine Thomas, *Social and Economic Aspects of Swedish Population Movements, 1750-1933* (New York, 1941).

[28] Möncкmeier, *Überseeische Auswanderung*, pp. 133-73.

[29] Dorothy Thomas, while refining Jerome's pull-thesis, acknowledged that industrial booms in Sweden lessened emigration, redirecting it to growing centers of industrial production. See her *Swedish Population Movements*, pp. 166-69.

[30] Brinley Thomas, *Migration and Economic Growth. A Study of Great Britain and the Atlantic Economy* (2d. ed., Cambridge, 1973, first published in 1954). A revision of his conclusions may be found in his *Migration and Urban Development. A Reappraisal of British and American Long Cycles* (London, 1972).

[31] B. Thomas, *Migration and Economic Growth*. See especially part 3, chapters 7 and 11, pp. 83-122, 175-89.

[32] Kristian Hvidt, *Flight to America. The Social Background of 300,000 Danish Emigrants* (New York, 1975), p. 75.

[33] Thistlethwaite, "Migrations from Europe," p. 61.

[34] Marcus Lee Hansen, "The History of Immigration as a Field for Research," *American Historical Review*, 32 (1927), 500-18 and *The Atlantic Migration* (Cambridge, Mass., 1940). Brinley Thomas also warned against overlooking the human element in the causes of migration. While he agreed with Jerome that most trans-Atlantic migration could be explained as a search for employment, he stressed that other factors could play a role, such as flight from hunger in the case of Ireland's Malthusian potato famine of 1846. See his *Migration and Economic Growth*, pp. 72-82.

[35] Hansen, "Immigration as a Field for Research," p. 501.

[36] Hansen, *Atlantic Migration*, p. 17.

[37] Hansen, "Immigration as a Field for Research," p. 501. He writes that during the nineteenth century "America was a huge magnet of varying intensity, drawing to itself people of Europe from those regions where conditions made them mobile and from which transportation provided a path" (p. 501). For a protracted discussion of the theoretical implications and off-shoots of Turner's frontier for the study of nineteenth-century German emigration see Günter Moltmann, "Nordamerikanische 'Frontier' und deutsche Auswanderung—soziale 'Sicherheitsventile' im 19. Jahrhundert?," in Dirk Stegmann et al., eds., *Industrielle Gesellschaft und politisches System. Beiträge zur politischen Sozialgeschichte* (Bonn, 1978), pp. 279-96.

[38] Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Europe," p. 49. Thistlethwaite adds that "even in so fine a mind as Hansen's there is always the presumption that the ultimate objective of overseas migration from Europe is North America and even . . . the United States" (p. 49).

[39] Hansen, *Atlantic Migration*, p. 272.

[40] Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Europe," p. 49.

[41] Ibid., pp. 54, 56.

[42] Ibid., pp. 52, 53-55. He cites the example of so-called Italian *golondrina* (swallows) who regularly migrated from their homes to Argentina, thence to the Piedmont and then back, following seasonal agricultural employment (p. 54).

[43] Ibid., pp. 52, 54.

[44] Ibid., 57-59.

[45] Ibid., pp. 57, 64-66. He elaborates further that "the overseas migration was one . . . result of a revolutionary increase in social mobility which had the effect of creating large numbers prepared to travel in search of jobs" (pp. 65-66).

[46] Walker, *Germany and the Emigration*, p. vii.

[47] Klaus J. Bade, "Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt im deutschen Nordosten von 1880 bis zum ersten Weltkrieg," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 20 (1980), 267, n. 3.

[48] Walker, *Germany and the Emigration*, pp. 1-41. See Akerman, "Theories and Models," p. 72. Akerman notes that most models do not account for socio-psychological overreaction to the social and economic pressures that are the larger causes of migration.

[49] A collection of the Uppsala Group's work may be found in Harald Runblom and Hans Norman, eds., *From Sweden to America. A History of the Migration* (Minneapolis and

Uppsala, 1976). Sune Akerman provides a synopsis of historiographical developments since Thistlethwaite and the Group's contribution to them in "From Stockholm to San Francisco: the Development of Historical Studies of External Migrations," *Annales Academiae Regiae Scientiarum Upsaliensis,* 19 (1975), 5-46.

[50] Harald Runblom, "A Brief History of the Research Project" in Runblom and Norman, eds., *From Sweden to America,* p. 17.

[51] Sune Akerman, "Theories and Models of Migration Research," in Runblom and Norman, eds., *From Sweden to America,* pp. 20, 71-75.

[52] Above all Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung,* pp. 96-99 and Wolfgang Köllmann, "Versuch des Entwurfs einer historisch-soziologischen Wanderungstheorie," in Ulrich Engelhardt et al., eds., *Soziale Bewegung und politische Verfassung* (Stuttgart, 1976), pp. 260-69.

[53] Bade, "Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt," pp. 265-323.

[54] Klaus J. Bade, "Die 'Gastarbeiter des Kaiserreichs—oder: Vom Auswanderungsland des 19. Jahrhunderts zum 'Einwanderungsland Bundesrepublik'?," *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht,* 33 (1982), 79.

[55] Köllmann and Marschalck, "German Emigration." Parts 1, 2 and 5 (pp. 499-516, 547-54) are by Köllmann, parts 3 and 4 (pp. 516-47) by Marschalck.

[56] For example Werner Langenherder, *Ansatz zu einer allgemeinen Verhaltungstheorie in den Sozialwissenschaften* (Stuttgart, 1970). For a review and attempted synthesis of universal behavioral models of migration see Hans-Joachim Hoffmann-Nowotny, *Migration. Ein Beitrag zu einer soziologischen Erklärung* (Stuttgart, 1970), and Takenori Inoki, *Aspects of German Peasant Emigration to the United States, 1815-1914* (New York, 1981), for a critical analysis of them on the basis of economic and demographic data.

[57] Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung,* p. 98.

[58] Köllmann and Marschalck, "German Emigration," pp. 500-01, and Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung,* p. 60.

[59] Köllmann and Marschalck, "German Emigration," p. 503.

[60] Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung,* pp. 72-83, chart p. 84 and Köllmann and Marschalck, "German Emigration," pp. 542-47.

[61] Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung,* p. 40 and Köllmann, "Bevölkerungsgeschichte," p. 29.

[62] Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung,* p. 83.

[63] Ibid., p. 82. "German Frontier Thesis" was coined by Kamphoefner, *Westfalen,* p. 12.

[64] Kamphoefner, *Westfalen,* p. 12.

[65] Bade, "Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt," pp. 281-83. This objection is substantiated by new evidence of chain migration of coherent family and even village units from Germany to American cities, thence to rural areas after a brief period of financial recuperation. See Kamphoefner, *Westfalen,* pp. 86-122, 156-71.

[66] Mönckmeier, *Überseeische Auswanderung,* chart p. 21.

[67] Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung,* p. 80. As much as 80% of Mecklenburg's emigrants from 1867 to 1874 were rural day-laborers (see Lindig, "Zustand des Auswanderungswesens in Mecklenburg," p. 293, cit. Marschalck, p. 78). See also chart in Mönckmeier, *Überseeische Auswanderung,* p. 164. This conclusion contrasts to Thistlethwaite's "Migration from Europe," pp. 57-59.

[68] Klaus J. Bade, "Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt," "German Emigration to the United States and Continental Immigration to Germany, 1879-1929," *Central European History (CEH),* 13 (1980), 348-77 and "Transnationale Migration und Arbeitsmarkt im Kaiserreich" in Toni Pierenkemper and Richard Tilly, eds., *Historische Arbeitsmarktforschung* (Göttingen, 1982), pp. 182-211.

[69] Bade, "Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt," pp. 267-68. His work provides an interesting parallel to the interactive "Atlantic Economy" Thomas postulated for Anglo-American migrations. The greatest difference is Bade's stress on multinational flow patterns of labor rather than on the determining importance of a particular pair of national economies.

[70] Bade, "Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt," p. 305.

[71] Ibid., p. 322.

[72] Ibid., pp. 277, 281-86, passim. This shift Bade associates with Marschalck's scheme of *Siedlungswanderung* and *Arbeitswanderung.* Internal migration carried many characteristics

of overseas emigration. Masurian migrants to the Rhineland, for example, tended to maintain internal group cohesion and identity, at least for a short period, a fact that prompts Bade to refer to Gelsenkirchen as the "New York of the East Prussians" ("Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt," pp. 278-80). The idea of long-distance internal migration as an element of industrialization and urbanization is further developed by Walter D. Kamphoefner in "Soziale und Demographische Strukturen der Zuwanderung in deutsche Großstädte des späten 19. Jahrhunderts" in Hans-Jürgen Teuteberg, ed., *Urbanisierung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 1983), 95-116, and Wolfgang Köllmann, "Industrialisierung, Binnenwanderung, und 'Soziale Frage,'" *Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte (VSWG)*, 46 (1959). According to Dieter Langewiesche rural-urban migration was a two-way process and therefore, even though cities experienced net growth, internal migration is better understood as an aspect of the nineteenth-century revolution of social mobility, a conclusion to which Thistlethwaite would surely concur; "Wanderungsbewegungen in der Hochindustrialisierungsperiode. Regionale, interstädtische und innerstädtische Mobilität in Deutschland 1880-1914," *VSWG*, 64 (1977), 1-40.

[73] Bade, "Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt," p. 269.

[74] See above, p. 6.

[75] Kamphoefner, *Westfalen*, pp. 22-56. Kamphoefner suggests that protoindustrial crisis may explain other regional emigrations as well, such as those of Württemberg and even Ireland. Though his major work has been published in German, Kamphoefner is an American by birth and training.

[76] Ibid., pp. 75-85.

[77] Ibid., pp. 123-71 and "Transplanted Villages: Regional Distribution and Patterns of Settlement of Germans in America to 1870," paper delivered to the Social Science History Association, Annual Meeting, Cambridge, Mass., November 1-4, 1979.

[78] Thistlethwaite believed that during the nineteenth century as many as 30% of European emigrants returned home. Kamphoefner points out that this estimate is based on a questionable backward projection of return migration rates in 1907 (*Westfalen*, p. 4). To the problem of return migration see J. G. Gould, "European Intercontinental Emigration. The Road Home: Return Migration from the U.S.A.," *Journal of European Economic History*, 9 (1980), 41-112, Alfred Vagts, *Deutsch-Amerikanische Rückwanderung* (Heidelberg, 1960), which offers a biographical account of prominent remigrating elites, and Günter Moltmann, "American-German Return Migration in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *CEH*, 13 (1980), 378-92. Moltmann estimates that return migration of Germans reached a maximum of about 20% during the 1870s, a period when overall emigration was at low ebb.

[79] Günter Moltmann, ed., *Deutsche Amerikaauswanderung im 19. Jahrhundert: Sozialgeschichtliche Beiträge* (Stuttgart, 1976), and ed., *Germans to America. 300 Years of Immigration, 1683-1983* (Stuttgart, 1982).

[80] Kamphoefner, *Westfalen*, p. 13. He cites Moltmann's "German Emigration to the United States during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century as a Social Protest Movement" in Hans L. Trefousse, ed., *Germany to America: Essays on Problems of International Relations and Immigration* (New York, 1980), pp. 103-10, and "Nordamerikanische Frontier und deutsche Auswanderung—soziale 'Sicherheitsventile' im 19. Jahrhundert?" in Dirk Stegmann et al., eds., *Industrielle Gesellschaft und politisches System*, pp. 279-96. See also the recent book of Moltmann's student Hartmut Bickelmann, *Deutsche Überseewanderung in der Weimarer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1980), and Moltmann's own "American-German Return Migration."

[81] Klaus J. Bade, " 'Gastarbeiter' des Kaiserreichs," and *Gastarbeiter zwischen Arbeitswanderung und Einwanderung* (Tutzing, 1983), *Vom Auswanderungsland zum Einwanderungsland? Deutschland 1880-1970* (Bonn, 1983). Further Klaus J. Bade, ed., *Auswanderer—Wanderarbeiter—Gastarbeiter: Bevölkerung, Arbeitsmarkt und Wanderung in Deutschland seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern, 1983), and Siegfried Bethlehem, *Heimatvertreibung, DDR-Flucht, Gastarbeiterwanderung. Wanderungsströme und Wanderungspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Stuttgart, 1982).

[82] Klaus J. Bade, "Politik und Ökonomie der Ausländerbeschäftigung im preußischen Osten, 1885-1914" in Hans-Jürgen Puhle and Hans-Ulrich Wehler, eds., *Preußen im Rückblick* (Göttingen, 1980), pp. 273-99, and " 'Kulturkampf' auf dem Arbeitsmarkt:

Bismarck's 'Polenpolitik' 1885-1890'' in Otto Pflanze, ed., *Innenpolitische Probleme des Bismarck-Reiches* (Munich, 1983), pp. 121-42.

[83] Bade, '' 'Gastarbeiter' des Kaiserreichs,'' pp. 88-92, and *Auswanderungsland zum Einwanderungsland,* pp. 96-124.

[84] Bade, *Gastarbeiter zwischen Arbeitswanderung und Einwanderung,* pp. 52-55, and '' 'Gastarbeiter' des Kaiserreichs,'' pp. 88-92.

[85] For example Dieter Groh, *Kritische Geschichtswissenschaft in emanzipatorischer Absicht. Überlegungen zur Geschichtswissenschaft als Sozialwissenschaft* (Stuttgart, 1973), pp. 19, 29, 53, passim. Further Iggers, *German Conception of History,* p. 270, passim.

[86] Bade, *Vom Auswanderungsland zum Einwanderungsland,* pp. 9-10.