

Population, Labour and Migration in 19th- and 20th-Century Germany.

Edited by Klaus J. Bade. Leamington Spa (UK)/Hamburg/New York: Berg Publishers Limited, 1987
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This book, the first of a projected "German Historical Perspective Series" whose purpose is to present the results of research by German historians and social scientists to readers in English-speaking countries, had its origins in the editor's visiting professorship at Oxford in 1985 and the papers of the several additional scholars from the Federal Republic of Germany he invited to take part in his seminar. Although not an exhaustive reference work, it is, despite its short length, a rather comprehensive treatment containing extensive statistical data, footnotes, and bibliographical references (but unfortunately no index).

The overall interdisciplinary approach reflects the revival in Germany of interest in historical understanding along with the overcoming of the identity crisis stemming from the Nazi era, as well as a new interest in social issues. The eight contributions (actually unnumbered chapters) following the editor's "Introduction: Population, Labour, Migration. Historical Studies and Issues of Current Debate" are concerned with the declining population trends, changes in the structure of employment, and current problems relating to the so-called "guest workers" brought in after World War II.

As the following references to the contributions indicate, the book contains a number of significant hypotheses and conclusions. The first contribution, on "The Age of Demographic Transition: Mortality and Fertility" (Peter Marschalck), concludes from a review of the data that, while Malthus's simplified explanation of the forces at work in maintaining the relatively stable pre-industrial population can be accepted, the later demographic changes, notably the decline in fertility pointing to a declining population, cannot be explained in terms of a single transition of one kind or another, but require consideration of a complex

of continuing social and economic changes. And since such changes can be expected to continue, "demographers will eventually have to recognize their discipline as a demography of permanent transition" [p. 33].

"Labour Market, Labour Force and Standard of Living: From Agriculture to Industry" (Toni Pierenkemper) begins with background material on early nineteenth century labor changes in agriculture, industry and the craft trades, and "proto-industry" (the processing by farm families of raw materials grown on the farm into products such as yarn and linen for sale on large outside markets). This is followed by material on the vast growth in employment in the 1850 to 1913 period of rising industrial production and the expanding economy, the economic disruptions of World War I which lasted until the mid-twenties, the several years of "normalcy" until the depression, and the Nazi regime's elimination of the free labor market but provision of employment as the war effort expanded. The standard of living roughly paralleled these historical developments, being low to falling and with much suffering in some periods of the pre-industrial era, rising more or less continuously beginning around the 1870s and until the eve of World War I, upset by the several ensuing crises and catastrophes, and improving but little thereafter until the "economic miracle" of the 1950s when it reached a level that could be termed affluent.

"Labour, Migration and the State: Germany from the Late 19th Century to the Onset of the Great Depression" (Bade) takes up the factors in the change from a labor-exporting to a labor-importing nation. Population pressure was eased in the nineteenth century until the early 1880s by the transatlantic migration (ninety percent to the United States), and beginning about that time by industrialization and the accompanying internal migration and urbanization. By the mid-1890s Germany was actually importing people as seasonal laborers from eastern, western, and southern Europe, and it was then that sociological problems arising from the different ethnic groups first appeared. Government intervention in organizing the labor market, which appeared on a small scale before World War I in the form of labor exchanges, recruitment, and placement, was increased during the war when compulsory measures were undertaken, continued on a larger scale after the war, and turned into a new compulsory system during the 1930s and the Nazi period.

"Internal Migration: Persistence and Mobility" (Dieter Langewiesche and Friedrich Lenger) points out that the spectacular rise in geographical mobility within Germany up to World War I was followed by a sharp break in the immediate postwar years, after which, with lessened population pressures, migration was stable at a lower level than earlier, but that it declined even further after World War II, so that there is now far less mobility than in the first half of the nineteenth century, and perhaps even the eighteenth. For most of the nineteenth century, the greater part of the migration was short-distance, but the large-scale east-to-west migration toward the end of the century required long-distance moves. Most of the internal migration was by single individuals, mostly young unattached men, not families. Unattached women migrants moved over fairly short distances, usually as domestic workers, although in areas where there were textile mills, many got jobs there.

"Long-Distance Migration, Integration and Segregation of an Ethnic Minority in Industrial Germany: The Case of the 'Ruhr-Poles'" (Christoph Klessmann) is a case study of an earlier minority that exhibits a number of similarities and parallels to the foreign guest workers of today. The Poles came to the Ruhr from 1870 to 1914 in response to the overpopulation in the eastern agricultural areas of the Reich and the rapid growth of heavy industry in the west. This case differs somewhat from today's guest-worker situation, however, since the history of the Ruhr Poles was also part of the German-Polish national conflict and their behavior was greatly influenced by that.

"German Transatlantic Migration from the Early Nineteenth Century to the Outbreak of World War II" (Reinhard R. Doerries) raises the question whether, in view of the oppressive conditions leading to overseas migration, the term emigration defined as a voluntary act is actually an appropriate one. The author says that most of the emigrants were as uprooted in their native Germany as they were described as being in America before acculturation. However that may be, the emigration up to 1865 was largely family emigration of independent small-plot farmers and small-time artisans; that from 1865 to 1895, which was from the northeastern parts of the country, consisted of an increasing number of landless peasants as well as downwardly-mobile artisans, and included a growing percentage of single emigrants; and that from 1895 to the beginning of World War I was marked by the phasing out of family emigration and an increase in industrial workers. Following the almost complete ending of emigration during World War I, the comparatively small rise in the 1920s was in response to the inflation and unemployment as well as the accompanying undesirable social conditions, whereas that of the 1930s was largely the Jewish emigration from the Nazi state. The author points out that, in Germany, social history, including migration matters, has been neglected until recently

because attention was focused on the problems arising from the cataclysmic events of the century, and he suggests that its present revival may have been engendered by the impact of growing social problems, in particular those brought about by the guest-worker policy.

"Transatlantic Emigration and Continental Immigration: The German Experience Past and Present" (Bade) is a historical account developing the theme that Germany has long been in the process of becoming a country of immigration in contrast with its earlier role as a country of emigration, and that, instead of exporting its social problems resulting from overpopulation, it has now imported social problems by way of bringing in the guest workers, for the latter have not only remained in the country, but have also married and had children, and now even have grandchildren growing up as though they were German citizens. Foreign workers had been imported from time to time under varying conditions, and with varying degrees of compulsion, even before World War I when the country was still providing emigrants, but they were always considered foreign migrant workers, not classical immigrants who might ultimately become citizens. The author says that, while Germany cannot be regarded as a country of immigration like the United States, it has not properly faced its immigration problems, which have been brought to a head by the guest-worker developments. He maintains that a new legal framework going beyond the migratory-labor concept and the indecisive guest-worker regulations is required, with provisions for social integration and the possibility of naturalization.

"Guestworker Question or Immigration Issue? Social Sciences and Public Debate in the Federal Republic of Germany" (Hermann Korte) is a sociological approach that introduces ideology. The author asserts that "ideological links exist between present migration theories and political theories of the nineteenth century, such as nationalism and [classical] liberalism" [p. 179]. He repudiates social research because of its liberalism and for being "too influenced by the value-orientations of the powerful official or quasi-official clients" of the country's social-science establishment [p. 178]. The school system was able to cope fairly well with the problems of educating the children of the guest workers only because of the orientation of the "politically and socially aware and active" young teachers of the "generation of 1968" [pp. 173f.]. The housing problem is a matter of power relations, he says, and not the result of individual decision-making or ethnic peculiarities, and it should be approached accordingly [p. 178].

This book is especially welcome because the material it contains is not available elsewhere in English. Although some readers might like a more extensive treatment of a number of points, it is quite informative as it stands. It is also thought-provoking beyond the immediate. Thus, the reader attuned to contemporary developments might readily come to speculate whether today's large-scale immigration from underdeveloped areas into the United States amounts in effect to the replenishment of the labor force, and even portends the displacement over the long run of the present, largely European-descended population.

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