An Investigation into the Structural Causes of German-American Mass Migration in the Nineteenth Century.

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Summary

This thesis examines the structural causes of German emigration to the United States during the nineteenth century. It contends that recent shifts in the historiography of migration studies, which heavily favour a network-based approach, both dismiss structural causes too eagerly, and have left outmoded, incomplete and incorrect structural assumptions in place. In investigating the key structural considerations behind mass German-American migration, the thesis challenges outmoded assumptions, offers new conclusions, and places structural cause alongside the network dynamic as inseparable parts of the migration process.

Chief among its considerations are an assessment of eighteenth century German-American emigration as a popular phenomenon, and an in depth examination of whether the downfall of the rural textile trade was a significant contributor to South West German emigration in the early nineteenth century. It finds eighteenth century movements to be a vital component of understanding the nineteenth century mass phenomenon, and existing arguments regarding the downfall of rural industry to be overstated. In turn it pursues a close examination of the effect of land splitting in the German South West, seeking a specific delineation of conditions which led to the early development of heavy emigration, through a comparative assessment of historic communities.

The thesis also examines the onset of emigration from Eastern German regions and their early role in delivering the movement to mass dimensions. It closes by placing the regional nature of the Atlantic emigration into a wider German context, showing the development of emigration to be fundamentally tied to the main narrative of nineteenth century German history, and the 'German question' which shaped much of the period.
Acknowledgements

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## Archives

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<tr>
<td>KAE</td>
<td>Kreisarchiv Enzkreis, Pforzheim [Enzkreis District Archive, Pforzheim]</td>
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<tr>
<td>LKA</td>
<td>Landeskirchliches Archiv, Stuttgart [State Church Archive, Stuttgart]</td>
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<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Massenbach Stadtverwaltung Gebäude [Massenbach town council building]</td>
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<td>MLHAS</td>
<td>Mecklenburg Landeshauptarchiv, Schwerin [Mecklenburg State Archive, Schwerin]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>National Archives, Kew</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Stadtarchiv Brackenheim [Town Archive, Brackenheim]</td>
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## Sources

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>I/T</td>
<td>Inventuren und Theilungen [Inventory and Partition Records]</td>
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<td>KB</td>
<td>Kirchenbuch [Parish Register]</td>
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Introduction –

This thesis examines the most prolific emigration of any European peoples to the United States in the nineteenth century. From the close of the Napoleonic Wars to the turn of the twentieth century, some 5 million people left the area outlined by Bismarck’s Reich, headed for America. As a consequence of this migration, Germans represent the largest ethnic heritage group in the modern day United States. As of 2008, official German heritage in the U.S. (the lineage of at least one parent) was 50,271,790, against a total population of 304,059,728, a 16.5% share. By comparison, those of Irish heritage numbered 36,278,332, and those of Mexican heritage 30,272,000.

During the nineteenth century, the mass movement of Germans across the Atlantic occurred in distinct phases. The period between 1830 and the mid-1840s was a period of growth; the annual figure of 10,000 departures was reached by 1832, and by the time of the 1848 revolutions, nearly half a million had left for the USA. Then, between the late 1840s and the early 1880s, a prolonged and heavy mass movement took place, during which the number of departures achieved close to, or exceeded, three quarters of a million per decade. Then, from the mid-1880s to the outbreak of the First World War, the emigration entered terminal decline. The last significant years of emigration were recorded in 1891-2; by the turn of the twentieth century, it was all but over.

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1 The total being 5,009,280; as U.S immigration was only enumerated from 1820, a further 25,000 might be added during the period 1815-20. Although a precise ethnic breakdown of the German element is not possible, the total enumeration for Austro-Hungary across the same period was an additional 1,027,195. Albert Bernhardt Faust, The German Element in the United States Boston, Houghton & Mifflin, 1909. pp. 581-2.


3 Ibid.
Fig. 1:
GERMAN IMMIGRATION TO THE USA
1821 – 30...............................................6,761
1831 – 40..................................................152,454
1841 – 50..................................................434,626
1851 – 1860..............................................951,667
1861 – 1870..............................................787,468
1871 – 1880..............................................718,182
1881 – 1890..............................................1,452,970
1891 – 1900..............................................505,152
Total: ..................................................5,009,280

The emigration was always rural, whether from among the small peasantry of the German South West, the *Heuerling* labourers of the North West, or the emancipated serfs of the East. In popular imagery it was also a rural immigration, with the German farmer an organised and productive figure in the planting of the American Midwest. However, whilst this was an important part of the German-American immigration, urban settlement was always significant. In 1850, 23% of the population of New York consisted of German immigrants. And whilst a great many Germans did indeed head for America’s Midwest, plenty were drawn to its cities; Chicago, Cincinnati and Milwaukee all became hubs of German immigration. By 1890, 36% of Chicagoans were native Germans; in Milwaukee the figure for that year was as high as 69%.

The nineteenth century mass-movement occurred in a period of upheaval and change in German Europe. As far as the consequences of that upheaval and change go, this enormous transplantation of Germans has received far less attention than other developments. Yet as a focus of research, it represents a unique lens into the conditions of a rapidly changing society, and it is in this guise

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4 Faust, *The German Element* p. 582.
7 Ibid.
that a study of the German-American migration originally suggested itself as an engaging topic for investigation. Investigating structural causes offered not only the chance to examine what conditions led to emigration, and as such, a close examination of the conditions faced by ordinary Germans in the nineteenth century, but also an opportunity to address a clear need within the current migration historiography. In order to demonstrate the context of and requirement for the current thesis, the development and present state of that historiography must first be addressed.

Reflecting the receiving society’s need to comprehend its heterogeneity, as with all European Atlantic migrations, the immigration literature of Germans in America is exhaustive. The volume, origins, settlement and working patterns of the German migrants are well addressed in a rich historiography that has grown and evolved for more than a century. This is, unsurprisingly, a general theme for the immigrant groups of the USA. But whilst the United States owes its population to immigrations of the near past and thus finds in migration movements a central and defining core of its history, emigration history has held understandably less gravity and concern for provider nations, because the principal actors were leaving the stage, rather than appearing on it. With specific regard to the German movement, it has been remarked that Ireland and Sweden regard emigration as part of national heritage, celebrated in museums, novels and films, whilst ‘one finds in the German case, almost a conspiracy of silence’.8 Such observations require an obvious asterisk as to whether migrants constitute a ‘subaltern’ strand of national history, or play a major role in the national story. Despite the large, continuous stream of migrants from nineteenth century Germany, the history of that nation is defined by other events, whereas in the Irish instance, the emigration has a case for being the most significant event of its past. Beyond the quantitative, migrations are not of equal weight; the community within which one finds their

vantage point defines that weight, whether it is the national story of the U.S., that of Ireland or Germany, a city receiving foreign immigration, or a village with a rapidly decreasing population.

Perspectives have thus proven to be a powerful determinant of how emigration historiographies have developed. As well as individual national narratives, historical approaches have been pivotal. As American immigration history learned during its tumultuous twentieth century evolution, the migrant is a sensitive subject when seen from the steeple of national self-image. Whilst early American immigration historians were intent on demonstrating the marvel of migrant success in the development of the American nation, by implication, the exodus of large numbers of people from their region of origin suggested significant shortcomings with their former home states. Topographically, economically, politically or socially, their former homelands had in some way failed to accommodate them. Until the early 1960s, when national histories dominated style and approach, it is thus unsurprising that such perceived failure received little attention from most European provider states. Frank Thistlethwaite described the situation as a scholarly ‘salt water curtain’ between the Atlantic migration zones; well-developed American immigration study remained largely separated from an underdeveloped and uninterested European literature of roots.9

The German emigration, like so many European emigrations, was no different, stunted in its historiographical attention. Although Eugen von Phillipovich’s collection of essays in 1892 provided an excellent survey of the movement from the German side, which, in some regions, was still taking place, by the turn of the twentieth century the topic was heading into a common scholarly no-man’s land; it was no longer a contemporary issue, nor was it far enough removed from the present to warrant further detailed historical investigation.10 With this stage beginning to drift into the era of heightened nationalism seen in the late Kaiserreich, attention on those who had left the fatherland failed to return to

popular research agendas. And whilst the incessant genealogical study of the Third Reich produced abundances of localised emigration surveys, their purpose was never going to be the objective establishment of cause. For the generation growing up after that period, pressing issues of historical causation concerned what had just happened, and how it had happened, not a migratory movement buried by the incredible din and historical turmoil of twentieth century events.

The discipline of critical European emigration research, and eventually critical German emigration research, would eventually find its beginnings in a crisis of identity on the American side, rather than significant signs of European interest. For want of better European research, or lack of interest, American immigration historiography had traditionally cast the European ancestor in the role of generic old world peasant, torn asunder by modernising forces. Where the intent was often a filiopietistic survey or commentary of the role of particular immigrant groups in the great American success story, causes were commonly confined to throwaway remarks regarding ‘overcrowding in the fields’ and ‘competition from the factory system’ loosely and vaguely applicable to whichever group was under consideration. In 1927, Marcus Lee Hansen had begun work on a highly ambitious survey of all European migrations, in which he attempted to provide a specific and accurate picture of the conditions in Europe which produced emigration, in order to create a more complete picture of the migration process. He produced some of the best early details on the causes of German migration, as well as the other major European movements, but his half-finished study failed to ignite a new approach in the American field. The touch-paper for change came from a history that stuck firmly to the representation of European ancestors as generic European country folk, Oscar Handlin’s Pulitzer Prize winning *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People*.

Handlin’s seminal 1951 work put immigration and the immigrant at the forefront of popular American discussion, marking the beginning of modern migration historiography. Although Handlin’s image of the emigrant never strayed from the general, with Germans, Poles, or Irish subject to the same standard terms

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11 Such causes are given in Faust’s filiopietistic history of 1909, *The German Element* p. 584.
of expulsion, his intention to portray the newly arrived immigrant as an isolated, often despairing individual, caught between two cultures, was a far cry from standard representations of success. By portraying the migrant at once as victim of the Old World and outcast in the New, Handlin's work provided the fuel that would fire the major paradigm shifts of migration study.

The full explosion of response would not take place for over a decade. In the intervening time period, the tools for riposte would appear. In 1960, Frank Thistlethwaite produced a guide to migratory study which to this day forms the major methodological outline.\(^\text{14}\) Citing Hansen's more detailed approach, Thistlethwaite argued that focusing on the national, or solely on immigration or emigration, would inevitably produce general, loose, half-complete and one-sided conclusions, inapplicable to many migrants who shared the general moniker of 'German' or 'Italian', let alone 'European.' Any such approach would be incapable of capturing mass immigration or emigration stories, made up of millions of individual experiences. Accurate understanding was to be achieved through the study of complete migration processes, in microcosm. The conditions in specific communities from which migrants came; the previous migratory patterns of those communities; how, why and where their migrants came to settle; the skills and work the migrants performed, and even their preferred transportation, needed to be examined collectively, in order to explain their actions and truly understand migratory phenomena. As Thistlethwaite demonstrated, one does not come to understand why Italians were found building the Panama Canal by examining conditions in Italy, but by being aware of the fact that their compatriots had already worked on its Suez exemplar.\(^\text{15}\)

The cumulative workings of a 'honeycomb of innumerable cells, districts, villages and towns' produced mass movements, and it was the cumulative investigation of that honeycomb which unlocked the dynamics of those mass movements.\(^\text{16}\) Thistlethwaite’s paper would appear just in time to carry enormous impact in migration study.

In the 1960s, the challenges of the Vietnam War, the Black Revolution and of civil unrest began to erode the dominant American narrative of a homogenous,
white, Anglo-Saxon peoples heading uninterrupted toward a modernity of power and progress. All of a sudden things were looking a little less powerful and progressive, and the questioning of identities fed directly into a renewed search for ancestral roots. As Rudolph Vecoli noted:

> From...disillusionment emerged, I believe, a new historical consciousness, one weary and wary of national heroics... A recovery of group memories followed... memories which could be and were mobilised to support movements of affirmation and liberation against the oppressions of racism, sexism and Anglo-Americanism. In the sixties, everyone came out of the closet and it felt good. Black was beautiful, but so was Polish, Swedish [and] Italian.17

The use of Thistlethwaite’s method, studying migration as a process, unbroken from the point of departure to the point of settlement, and approached from the migrants’ perspective, offered powerful redemptive qualities. By understanding all sides of the migratory process, ethnic groups no longer had to be uprooted, but were often found to be moving for specific purposes and into particular communities, their direction and settlement dictated by pioneers from their own region, their new homes often forming transplanted communities. This approach assuaged the discomfort produced by Handlin’s portrayal of ancestors as outcasts, and unshackled the myriad of peoples in America from an often unrepresentative American national narrative, and general European background. By becoming a powerful tool of ethnic identity, detailed emigration history experienced a sustained boom. Rudolph Vecoli’s 1964 ‘Contadini in Chicago’, a study of the South Italian Contadini in urban America, marked the pioneering first example of this new school of history from below.18

In the same year, German emigration received its first detailed study. Mack Walker’s *Germany and the Emigration, 1816-1885* was however a product of an earlier technique. Originally the product of doctoral research in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the methodological approach expounded by Thistlethwaite was

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largely absent from the account. Using a traditional narrative method, Walker attempted a complete account of the entire emigration from the German side, from all regions, and for all reasons. Inevitably, he encountered the obstacles which Thistlethwaite's approach had been engineered to avoid. The use of a narrative method to try an explain the entire phenomenon led Walker to the lament that the German emigration was

composed of a vast kaleidoscope of separate acts without a collective main cause... The reality of it is too various to be mastered; try to arrange it meaningfully, and one is taken farther from the objective truth with each generalisation and each abstraction. Any comprehensive pattern is complex and insecure; close scrutiny causes any part of it to fade and decompose. The best one can attain is a blurred and refracted image, composed of a severely limited spectrum; and if one forgets that is all it is, then its value is gone.19

Walkers 'limited spectrum' referred to the inevitable outcome of a single historian attempting to tackle such a broad subject, rather than any attempt at actual restriction in the scope of his own study. Such restriction, it was argued, would be just as unrepresentative as the blurred and refracted image of the whole, as no small scale account or aspect could be reasonably extrapolated to the wider movement without blocking some other factor, giving rise to further distortions. The narrative method was also justified because in migration history, Walker believed the issue of individual agency and personal motivation – a box to which no historical method holds the key – to be at once too significant and too irretrievable to justify a more empirical approach.

As a result, *Germany and the Emigration* serves as an anthology of innumerable parts of a whole, an attempt to pull together as many representative strings and detailed stories as possible, in order to give some idea of the character of the phenomenon throughout the nineteenth century. Wherever causation came too close to specificity, the author was quick to fold it back into rich description, ever wary of giving precedent to one colour in the kaleidoscope. The study brought out many basic themes behind the emigration, such as the unsustainable practice of equally divided inheritances in the agricultural German South, and the harshness of feudal landlords in the North East, but lacked both the method and

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inclination to draw out the specificities of these circumstances. As a narrative depiction, the piece was and remains unique, uncoloured by any of the pre-disposing motivators that have shaped the field. Walker was not seeking to integrate German immigrants into the American story, as some predecessors did, or to rescue their cultural identity, as his contemporaries might have done, or to build typologies of migration that might champion migrant agency, as future scholars would. Aside from achieving a still informative overview of the German-American movement, the one thing the study certainly did do, was swim strongly against the rising trend of research priorities in migration study.

In 1976, a Swedish study which had taken place over ten years, involving some 30 scholars, verified the merits in the approach of the new school. *From Sweden to America* proved that the community-driven fundamentals of migration, postulated by Thistlethwaite, were not only a useful tool of accurate study, but something close to an intractable truth of unforced mass-migrations. Through an exhaustive investigation of detailed parish records, the study found that not only did a community's migratory heritage dictate its future migratory behaviour, but that migratory movements were consistently propelled by a 'self-generating effect'.

Where migration paths were established, communications between migrants and their former home communities acted as highways, providing information for family members and acquaintances to act upon. Through the information of trusted sources, comparative images of the Old World and New became possible, as did the possibility of settling among familiar faces who already knew the lay of a new land. As the number acting upon information increased, so in turn did the number providing it; a self-fulfilling mechanism producing ever thicker lines of communication and movement. Migration was given quantitative and qualitative proof as a community process, a self-propelled, self-sustained bridge across the ocean which continued to function until some process of de-population or industrialisation finally caused the receptiveness of the old country to give out.

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The comprehensive corroboration of this process provided by the Scandinavian study became the last word against Oscar Handlin’s uprooted outcasts. Here was proof, borne out on a large scale, that migrants were not ‘pushed’ out of the old country, or necessarily ‘pulled’ by the new; they were agents moving along their own pathways, the old vernacular of push and pull replaced by the new of ‘chains’ and their linkages, capable of stretching across vast distances. The self-generative effect unlocked settlement patterns, accounted for mass dimensions, gave an agreeable measure of agency to migrants themselves, and made that agency a crucial and observable dynamic. Migrant communications were quantifiable evidence of motivation at the personal level. The Swedish group were also aware however, that the mechanism necessarily required pioneer migrants to lay out the paths along which chain migration could operate, and called for further research into important opening developments.

In 1982, a ground-breaking study of German emigration appeared, heavily influenced by the method and approach of the new school and the Scandinavian project. *Westfalen in der neuen Welt*, produced by the American scholar Walter Kamphoefner, later reworked and enlarged in an English edition entitled *The Westfalians, From Germany to Missouri*, has become something of a last word on causation and analysis of the German movement.\(^{21}\) The work coincided with a period of increased attention on the phenomenon, and the fact that it first appeared in German was a signal of growing Old-World interest in the subject; in the 1970s, West German scholars had at last begun to work on the emigration. Wolfgang Kollman and Peter Marschalck began this research with a survey of the movement heavily determined by the sociological categorisation of migrants.\(^{22}\) Then in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the literature began to build. In 1979, Günther Moltmann gathered much of the public commentary and investigation that had appeared at the time of the earliest nineteenth century movements.\(^{23}\) In 1982, just in time for the tri-centennial of the first German landings in America,
Moltmann and a group of German scholars also produced a collection of papers on various aspects of the entire movement, from the chronology of settlement, to legislative issues, and diplomatic legacies. In 1984, Wolfgang von Hippel also produced his overview of South West German emigration, which categorised and quantified the emigration in close detail. But it was Kamphoefner who was working to the methodological and historiographical state of the art.

A self-confessed disciple of Thistlethwaite and the approaches of the Scandinavian school, his study of North West German migration combined analysis of both initial causation and subsequent networks in order to create a holistic picture of the migration from Westphalia to the New World. Its contribution to the understanding of structural causes of emigration would leave a lasting impact.

As was characteristic of the American scholars applying new approaches to migratory movements, Kamphoefner’s interest in the German North West stemmed at first from genealogical roots, but his study was also prompted by historiographical need. Established structural arguments of early German emigration cited the equal division of inheritances as the key factor. This practice was well established in the German South West, the region most commonly associated with the early movements of the 1830s and 1840s, and was viewed, as far back as the mid-nineteenth century, as an unsustainable practice that had ignited migration. But as Kamphoefner pointed out, this system did not exist in the North West, with its practice of primogeniture, and yet there were pockets of emigration from this region as intense as anywhere in the South. In order to account for the pioneer migrants who had built the chains between the North West and the New World, some other cause was required.

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24 Günter Moltmann, Hartmut Bickelmann, eds., *Germans to America 300 Years of Immigration, 1683 to 1983* Stuttgart, Published by Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations in cooperation with Inter Nationes, Bonn-Bad Godesberg, 1982. On the American side, a coterminous project of very similar material involving many of the same contributors is Frank Trommler, Joseph McVeigh, eds., *America and the Germans an Assessment of a Three Hundred Year History* [2 vols.] Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985. These volumes were filled with the initial essays and findings of many of today’s prominent German-American Scholars.


26 In confessing that his study ‘took shape in the intellectual atmosphere of the New Social History, and shares its concern for “writing history from the bottom up”’ Kamphoefner’s work dovetailed neatly not only with rising trends in migration historiography, but in both region of study and method of approach with the rise of German Social History in North-Rhine Westphalia. See Kamphoefner, *The Westfalians* p. 7, p. 9.
Incorporating contemporary elements of economic theory, Kamphoefner produced a specific and precise explanation that placed the pre-industrial production of textiles at centre stage. It was demonstrated that dependency on the handloom linen industry was at the core of pioneer emigration from the North West. Employing contemporary proto-industrial theories, the rise of handloom linen production in the pre-Napoleonic era, and its downfall thereafter, provided Kamphoefner with both a predisposing crisis of overpopulation, and a precipitating cause of industrial collapse. Indeed, this causal explanation proved so persuasive under close scrutiny that it was suggested as a crucial dynamic of the South West German emigration as well, and a necessary inclusion in any consideration of the path-building stages of German-American emigration.27 Although not fully developed, promising initial results for the hypothesis when applied to the German South led to calls in 1995 for further investigation into this avenue of structural causation.28

From the platform of rural industrial depression, The Westfilians was able to move seamlessly from the structural causes of pioneer migration to the in-depth study of resultant networks and their dynamics. Kamphoefner’s next project, in collaboration with Wolfgang Helbich and Ulrike Sommer, would focus on the fundamental element of that dynamic; the migrant letter. Again first appearing in German in 1988, then in English in 1991, News from the Land of Freedom gave further fascinating and robust support to the network approach, which was ascending toward exclusive control of the field.29

During the 1990s, the agency-based nature of network approaches achieved something of a total victory over structural approaches to migration history. Having achieved an established and supported record as the fundamental dynamic of migration processes, the final developments in network theory have been to

27 Kamphoefner classified this stage as lasting until the American Civil War. Ibid, p. 16, pp. 27-30.
challenge and deny the very need for structural causes in migration. As Georg Fertig stated in 1998, agreeably citing the work of Charles Tilly,

If emigrants moved along lines of contacts and information, we do not need to refer to strong push or pull factors in order to explain why they were ‘uprooted’ from the territorial categories to which they belonged. Chain migration can be interpreted as a... system in itself.30

This went beyond what the Swedish group had stated 20 years before. A crucial change in terminology was underway, moving away from nation states and structural causes, to ‘territorial categories’ and migration as a ‘system in itself’.

By focusing entirely on the system of migration and actions of migrants themselves, the primacy of the state and the role of socio-political structures could be removed or at least severely downplayed, and migrants elevated to shapers of their own destiny, a destiny driven by the self-sustaining nature of their actions and decisions. This complete seizure of agency over structure suited all parties in the historical equation, and all elements of modern sensitivity. Individuals no longer had to be leaving failed states, or moving toward a land destined for modernity and greatness. Most importantly the individuals themselves could be defined by their networks and actions, not by nation-state labels which were peculiarly unfitting to their group, or structural considerations that made them ‘victims’ of social or economic circumstance.

Refutations of structural cause ensued. Fertig, discussing the German case, even demonstrated the theoretical impossibility of overpopulation, by showing an economic capacity curve – one of industrialising countries – always remaining ahead of growing population.31 In this scenario, there would never be population ‘surplus’, - a typical label for migrants - and any decision to leave would rest entirely with the agent, rather than their surroundings. Lost in such hypothesizing is the obvious need to consider the highly divergent paths of economic development between different societies at different stages in their history, and the relationship of those different circumstances to the populations concerned.

31 Ibid, Fertig pp. 420-422.
The argument nonetheless fit the directional trend of migration study, which would soon develop the claim that migrants not only did not need national structures to explain their actions, but through their actions were more important to understanding history than the nation-state itself.

This total victory of agency over structure in migration study has recently produced sweeping narratives as unrepresentative and unhelpful as those the discipline originally sought to combat. Dirk Hoerder’s ‘Historians and Their Data: The Complex Shift from Nation-State Approaches to the Study of People’s Transcultural Lives’ attempts to achieve the final elevation of migration study to the summit of self-sustaining metanarrative.32 Hoerder’s modern world is a world defined by ‘Transculturality’, a present day reality shaped by the migratory patterns and movements of human history. This Grand Theory shows that the persistence of a nation-state based narrative of history has led the white middle class into a blissful unawareness of the manifold cultures which have come to shape its existence.33 Only by understanding history through the dominant maxim of migration is the transculturality of the world made readily intelligible.

It is unclear whether such a typology, which essentially equates to a view of the modern world, has any practical use for historical migration study. It is a natural end point of a developing trend, beginning with Thistlethwaite’s advice to forsake, for the time being, any focus on the nation state in order to understand the innumerable parts of migration, and the subsequent use of that method as a tool of migrant salvation in response to white, Anglo-Saxon America and Handlin’s faceless masses. Thistlethwaite never suggested however, that national structures had no role to play in understanding migration, only that the best way to study the phenomena was to start from the bottom and work up, rather than from the top and work down. It remains to be seen whether Hoerder’s typology will gain any traction in historical study, or simply become part of the vocabulary of social science. For the time being, the more tangible elements of the network approach to migration study remain in vogue among historical methods.

33 Ibid, p. 93.
Walter Kamphoefner’s most recent work has defended the central and obvious role of the migrant letter in sculpting migratory movements. Other work published by Kamphoefner and Helbich during the ascendency of the network approach has also been largely representative of parallel developments in the German field. With networks having pushed causation from research agendas, the historiography has developed an extended account of the migrant experience. For Kamphoefner and Helbich, this has included an account of German experiences in the American Civil War (recounted through letters), and a study of the German immigrant experience in politics, farming and religion in comparison to other ethnicities. Many other aspects of the German movement, including transport methods, working habits, settlement patterns, and assimilation and cultural identity, have also received detailed attention. The enrichment of this literature during the 1990s and 2000s has greatly improved the detail of information regarding the German-American movement, and how it was experienced by the migrants involved.

The contribution of German immigration to American life and development has also begun to receive renewed popular attention in the Old World. As American culture has achieved greater ubiquity in German life through music, fashion and sports, especially among younger generations, titles such as Alexander Emmerich’s *Die Geschichte der Deutschen in Amerika* have begun to appear, featuring a richly coloured cover of a crumpled Stars and Stripes bearing a manufacturer’s ‘Made in Germany’ label. American cultural hegemony has created an inversion of migration literature, in which the provider nation, rather

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than the immigrant or their descendant, is often keen to show the Saxon, as well as the Anglo contribution to the creation of the world’s dominant super-power.\footnote{38}

To date, the historiography of German-American migration has thus determined that migratory patterns, as with all free migrations, were determined by migrant networks, as well as achieving an extensive biography of the Germans in America, from life on a Wisconsin farm to the legacies of famous entrepreneurs and politicians. Of all the aspects of the German-American movement, the part upon which a bibliography of network and settlement patterns necessarily depends – initial causation - is the least researched. The move away from structural causes to the agency based model of networks has left investigation of initial causation in something of a fossilized state, and it is a sparse and unsatisfactory fossil record at that. In the decades since Mack Walker’s magisterial narrative and Kamphoefner’s analytical study of the mid-1980s, some amalgam of land-splitting and cottage industry has become a generic citation in the introductory remarks of any history of the German-America movement. The manner is not as entirely fleeting and generic as the history of the pre-Handlin days, but it is on occasion close. Yet anything beyond a perfunctory glance at the onset of the German-American movement reveals significant gaps in our understanding of initial causes. The German South West was the engine of early migratory movements, yet explanation for this migration is vague and unspecific. Age-old structural arguments about the unsustainability of land splitting persist as the trigger for this movement, yet they are quite inadequate. The equal division of inheritances was uniform across the lowland regions of Baden and Württemberg, emigration was not.

Adherents to network theory have claimed that information alone was enough to generate the early transatlantic movements from the South West, by portraying them as merely an extension of existing community migratory behaviour.\footnote{39} A look at the specific structure of early South Western movements counsels against such simple reasoning. Until the subsistence crisis of 1846,

\footnote{38} There is of course an agreeable but unconscious timing to the arrival of these titles, appearing 100 years after Faust’s \textit{The German Element}.  
American emigration was highly localised, confined to certain regions, and to specific communities within those regions. If early networks were merely an extension of existing domestic movements, one might be entitled to ask why every community did not extend its migratory habits across the Atlantic. Some differentiating cause is necessary, and there is little differentiation available in existing structural argument. The best possible existing case for localised differentiation, and early path-building migrant communities, is Kamphoefner's model, which cites localised overpopulation thanks to large family labour forces in regions practicing cottage industry, and their subsequent migration upon the collapse of that industry. Yet this hypothesis has never been explicitly tested for the South West. Although it is often cited as a contributory factor, this is testament to the strength of the initial thesis, not the result of any specific investigation.

An examination of the structural conditions that caused German-American emigration is thus a response to distinct historiographical need. It is warranted because of the current paucity of detailed investigation and gaps in understanding hitherto noted, and the vastly inverse quantity of literature devoted to networks and the American perspective of settlement. These considerations have shaped the research agenda for this thesis. Although the present research somewhat predictably found the network dynamic to be present and demonstrable, it was never the intention to examine it. Such an endeavour would have been unnecessary. As the historiography has relentlessly and tirelessly shown, networks are a universal feature of free migration. As we have understood patterns of German settlement in America for 100 years, and understood the network dynamic that sculpted them for a generation, a further study of that dynamic would tell us little of interest, beyond any genealogical context for the communities involved. Similarly, whilst the present thesis seeks to examine structural factors, and implicitly refers to American conditions throughout, further study of the migration from the American side was beyond the scope and necessity of investigation.

As this introduction suggested at the outset, the American angle is the most voluminous in attention with regard to all European Atlantic migrations. Neither the broad appeal of immigration, thanks to American economic opportunity or

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40 In the first instance Faust, The German Element; in the latter Kamphoefner, Westfalen.
religious freedom, nor deterrents to immigration such as nativism, recession, or the Civil War, require further detailed discussion here. Beyond these broad factors, studying the specifics of German immigration would inevitably involve a return to networks and with them the study of German-American settlement and community aspects, which already enjoy such detailed consideration. Any further investigation of these latter factors in the present thesis would have incurred enormous costs in both time and finance, in return for a minor contribution to an already busy field. At every turn, the ‘village outward’ approach was the most pressing and necessary focus. In the days when Thistlethwaite’s recommendations were gaining popularity, such an approach may have been criticised as one-dimensional, as not studying migration as a complete process. Such a criticism would not stand today; the biggest gap we have in our knowledge of the process is our comparatively hazy and generalised view of conditions in the German migrant’s region of origin.

A concentrated village outward assessment of structural causes, without any prolonged attention on specific networks, is not in any way an attempt to marginalise or deny agency. Rather, agency, as with the network dynamic, is implicitly accepted throughout without the need of lengthy discussion. The decision to migrate was of course intensely personal, and whilst ambition, boredom, or some other character trait might be difficult to quantify, other signs of personal motivation are often clearly shown in the sources.

Parish registers, for example, which were used for a variety of purposes in this study, not least to track the out-migration from specific villages, consistently show that individuals would leave after suffering bereavement. The loss of a man’s wife in childbirth, the repeated loss of young children or the persistence of still births very frequently resulted in the bereaved family seeking a new life and new start in the New World, often within months or weeks of a loss. Similarly, as many scholars have found, the arrival of a letter from a former villager or a relative

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41 The impact of anti-immigrant feeling on German immigration in the mid-1850s is discussed in Walker, Germany & The Emigration p.174. A more controversial view of the strength and impact of this phenomenon is given by Raymond L. Cohn, ‘Nativism and the End of the Mass Migration of the 1840s and 1850s’ in The Journal of Economic History 60, no.2, 2000, pp. 361-383. On Germans and the Civil War, see Kamphoefner & Helbich, Letters they Wrote Home.
42 Parish registers typically recorded the out-migration of their subjects regardless of whether those subjects had governmental permission and a passport to leave, thus giving a more complete account than official records.
discussing life in the New World was an excellent motivator – by far the most quantifiable measure of personal migration decisions – and often led would-be migrants to explicitly state that news from America was behind their decision.\footnote{An excellent collection of precisely such statements are found in the study of chain migration by Uwe Reich, ‘Emigration from Regierungsbezirk Frankfurt/Oder, 1815-1893’ in Hoerder Nagler, \textit{People in Transit} pp. 79-99, pp. 95-96.}

The important point about local structural conditions, also clearly shown in the sources, is that the same bereavements suffered by families in village x did not motivate them to the same course of action – migration – as commonly happened in neighbouring village y. One might suggest that networks held the key; that village y was receiving letters from America, putting life in the New World on the horizon of the bereaved families. One might then be entitled to ask why this village was involved in that letter exchange, whilst its non-migratory neighbour was not. The differentiation between the two villages cannot be left to the mere chance that one village extended its migratory networks across the Atlantic, as opposed to its unconnected neighbour, especially when dealing with a large accumulation of villages with varying migration dialogues. We are back to square 1; \textit{why} did the first village forge those links. Predisposing structural factors help to fill in the gaps.

This thesis is thus a discreet study of \textit{one significant but understudied element} in the migration process, which seeks to contribute to our understanding of the German-American mass-migration as a whole. The principal aim has been to research \textit{how and why the emigration built into a self-sustaining mass phenomenon, through an investigation of structural causes on the German side}.

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A major priority was to examine the German South West, the most heavily affected region of emigration in the first half of the nineteenth century, and the original source of the movement. The equal division of land among heirs in lowland Baden, the Palatinate and Württemberg is a logical but loose explanation for an emigration which was pioneered and driven by pockets within this region. The principal question considering initial cause, and thus the laying of initial migration chains, must therefore be \textit{why did the movement originate in these regions?}
pockets? A point of departure was provided by the proto-industrial model, regarding the rise and fall of rural textiles, which has been successfully layered over inheritance structures as a key – possibly the key – differentiating structural cause in pioneer migration communities. As no systematic test of this hypothesis exists for the South West, a major objective of archival research was to test the applicability of the theory.

The hypothesis has two lynchpins; firstly, that competition from British industrial manufacturers drove German handicrafts to ruin, and secondly, that the proliferation of those handicrafts in certain German regions had encouraged large household labour forces in order to maximise home production. The latter became a disaster of local demography in the wake of the former, precipitating emigration. Archival work thus focused on a specific test of these claims. Using British customs ledgers, a reconstruction of export patterns in the first half of the nineteenth century confirmed that of all European regions, the German lands received by far the highest volume of finished and half-finished British textile goods. Archival work in Germany then began, in order to investigate the links between cottage industry and early emigration in the South West.

This work began from the ‘bottom up’, and involved a painstaking collection of data from parish registers in Württemberg, the most heavily affected of the South Western regions. The registers were used to cross-reference occupational data, fertility patterns and village out-migration across the time frame 1750-1850, thus encompassing the eighteenth century period in which cottage industry is known to have experienced a precipitous rise, and the subsequent nineteenth century period in which large-scale emigration was established. Data were collated from a wide cohort of communities – 14 in total – selected from regions historically associated with rural textiles, and regions of a more traditional agricultural structure. After a lengthy process, the dataset eventually ran to some 4,465 households, encompassing tens of thousands of individuals. Preliminary findings yielded surprising results; emigration was more heavily concentrated in agricultural rather than overtly ‘industrial’ villages, and within the affected villages typical households were not particularly oversized. Moreover, in agricultural regions, villages of close proximity and apparently
similar makeup had widely different experiences of emigration. Some were clearly pioneer communities, others followers.

Previous investigations conducted in Württemberg into the relationship between cottage industry and high fertility levels had consistently returned a negative result; they were however investigations in regions largely unaffected by emigration. The parish register data-set showed the lack of relationship between cottage industry and precarious population level to be consistent across the region, even in communities that were affected by emigration. Crude models of overpopulation were therefore struck from the list of possible causes. This result could not be used to refute the hypothesis of rural-industrial downfall as a trigger to emigration, however. Parish records show only primary occupation, whilst theories of increasing dependence on cottage textile incomes posit that textile work was usually a secondary trade. Even without any obvious fertility effects, the slide into textile work is still cited as a ‘social inequality theory’ of emigration, in which poorer agriculturalists have to take to this extra source of income, then resolve to emigrate when even this prop begins to give out. It is a logical theory, as agriculturalists, even of a poorer type, would have greater means at their disposal for emigration than already impoverished cottage ‘proletarians’.

The results of the initial investigation thus provided a smaller, more appealing cohort of agricultural communities with which to test this theory. These communities thereafter served as the case study villages for a significant part of the thesis. The 6 villages of Ölbronn, Diefenbach, Lomersheim, Massenbach, Pfaffenhofen and Neipperg shared comparable features of size, location and occupational makeup, essentially typifying the rural agricultural village of the eighteenth and nineteenth century German South West. The first three villages were situated in the historic Oberamt (administrative district) of Maulbronn, the latter in the neighbouring district of Brackenheim, both districts sitting on the contemporary Württemberg border with neighbouring Baden. Yet the experience of American emigration among these overtly similar villages, in the heartland

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region of the movement, varied significantly. Here was a testing ground for the social inequality theory of emigration, and whether rural crafts were the differentiating cause for the important pioneer communities of the American movement. In order to examine this cohort of communities however, source material of a finer degree of focus was required, in order to ascertain 'invisible' secondary working habits, and a generally more refined level of detail at the community level.

This information was found in the unique Württemberg Inventuren und Theilungen (inventory and partition) records. In a region of equally divided inheritance among heirs (Realtteilung) these documents were used to record the worldly belongings of contemporary citizens. At three stages in the life-cycle of a contemporary household – its formation at marriage, the death of the first partner, and the final division of the household estate upon the death of the second partner – full inventories were made detailing every possession (and bequest) of the home. These records are invaluable, as they contain every tool, building, animal, strip of land, pot, pan and undergarment owned by pre-industrial households, and give the value of every single item recorded. Inventories taken at a mature stage of a household's life-cycle – the Eventual Theilung taken at the death of one parent, and the Real Abtheilung taken at the death of the second – provide a fascinating insight into the wealth and working practices of contemporary homes. Records were available, in varying degrees of completeness, for 4 of the 6 case study communities, and quite conveniently were most complete for the village most affected by emigration – Ölbronn – and the village least affected - Neipperg.

Although the records carry the caveat of a time-lag, in that most homes would usually have been at their full working strength some years before both parents died, records were generally available up to 1850, giving an accurate sample of the material composition of homes whose prime working lives ran into the 1830s and early 1840s, when heavy emigration began. The records offered a unique opportunity to both compare and contrast communities, and to observe change over time. The examination of them required a systematic and extremely diligent approach. Firstly, care had to be taken not to double up on the same household where the Eventual and Real record occurred in quick succession, which would have produced near duplicate information. At the same time however, there
was cause to be vigilant and record the *Eventual* and *Real* record of the same household if there was a significant gap between the two, and/or if an original partner re-married, as in both instances the material composition of the home would change. Care also had to be taken not to record the data of *Eventual* records that were produced soon after a couple’s marriage i.e. if the wife died in labour or the husband in an accident at work, as immature inventories before a couple had established a family would not reflect the material circumstances and likely working habits of a full family unit. In order to manage these discrepancies, a discretionary period of at least ten years from marriage was set before *Eventual* records were deemed eligible, and a minimum of a ten year gap, or of remarriage, was required before *Eventual* and *Real* records concerning the same household were recorded.

In total, nearly 500 households were examined in tremendously close detail. In order to track change over time, wherever possible data were recorded from the mid-eighteenth century onwards; in all instances, records were consulted up to a cut-off point of the mid-nineteenth century, to give a reflection of household life in the period when emigration began. For smaller or incomplete collections, all relevant sources were recorded. For collections that existed in their entirety, as with the fairly sizeable village of Ölbronn, the first 20 relevant records were consulted at ten year intervals, due to time constraints.

A principal concern of this extensive data gathering was to determine the level of textile tool ownership – both handlooms and spinning tools – among contemporary agriculturalists, in order to determine their dependency on this failing income prop. As well as this information, various other details were recorded, including levels of homeownership, levels of landownership, animal ownership (draught animals being a good indicator of large scale farming), and levels of overall wealth. To complement the growing picture of household conditions taken from the *Inventuren und Theilungen* and the relevant parish registers, the contemporary governmental survey of the Württemberg districts, the *württembergischen Oberamtsbeschreibungen*, conducted throughout the nineteenth century, was also consulted. These descriptions discuss not only the conditions and history of the villages themselves, but contain more scientific data such as collated changes in population over time, crop yields, and specific structures of
local farming. By using these sources to reconstruct village life from the household upwards, a clear picture began to emerge of the crucial characteristics in communities that drove the early, pivotal movements to America, with results that sharply qualified the loose and untested arguments of the existing historiography.

As this process developed, it became increasingly clear that the dissertation would have to begin with a re-examination of eighteenth century German emigration to America, an often misrepresented prelude to larger nineteenth century movements. The emigration of Germans to America in the eighteenth century has traditionally been detached from analytical considerations of the nineteenth century mass movement, and since the 1980s, a quite separate bibliography has developed for the colonial era. The movement of the colonial period was relatively small, and traditional explanations account for it in terms befitting a small-scale migration, rather than a mass or popular phenomenon. Largely on account of its perceived small size, and the better record left by religious particularists and fortune seekers, it is still popularly regarded as typically a movement of these groups. A small scale event, characterised by individuals in highly specific circumstances, has not therefore conventionally been seen as a particularly close or causal precursor to nineteenth century mass movements. The largely different settlement regions of the Germans who arrived in the Republic from those arriving in the colonial era also seems further testament to that fact. Despite the triumph of network theory, for the German-American movement, any substantial paths across 1776 appear a bridge too far. Yet during the present research, as the reconstruction of local conditions and community emigration habits began to build, the obvious and crucial presence of a bridge across 1776 became impossible to ignore. Addressing misconceptions about the eighteenth century movement in the opening section of the dissertation thus became a vital and necessary part of accounting for the causes of the emigration in the following century.

46 The best work concerning this era was produced around the turn of the millennium. Whilst dealing with logistics rather than cause, Marianne Wokeck’s *Trade in Strangers: The Beginnings of Mass Migration to North America* Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA, 1999, nonetheless marked the first monograph dealing with the phenomenon as a mass movement. The collection of essays in Hartmut Lehmann, Hermann Wellenreuther, Renate Wilson, eds., *In Search of Peace and Prosperity: New German Settlements in Eighteenth-Century Europe and America*, Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999, also include valuable insight into German life in the 18th century transatlantic world.
In order to address the eighteenth century, a mix of primary and secondary sources was used. Data from local German parish records as well as the British National Archives proved essential in helping to corroborate a more accurate portrayal of eighteenth century emigrants than is commonly found in popular historiography. The chapter was also informed by discussions with Konstantin Huber of the Kreisarchiv, Enzkreis, regarding the most up to date knowledge of early South Western population movements in the region itself. Work by the economist Sheilagh Ogilvie, including a substantial working paper produced by her Cambridge research group - active in Württemberg whilst the present thesis was underway - also proved extremely useful in dealing with the structural causes of the eighteenth century emigration.47

Moving beyond the South West, a final necessity of archival work was to address the German North East, which suffers an acute paucity of attention. Its considerable emigration is often cited as a result of increased competition from the American grain bowl in the 1860s. Yet emigration from this region began considerably earlier, as a result structural change in the local economy. Existing literature is so scant, however, that it is difficult to find any explanation for the onset of the movement. Even in local German histories, little attention is paid to the matter. It is virtually impossible to pick up a history of a small town or village in present day Baden-Württemberg and not find a section dedicated to the local Auswanderung (lit. ‘out-wandering’), usually shortly after the section discussing the economic and social difficulties of the early nineteenth century. In the former East Germany, such a tradition never took hold. In many local histories in Mecklenburg, and virtually all written before 1990, one is more likely to find reference to the local poorhouse as a consequence of nineteenth century difficulties than any discussion of emigration. The harshness of local landlords, rather than the opportunity offered by America, no doubt offered a more suitable topic for local history in the climate of the GDR.

47 The research group was awarded nearly £1 million of ESRC funding for the 2008 – 2012 project ‘Human Well-Being and the “Industrious Revolution”: Consumption, Gender and Social Capital in a German Developing Economy, 1600-1900’, much of which was focused on the close reading of the Inventuren und Theilungen of the Württemberg communities of Auingen and Wildberg, a testament to the extraordinary value of these sources. See www.econ.cam.ac.uk/Ogilvie_ESRC/index.html
When the East German regime collapsed and the archives were flung open, East Elbian emigration to America enjoyed a flurry of attention, focused on a significant research project at the University of Rostock. Since the output of this project, however, the literature has slowed considerably. To date, the historiography concerning American emigration from Mecklenburg, the most intensely affected eastern region, runs to a single article in the English language. The existing discussion of the Mecklenburg case also resembles an act in which the main characters never appear together on stage; structural changes in the early nineteenth century economy are discussed, but never explicitly tied to the form and development of emigration from that region. As the Mecklenburg case was an early, acute and indicative example of large-scale East Elbian American emigration, archival work was conducted in Schwerin to inform a discussion of the region for this thesis. Data at the local level, taken from the individual Mecklenburg districts, were gathered in order to demonstrate the direct link between the changes in the rural economy during the early nineteenth century, and the form, scale and timing of emigration that occurred as a result. In so doing, not only is the onset of North East German emigration placed in its correct time frame, but the role played by structural change east of the Elbe given important context in the development of the German-American emigration tradition.

It should be noted that throughout the thesis, the German North West is also frequently referred to, even though this was not an original intention. The most accomplished existing explanation of original push factors for any part of the German emigration is of course Kamphoefner’s Westfalians. Yet doubts raised over many theoretical features of this account during the current investigation of structural causes brought the North back into discussion at various points during the dissertation. Various publications, not directly concerned with American emigration from the German North West, were used in order to support

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48 The leading essays from the University of Rostock project were published in Hoerder & Nagler People in Transit see Rainer Mühle, ‘Colonist Traditions and Nineteenth-Century Emigration from East Elbian Prussia’ pp. 35-56; Axel Lubinski, ‘Overseas Emigration from Mecklenburg-Strelitz: The Geographic and Social Contexts’ pp. 57-78, and Reich ‘Emigration from Regierungsbezirk’
50 Lubinski, ‘Overseas Emigration’, concerning the smaller of the two Duchies.
conclusions regarding that regions movement, which clearly required a less total investment in proto-industrial theory as an over-arching structural cause.

Until the last chapter, the thesis examines the emigration on a regional basis, adopting a largely chronological structure. In the closing section, the emigration is then placed into a wider national context. This is a crucially important consideration. The final chapter returns a necessary nation-state perspective to the account of structural causes of the migration, principally through the use of secondary sources to provide context, but also through the use of some contemporary reports and surveys that draw out the more pertinent points of the argument. The chapter demonstrates that national perspectives and context are a vital part of understanding emigration movements, and that their increasing absence from analytical account is in effect the product of the re-orientation of migrants and migration as a group and topic among themselves in the historical mainstream. The chapter shows that the problem posed by the wide lens of nation-states in migration study has become confused; it has become an issue of labelling, produced by sensitivities of identity and agency, when in fact it is merely one of method. If migration study begins from the bottom up, and then relates findings to wider national circumstance, those circumstances come readily into focus as a connected and immutable part of the whole. This principle therefore guides the overall structure, and the departure from a chronological, case study driven approach in the concluding stages.

The chronology begins prior to the eighteenth century, with chapter 1 developing an amended version of the popular account of early German emigration to America, which bridged the colonial era and the early years of the Republic. Chapter 2 then investigates the accepted account of collapsing proto-industry as the predominant structural cause for the onset of nineteenth century emigration in the 1830s and 1840s. With the return of surprising results, chapter 3 advances new conclusions regarding the conditions and community legacies that caused emigration in this early period, focusing on the case study communities of the South West. It closes with an account of the North West, necessitated by the findings of the previous chapter. Chapter 4 then discusses the rise of the emigrant transit system and public attention on the movement up to the mid-point of nineteenth century. It demonstrates both the consequences of early movements in
making American emigration an attainable socio-economic choice across the German lands, and the broad nature of structural considerations, which go beyond conditions in migration affected communities themselves, and must include the business, infrastructure and publicity that made functioning migration chains possible. Political and public discussions of the emigration represent a thesis in their own right, and cannot be adequately covered in a discussion of the causes that generated their subject. Yet an account of these points and the transit networks of the emigration, using the well developed and most up to date material on the subject, are a necessary inclusion in understanding the development of the emigration to a self-sustaining mass movement. Chapter 5 discusses the onset of the East Elbian movement, the last major development in the phenomenon. Chapter 6 then discusses the core features of nineteenth century German history, in order to bring the fundamental role of the national perspective back into our understanding of the structural causes of the German-American movement.

Well before the main course of Germany's nineteenth century development can be discussed however, it is necessary to begin with conditions many centuries prior, when the embryonic circumstances for American emigration were formed, and those circumstances found their first translations into transatlantic movements.
Pietism and Pauperism –

Long before, there had been those, the religiously persecuted, who had already pioneered emigration in the 18th century; those, like the journeymen, who had left familiar territory to visit and travel around neighbouring European countries; those who, without the slightest knowledge, first or second hand, of foreign countries, had left to seek a new life and fortune in America.¹

The above statement is highly misleading. It is a typical preface to much of the historiography that attempts to explain the nineteenth century German-American emigration, which confines eighteenth century movements to an almost mythical past of adventurers and religious marginals.² The tendency to misappropriate migrant type in favour of minority groups, and to measure the movement’s significance against the weight of nineteenth century emigrations, creates an impression of inconsequence from both the perspective of providing and receiving communities. The purpose of this chapter is to address these misappropriations, so that the relationship between eighteenth and nineteenth century German-American migrations can be properly understood. In order to establish a correct measure of the of the eighteenth century movement, it is important that source, cause and type of migrant are accurately appreciated.

The eighteenth century movement, in its very earliest stages, may have begun with religious refugees, a little fortune seeking, and even the depredations of French invaders, but just as with the nineteenth century, the majority of

migrants were drawn from far more ordinary circumstances. After a short phase in which religious pioneers and anomalous events established contact between German Europe and the New World, the migration that followed resulted from a changing German society as the eighteenth century progressed.

The earliest German settlements in America, in 1663 and 1683, were both the result of organised religious groups. The first was a Mennonite colony established on the Horekill River where it empties into the Delaware. The second was a settlement named 'Germantown', founded by a group of Pietists and Quakers who left the Krefeld region of Westphalia and settled in Pennsylvania. This second group bore little resemblance to the majority of later German migrants to colonial America in origin, dialect, or religion. They also had little success in attracting large numbers of further migrants to their colony; after 25 years it had only 150 inhabitants. But for reasons that probably have more to do with the central role of Pennsylvania in German-American emigration than anything else, it is 1683, not 1663, that is given as the founding year of organised German settlement in the New World.

Most German migrants to North America in the eighteenth century came from the South West of the Holy Roman Empire, and their dialogue with the New World began some decades after the Germantown settlement. The South Western region of the Empire was characterised by a high degree of population fluidity, which was the result of generations of depopulation and repopulation swings. From the earliest phases of the Thirty Years War (1618 – 1648) to the opening decades of the eighteenth century, the Palatinate, Alsace, Baden and Württemberg were regularly decimated by warfare. During the course of the Thirty Years War, these areas lost between 60 – 80% of their populations. At one point, the population of Württemberg fell to just 97,000. Before it was first invaded, it had

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3 Howard B. Furer, The Germans in America 1607 – 1970: A Chronology and Fact Book Ethnic Chronology Series 8: New York, Oceana, 1973. p. 1. Although organised German settlements in America did not appear until the late seventeenth century, there were prominent instances of individual Germans in America from 1607, including 3 members of Captain Smith’s company at Jamestown, and in 1626 an elected Governor of New York, Peter Minnewit, a Rhinelander selected by the Dutch government. Ibid.
5 Emmerich, Die Geschichte Der Deutschen in Amerika p. 35.
been 445,000. The opportunity offered by empty land and rebuilding work brought massive post war immigrations from less affected regions, especially the Swiss Cantons, on a scale that is not yet fully appreciated.

Although published work on the Kraichgau region of North Baden and the edge of North West Württemberg lists slightly more than 5,000 new heads of household entering from the Swiss Cantons in the 1660s and '70s, it is possible that for this one region, the number of 20,000 is more realistic. As most immigrants moved with their families, a conservative estimate of 70,000 migrants for this one small corner of the South West is not unrealistic. This means that the post-war influx across the entire South Western region would have comfortably numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Nor did these migrants always remain rooted to their new plots of land; they could appear in a parish register in Württemberg in 1675 and reappear in Alsace 20 years later. The entire region was riven with migratory networks. As migration historiography consistently proves, the early establishment of a migratory tradition plays an important role in a community's migratory behaviour of subsequent decades. If a large part of the population is made up of individuals for whom migration has already been a practical social and economic choice, a 'latent mobility' is present, a migratory inclination when further opportunity or difficulty arises.

Further difficulties and opportunities were never far away in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century German South West; the War of Palatine Succession (1688 – 97) and War of Spanish Succession (1701 – 1713/14) constantly exacerbated and recharged the cycle, embedding migration as a fact of life. It was not uncommon for villages to contain an entirely different set of family names on its muster roll in 1700 than had filled the same list in 1600, the whole community replaced with immigrants. The degree of latent mobility in the South West would be hard to overstate. The history of the eighteenth century emigration

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8 Karl Diefenbacher, Hans Ulrich Pfister, Kurt H Hotz, *Schweizer Einwanderer in den Kraichgau nach dem Dreissigjährigen Krieg: Mit Ausgewählter Ortsliteratur*, (Sonderdruck 3) Sinsheim, Heimatverein Kraichgau, 1983, pp. 17-206 lists 5,334. Since 1996, Konstantin Huber of the Kreisarchiv Enzkreis, Pforzheim, has been working on a more complete database of Swiss immigrants to the Kraichgau region, giving an estimate of 20,000 cases based on information gathered so far, with only adult males counting as an immigration statistic. It is worth noting that this region had less Swiss immigration than some of the territories which surrounded it.
essentially concerns how this mobility was directed toward the New World, and why, despite the absence of any further exogenous shocks after the very early eighteenth century, American emigration progressed into a widespread and extensive phenomenon.

Attention was directed across the Atlantic in the spring of 1709. In the previous year, a Lutheran pastor serving the communities of Eschelbronn, Münchzell and Daisbach in Amt Dilsberg, a district in the northern Kraichgau, had gained passage, along with 49 others, to the British colonies.9 Faced with the unexpected arrival of a group claiming to be refugees from recent French attacks, the authorities in London were at a loss with what to do with them, providing alms before eventually forwarding them on as settlers. The Pastor, publishing under the name Joshua Kochertal, added this fair treatment to an earlier promotional title he had written on behalf of the proprietors of Carolina. In the wake of an extraordinarily hard winter, individuals in the near vicinity of Kochertal’s home region followed the group he had led, expecting the same results. As this movement began near the information confluence of the Rhine and Neckar Rivers, the sudden movement of emigrants and the words of Kochertal’s book sparked a fever. Along the Rhine, Neckar and Main River valleys, the success of the initial group developed into a rumour that the British would re-home migrants in the colonies, creating a belief in a serviceable and acceptable channel of migration. Among those periodically used to using such channels, an accessible passage to America was taken up as a highly agreeable opportunity. The rumoured promise of Britain’s Queen Anne to give not only free land but transportation to it, widened the channel to an enormous degree, hence its extraordinary impact.

More than 13,000 from the Kraichgau, Palatinate, and Alsatian bank of the Rhine arrived in London in the spring of 1709 expecting to be shipped to America. The migrants were not of a particularly depressed economic class or persecuted minority. After surveying the first half of arrivals, the London authorities found that 65% of males were ‘husbandmen’, whilst 34% were artisans or tradesmen, with the remaining 1% of an educated hue; an accurate reflection of contemporary

Regarding denomination, the diverse religious affiliation of the region was also accurately reflected; 42.5% Calvinist, 32.4% Lutheran, 25.1% Catholic. Even the demography of the group accurately reflected a slice of contemporary society; those travelling were largely families with 2 – 3 dependent children, accompanied by a smaller group of single men, and small groups of single women and widows. The makeup of the London arrivals clearly shows that the emigration was the product of information permeating a highly mobile region, rather than a particular faction or group.

Although many informed the London authorities that the marauding French and cold weather had caused their flight, the weather had also been terrible in 1695, right in the middle of the War of Palatine Succession, an almost identical set of circumstances to 1709. This had not caused an explosion in North American emigration. No doubt things in 1709 were bleak, but bleakness does not logically translate into a mass intention to travel across the Atlantic, especially for landlocked Central Europeans. The 1709 ‘Palatine’ episode was about harsh conditions interacting with information, perceived opportunity, and the magnetic effects of a gathering crowd. It was testament to a culture of mobility and what happens when new information taps that seam of mobility and redirects it. When the information was found to be false, the flow stopped. Unfortunately, the apparent free offer of land had created such a fever that by the time word of its fiction reached the southern Rhine, a huge number had already committed themselves to emigration. When a British Parliamentary commission finally got around to investigating the cause of the influx, it mentioned a ‘golden book’ of which the Palatines spoke, featuring a picture of Queen Anne – a description of Kochertal’s title page.

The experience of the 1709 group was fundamental to the South West’s discourse with American emigration, and extra-territorial migration in general.

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11 NA SP34/10/128.

12 Ibid.

Slightly over 3,000 were actually sent to America. The majority of them were part of a project to produce naval stores – pitch and tar – from the pine forests along the Hudson, simultaneously providing a bulwark to the French and natives. A very unfortunate group of 650 were actually sent to Carolina, with half dying in a torrid voyage, and the Tuscarora Indians killing 60 more, virtually destroying their settlement and scattering them throughout South Eastern Carolina. Several thousand were sent to Ireland where barely 1,000 stayed. 2,200 Catholics who refused to convert were sent back across the Channel. The fate of the New York group, and the treatment of the Catholics, were the two most important outcomes for the future of South Western emigrations.

The fact that the British not only refused the Catholics settlement, but expelled them from England itself, made it clear that British territory was a dead-end for anyone wishing to openly practice Catholicism. A dividing line was created that sent Catholic migrants east, to the Habsburg Emperor’s lands, and Protestants west, across the Atlantic (and later in the century to the Prussian North.) It effectively demarcated zones of migration tradition in South West provider regions, creating different communication networks and migration options for families in otherwise identical circumstances. From an American perspective, this fact was further underscored by the Naturalisation Acts of 1740 and 1742 which forbade Catholic ownership of land and only allowed religious gatherings of Catholics in private, if at all.

The New York settlement was also important. The group were not given the land they were promised, - each settler had been assured 40 acres once they had earned back their debt to the British crown - and after a period of uneasy cooperation with the British naval stores project, they moved further in to the back country to make their own way. The group, who had inflated the number of

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14 Furer, The Germans p. 3.
15 Otterness, Becoming German pp. 68-69.
17 The original course of action for the ‘Palatines’, set out in Whitehall on Dec.5 1709, stated that “The governor (of New York, Robert Hunter) be likewise directed to grant under seal of that province, without fee or reward, forty acres per head each family (underlined in original) after they shall have repaid by the produce of their labour the charges to the publick” the produce being “of turpentine, rozin, tar & pitch” The settlers failed to amass the more than £40,000 debt they had incurred, and despite Hunters
German speakers in the colonies by more than ten-fold, began relaying information of their experience in letters as soon as 1711. Whilst many moved off to settle the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys, many others found their way to Pennsylvania, making contact with its small German communities, and began to relay information of the fair and tolerant treatment of William Penn’s colony to their former countrymen. As one contemporary English commentator noted:

The Germans (Palatines) were first sent to America by the bounty of this nation, under the protection of Queen Anne. Everything necessary was provided for them. They were convoyed to New York there to be settled on the Crown Lands; and if this intention had been executed, the French in Canada had been forever effectually confined to their proper bounds; but by the villainy of those in power, this national charity and benefit was defeated. These Germans, cheated, abused and deceived in the grants of land assigned to them, and made the property of avaricious designing men, were forced to seek new habitations. They found their way thro’ the woods to good lands in the colony of Pennsylvania. Here they were used well, and grants made them bona fide. They represented the fraudulent usage of one government, and the justice of the other, to their brethren in Europe; which determined all future German emigrants to prefer this colony.  

From the outset, William Penn had established a contact in Rotterdam, a Quaker by the name of Benjamin Furly, to funnel interested religious groups to his colony. Positioned at the mouth of the Rhine, Rotterdam was the natural port of embarkation for the migrants travelling up from the German South West; this positioning, the more organised and peaceful settlement of Germans in Pennsylvania, and the increased reports from the region did indeed determine most, if not all, future German emigrants to prefer this colony. That preference was helped not only by the increased number in Pennsylvania, but by the type of individual who made up that number. No longer were reports from the colony largely circulating between religious groups and figures, they were, thanks to the pedestrian mix of the 1709 emigration, reaching the farms and inns of those who had not joined their countrymen in the fever of that year. When future emigrants chose to cross the Atlantic, they were certainly not doing it ‘without the slightest attempts to keep them at work, began to drift from the initial settlements. NA Colonial Office (CO) 5/1230, NA CO 5/1231.
knowledge, first or second hand’ of America. With each successful migration, more and more information returned, improving the picture of life in the New World.

Many were not willing to act on this information immediately, however. The ironic final consequence of the 1709 movement was to initially dampen the appetite for American emigration in the short-term. The sight of thousands of impoverished and dejected returnees trying to reclaim something of their former lives over the next months and years served as a warning to those attempting any rash relocation to Bintzel Vannier. Only the most buoyant artisan or farmer risked following up on information of the New World, leaving richer migrants and well organised religious groups to fill the gap over the next decade. If the adventurers and marginals that are so frequently cited as the typical eighteenth century migrant have a role to play, their greatest significance was in this short period, during which they were key to consolidating the position of the German-American communities and their economies, increasing the volume of business and regular information passing between Old World and New.

A particularly prominent example of one such individual forging those links was Caspar Wistar. Born and raised in Amt Dilsberg, the epicentre of the 1709 affair, grandson of the Elector Palatine’s chief forester, and apprentice to the Elector’s chief huntsman, Wistar travelled to Pennsylvania in 1717, where he carved out a business empire based on selling land and provisions to other German settlers. Rather than wait for fellow countrymen to arrive, Wistar canvassed his former homeland by way of a childhood friend in Neckargemünd, asking for information on those with a desire to travel to America, whom he would then write to directly. Advising only the most well off to travel (in order to help his custom) Wistar bought 20,000 acres of back country Pennsylvania real-estate and sold it to his German buyers, all the while supplying them with German language bibles, hardware goods and even hunting rifles, acquired via his contact in Neckargemünd, and ferried to Wistar’s Philadelphia home with trusted travellers and shippers.

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The constant communication between the two business contacts, carried out by their chosen contacts travelling between the New and Old Worlds (neither ever travelled themselves), based on a mutually profitable relationship, was just one network in an increasing web of information and activity passing between Pennsylvania and the South West of the Holy Roman Empire. The Pennsylvania German connection was consolidated as these links grew, and by the 1730s, the well-established and very favourable reputation of Pennsylvania, and the transportation networks to it, were being called upon by an altogether different type of settler, in very different circumstances, travelling in far larger numbers.

Map 1:
Principal Regions of 18th Century South West German Emigration -

The shape of the eighteenth century movement took its decisive form when conditions in German Europe began to change in the second quarter of the century. Between the 1720s and ‘30s, most regions saw their populations finally recover to pre-Thirty Years’ War levels; increases thereafter equated to higher population
levels than had ever been seen before. At the very latest, this juncture was reached by 1750. The socio-economic system of much of the South West was structurally ill-equipped to deal with this increase. Social and economic controls worked to constrict opportunity for a growing proportion of society, and the artisanal and trade communities were particularly hard hit.

The South West German tradition of equally divided inheritances – \textit{Realtteilung} – is historically seen as the most structurally deficient aspect of the region’s economy. The continual splitting of agricultural holdings appears an unsustainable economic model, but in the eighteenth century, agriculturalists were not experiencing the negative effects of this process. During the 1700s, the \textit{Bauern} – full peasant farmers – of the South West still occupied significant plots that could withstand further division. Many \textit{Bauern} whose plots were becoming too small to provide a living from farming alone picked up a trade, which became their formal designation in village records, then supplemented their income and subsistence from their farms. The individual most immediately under threat from rising population numbers was the traditional tradesman, or \textit{Handwerker}. Those who had filled empty territories in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century in order to rebuild houses, churches, walls and barns, rather than to live off the land, and those who had followed their father’s \textit{Handwerk} for generations, were now becoming oversubscribed. They lacked the larger landholdings of full \textit{Bauern}, and the division of their smaller plots, as well as an exclusory guild system, left an increasing number of them on the economic margins.

Those who found themselves in this position were the victims of a defensive socio-economic structure that reduced economic freedom and opportunity. The contemporary governing philosophy of Cameralism was guided by the belief that the larger the population, the greater the wealth of its ruler. The main objective was to capture as much wealth as possible, from the activity of as many subjects as possible, and to redirect it upwards. In order to vertically funnel wealth, rulers then favoured a guild system that could efficiently manage and exploit economic activity.

The area of the old Duchy of Württemberg, which annually provided anywhere from 25-40% of eighteenth century American emigration, provides a particularly clear example of the extensive and detrimental impact guilds could play in the lives of contemporary workers, with emigration proving to be a consequence of that impact.\textsuperscript{22} During the 1740s, Württemberg’s population began to reach unprecedented levels, and its strict guild structure, which was wedded tightly to the region’s social and economic management, both obstructed and exploited the working habits of the lower strata in an expanding population.\textsuperscript{23}

The principal function of a guild was to sanction the practice of its relevant trade or industry, whether it was a tradesman’s guild governing carpentry or masonry, or a merchant’s guild governing the selling of cloth or wines. Only those permitted guild membership were allowed to practice a given activity on a full-time basis in the community over which the guild ruled, at a set price stipulated by the guild. Those without guild membership were the itinerant tradesmen, the journeymen – \textit{Gesellen} – who had completed their apprenticeship and did piecework from community to community looking to gain entry to a guild that would allow them to settle and work there permanently. Because having the right to work in a community preceded the right to settle there, the guilds at once had a strong degree of social control. The ubiquity and power of that control was highly pronounced in Württemberg.

Württemberg rulers gave unequivocal ducal backing to the strict guild regulation of goods and services. An individual found to be selling cloth in an area where a privileged merchant guild had a state-backed monopoly, could find themselves punished three times; firstly via a fine from the aggrieved guild, secondly through a much larger fine levied by the state, and finally, in extreme cases, through a jail term.\textsuperscript{24} A butcher caught tanning hides by the local tanning guild could suffer the same punishment, as could an individual caught making nails if they were not a registered nailsmith. In return for granting strong state support

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} Emigration volumes from Württemberg taken from Hippel, \textit{Auswanderung aus Südwestdeutschland}, p. 32, cross referenced with American German immigration totals calculated by Marianne Wokeck in \textit{Trade in Strangers} p. 45.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Hippel, \textit{Auswanderung aus Südwestdeutschland} p. 29.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Sheilagh Ogilvie, Markus Küpker, and Janine Christina Maegraith, \textit{Community Characteristics and Demographic Development: Three Württemberg Communities, 1558-1914} Cambridge: University of Cambridge Working Papers, Faculty of Economics, 2009. p. 81.
\end{itemize}
to locally enforced monopolies, the rulers expected financial favours from those who benefitted. Whilst guilded tradesmen received price protection and the right to work, the principal beneficiaries of the system were the *Zunftmeister*, or Guild Masters. These individuals represented the ‘funnel’ which Württemberg rulers so relied on, and had a position of enormous power thanks to their close relationship with the state on one hand, and their right to admit or reject members to their guild on the other. The *Zunftmeister* collected fees from their members, fines from those who impinged on their rights, and annual dues from tradesmen’s widows, transferring portions of the moneys as one-off payments, favourable loans and military funding to the state. The state protected their rights in return for this cash, which could only be raised in the first place because of monopolistic rights bestowed by the crown. It was a circular and mutually beneficial arrangement.

Guilds also collected taxes from their members, delivering them directly to the state, removing the need of the crown to hire a bureaucracy to do so. It is easy to see why the Duke of Württemberg, commenting in the founding charter of the *Calwer Zeughandlungskompagnie* [Calw Worsted-Linen Trading Company] in 1650, found it to be ‘much more useful and better to conduct commerce out of one hand than out of many, dissimilar hands’; it made for a manageable, predictable, every-ready source of funds. Throughout the early modern period, the Württemberg crown used this profitable arrangement to broaden its intake of finances. Monopolistic privileges were granted right across the duchy in every conceivable arena of economic activity. Everything from herding sheep, to fishing, growing wine grapes, making music, or chimney sweeping, even being a river or boatman, was granted guild protection, with subsequent fees and fines rolling in from each successive activity that was given ducal support and protection. As Württemberg guilds were not urban but regional, organised into *Laden* (guild lodges) which regulated matters across the towns and villages of entire districts, these institutions achieved near geographic and occupational ubiquity.

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26 Ogilvie, Küpker & Maegraith, *Community Characteristics* p. 78.
27 Ibid, p. 72.
28 Ibid, p. 73.
The four largest and most significant privileged entities were the textile merchant guilds of the Calw Worsted-Linen Trading Company; the *Uracher Leinwandhandlungs-Compagnie* [Uracher Linen Trading Company, est. 1662]; the *Blaubeurener Leinwandhandlungs-Compagnie* [Blaubeuren Linen Trading Company, 1726] and the *Heidenheimer Leinwandhandlungs-Compagnie* [Heidenheim Linen Trading Company, 1750]. These companies controlled both the production and the selling of textiles in their respective regions. All those wishing to weave and sell cloth within a wide radius of these companies, established in the east, west and centre of the duchy, were forced to join them and sell their product through company merchants. Those merchants, as the only legal traders, were able to force down the price when buying produce, then sell at an inflated value, which they maintained by enforcing strict production quotas on the producers. They were legally supported in the right to destroy goods produced over-quota, or by non-members.

The heads of guilds, the *Zunftmeister*, and the merchants who were granted monopolies over certain wares, had enough wealth and power to be classed among the local notability, or *Ehrbarkeit*, which gave them additional power and control at the community level. The local notability, which also included the largest landowners, made up the community court, or *Gericht*, and the community council, or *Rat*. As well as presiding over small legal issues and questions of moral conduct, these institutions also had the right to grant or deny an individual’s settlement in the community, and even to lobby the established church and state against the issuing of marriage banns. If a community felt that the marriage of a young couple would produce children for which they did not have the perceived means to keep, the *Gericht* and *Rat* would work to prevent the marriage. If a journeyman from a neighbouring village wished to marry into the community, the *Ehrbarkeit* could work to protect the interests of local tradesmen by blocking his entry to the relevant local guild, thus blocking his right to settle and removing any chance of the intended matrimony. A local oligarchy, many of whom could thank the state for their privileged position, therefore controlled the basic social contracts of work, marriage and settlement.

The Württemberg rulers thus presided over a system that allowed them to glean as much wealth as possible from as wide a range of activity as possible, in
exchange for giving local notables the wealth and power to maintain their individual status through rigid control of economic and community affairs. For those with a decent inheritance of land, which in the eighteenth century was still most people, significant conflict with this oligarchical arrangement was infrequent. But from the 1730s onwards, many others increasingly found themselves at the whim of this protectionist and exploitative system. They were the children of poorer craftsmen and tradesmen who inherited insufficient land to adequately supplement their trade, and who were reliant largely on their cash incomes from skilled work and labouring. Labourers, or Taglöhner, were not subject to guild restrictions, but their lack of skills translated to a lack of economic buoyancy in the eyes of the local oligarchy, which frequently blocked such individuals from establishing a household or marriage until much later than their contemporaries, with necessary savings, acreage, or both having to be scraped together first. If the Taglöhner were caught attempting any skilled work, they were at the mercy of the guild and local community sanctions.

When the population of tradesmen and labourers began to exceed former numbers, guilds and local Gerichte became increasingly protectionist. Even when applying for guild membership or marriage banns in the very community in which they were born, many found that their particular ‘Handwerk was overcrowded’.29 Increasingly long delays were often only overcome when a substantial concession fee was paid to the relevant guild, usually drawn from the applicant’s inheritance, which thereafter stifled the early years of marriage.30 For those unable to reach the funds right away, delays were even longer.

The defensive strategy existed because guilds had no control over demand, and thus wages could only be defended by limiting supply. The fact that the strategy began to ratchet up in the eighteenth century was testament to the deflationary effects already being felt on tradesmen’s incomes. It was not a hollow claim that the Handwerk was overcrowded; by the standards of former income levels, it was. The dividing up of relatively static markets among more members was becoming problematic for those with large families to support, or with smaller

29 Ibid.
30 A detailed discussion of this point can be found in Ogilvie, State Corporatism pp. 127-180.
land holdings, or both. In some trades, the deflationary pressure of increased membership had been particularly strong. Because production based crafts like weaving were tied to much more expansive markets than something like the local construction industry, the merchant guilds that dominated them permitted a far greater elasticity of entry, which encouraged uptake. Because of the monopoly enjoyed by the merchants however, this elasticity worked to the detriment of producers and only benefitted the merchants who permitted it. A glut of available producers simply allowed cloth to be bought more cheaply, and sold on for greater profit margins.

For a significant number of people, the wage economy was becoming increasingly unsatisfactory. It marginalised the poorer tradesmen and labourers of village life, and offered only diminishing returns even to those who gained full entry. The journeyman, the labourer, and the craftsman with many mouths to feed, all responded to these circumstances with typical migratory inclination, and looked elsewhere for opportunity.

Pennsylvania became the destination for tens of thousands of these individuals. In the early 1730s the volume of emigration to the colony began to gather pace. It was dampened in the 1740s when the War of Austrian Succession brought conflict to the British and French colonies and threatened to bring war to the Atlantic, but the corked migratory intent thereafter exploded between 1749 and 1754. In this period, German arrivals in Philadelphia peaked at more than 9,000 individuals a year, and total immigration to all of North America reached nearly 60,000. If these figures sound small by later standards, it is worth remembering that in 1756, the entire population of Philadelphia was 17,000. So numerous were the arrivals that in 1753 Benjamin Franklin was compelled to ask

32 The highest individual year for Philadelphia was 1749, at 9,435 arrivals; total immigration for all of America in this period was 57,671. See Wokeck, Trade in Strangers p. 45.
‘why Pennsylvania, founded by the English [should] become a colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanise us instead of our Anglifying them.’

During these peak years, 74% of all Württemberg emigrants to America were tradesmen and labourers, the largest group among them weavers, at 11.4% of the whole; less than 18% were agriculturalists, the most buoyant group in the contemporary economy. Whilst the situation was particularly acute in Württemberg, between 1733 and 1761, 61% of all German arrivals in Pennsylvania were from trades and labouring backgrounds, whilst 39% were agriculturalists; almost exactly inverse proportions to their representation in German society. The significance of this for future German-American emigration is clear; the main thrust of eighteenth century migration was produced by widespread structural inadequacies in the incumbent socio-economic system, rather than merely religious particularism. Because of this, it reached a far higher aggregate of communities than a movement confined to minority religious groups, meaning that American migratory traditions were established across an extremely broad base of the German South West.

Whilst the breadth of the movement was the result of growing marginalisation in the wage economy, its size, and thus the depth of its impact, was reliant on a transportation network able to effectively exploit deteriorating conditions and carry the maximum possible number of migrants. Rotterdam merchants at the mouth of the Rhine had perfected a model of transportation that could carry even the poorest of emigrants, a model which was pivotal in opening up Philadelphia as a realistic destination for the marginalised wage earners and working poor of mid-eighteenth century society. Generally known by the rather specious and inappropriate term of ‘Redemptioning’, the German name given to the principal actors of the mechanism – Seelenverkäufer, or ‘soul sellers’ – conveys a little more of its true nature.

Phillip Gleason, ‘Trouble in the Colonial Melting Pot’ in Journal of American Ethnic History 3, 2000, pp. 3-17. p. 3. Ironically, during the 1730s Franklin had been the most prolific printer of German language titles in all of Colonial America.

Of the 17.7% involved in agriculture, 7.4% were specialists such as wine growers or animal herdsman, and the rest, accounting for just 10.3% of the whole, were full Bauern. The remaining 8.3% of migrants came from the moneyed and educated classes of clergymen, schoolteachers, surgeons, innkeepers and so on. See Hippel, Auswanderung aus Südwestdeutschland. p. 52.

From an early stage in the transatlantic relationship between Rotterdam and Philadelphia, two large merchant houses in the Dutch city, one of John Stedman, and one of the Brothers Isaac and Zachary Hope, had devised a way of carrying passengers to the colonies on credit. Whilst in the 1710s and early 20s most German migrants paid their passage, as Wistar or the organised religious groups had done, ships captains found that the demand for labour in the colonies was so great, that they could afford to take other individuals who were unable to pay a whole fare. Small amounts of cash could be put down as a deposit, and a family's goods – worth much more in the New World than the Old – could be sold upon arrival to make up the difference; the balance was often fully settled by arranging short periods of servitude, with the payment given directly to the captain. Captains found that there was virtually always a way of making up the fares, and typically added 15% to the cost of those travelling on credit compared to those paying up front, just in case they needed to make up for the few who could not settle their balance.37

The merchant companies of Hope and Stedman quickly commercialised and monopolised this credit arrangement. Because the English Navigation Laws stipulated that only English ships and captains deal with crown territories, Hope and Stedman devised a system which enabled them to offer English shippers profitable passenger freight on their outward journey to the American colonies. The freight was drawn from the poorer pool of South West German migrants, who could not afford a fare, but could be sold as indentured labour in the healthy Pennsylvania market. Orchestrating the entire affair, from finding the freight to stumping up for the ships' provisions, the merchants then divided the servitude moneys gained for the passengers between themselves and the ship owners. Hope and Stedman used an active system of recruitment to arrange the boat loads of 'Palatines', as the English called them. The campaign began in Pennsylvania.

The merchants asked contacts in Philadelphia – Stedman's brother, for example, was based there – to seek out German speakers who had some purpose

37 O'Reilly, To the East or to the West? p. 192.
for returning to the former homeland. These were persons who wished to carry letters, retrieve legacies, or recruit people on behalf of colonial governors or religious settlements. These individuals, the ‘newlanders’ who knew so much of the New World and sold its merits earnestly to their former countrymen, were tasked with funnelling as many interested parties as possible toward the English boats that Hope or Stedman had contracted to fill. As the number of arrivals in Philadelphia began to increase, and the money began to pile up, so too did the number of individuals willing to return to the old country, having learned that a pretty penny could be made by offering their services to the merchants in Rotterdam. By mid-century, this mechanism had gone into overdrive, with Hope and Stedman seeking to cram ever more migrants in to the English ships, virtually all of whom were now travelling on credit, whilst newlander activity penetrated every community which had the potential to offer up dejected workers and labourers.

The newlanders were the perfect recruiting tool. Having known conditions in the old country first hand, they knew exactly what issues to press in order to capitalise on their potential markets. They understood the marginality of those outside of full agriculture, and represented to them such things as free, limitless wood collection, the right to hunt and fish unhindered, and the level of pay a tradesman, craftsman or labourer could make in a day – often giving inflated figures. They knew everything that incensed people about life in the Old World, and compared every problem and want with the more favourable position of Pennsylvania. They were the principal letter carriers between the New and Old Worlds, and even if their claims about life in the New World were exaggerated, the letters the Newlanders carried often corroborated their message, albeit in more reserved terms. Very frequently they returned to their own former community, where their expensive clothes and appearance carried the strongest message of all. To their former countrymen the newlander was a bridge; a symbol of success, and

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39 O’Reilly, *To the East or to the West?* p.192.
40 It was also not uncommon for Newlanders to doctor letters in order to corroborate their grandiose claims about life in the New World. Brinck, *Die deutsche Auswanderungswelle* p.149.
one that offered knowledge of the route, languages and vessels that could carry others toward that success.

In the German source regions, governed as they were by Cameralist philosophies, the newlanders were a despised pest. So decisive was their pull on their former countrymen that they were frequently imprisoned and often banished under the threat of death. The British, whose colonial governors had long used newlanders to try and attract more colonists, became increasingly uneasy about the mass of unregulated and exploitative activity. In the first instance, they were unsettled by the potential mass immigration of clandestine Catholics, transported by newlanders seeking as much freight as possible. As the volume of newlander activity increased, fear spread that 'If necessary measures are not taken to prevent the Roman Catholick's and their ecclesiastics transporting themselves to his Majesty's dominions, fatal consequences may ensue.' The 'fatal consequences' were apparently that the desired Protestant colonists would be put off by settling among 'Roman Catholick's, whom they can't endure.' Many newlanders also latched on to the buzzwords of official British recruiting campaigns, like 'Nova Scotia' or 'Carolina', and then dumped their hopeful subjects with the highest bidding merchant in Rotterdam, having claimed to be acting in the name of the British crown. The unscrupulous behaviour was summed up thus:

For their purposes the Newlanders (the major part of whom are men of abandon'd or non principles) make the Palatines the fairest promises, represent to them the fertility of the colony, (which they tell them they will be transported to,) its happy situation and the richness of its soil, in the meantime the newlander borrows their money under pretence that he will repay it when he arrives in Holland, or that he will invest it in goods, which will yield profit to them on their arrival in the colony, thus they are doubly deluded to attach themselves to, and accompany the newlander... as soon as they arrive [at port] the newlander enters into a treaty with the merchants, and whoever bids him the most for the people he has brought is most sure of procuring them, whether the ships are bound to the colony for which they [the Palatines] intended, or not.

41 NA SP 80/240 ‘Including account of malpractices made by Rhine boatmen against Germans emigrating to British colonies in America via Rotterdam’
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
At its high point, the eighteenth century transportation of Germans to America was often completely detached from any formal links, with shippers, merchants and recruiters forming a simple structure that allowed profit to be made from moving people from one continent to another. By mid-century the number of individuals loaded on to vessels had climbed from an average of 185 people to more than 300.\textsuperscript{44} It was not unusual for more than 400 to be crammed in. This was not achieved by drastically increasing the size of the vessels, but by reducing the amount of space for each individual on board, and dedicating the vessels entirely to the carrying of human freights. With an average price of £5-6 per head usually achieved, the incentive was to carry as many as possible on every trip.\textsuperscript{45} After ships captains and owners had been paid a substantial sum, recruiters given their commission, and the ships provisions accounted for, those responsible for orchestrating the whole transaction – either Hope or Stedman – were left with hundreds of pounds in profit from every crossing. Because of the increasing availability of colonial labour created by the system, the individuals it transported had to serve longer and longer periods of servitude, after a journey which had become increasingly horrific.

The horrors of this exploitative system were described by the Heilbronner Gottlieb Mittelberger, in an oft-quoted and excellent passage. Mittelberger had travelled in 1750 on a vessel carrying nearly 500;\textsuperscript{46}

\begin{itemize}
\item In Rotterdam and to some extent also in Amsterdam, the people are packed into the big boats as closely as Herring, so to speak. The bedstead of one person is hardly 2 feet across and 6 feet long, since many of the boats carry from four to six hundred passengers... the ships often take 8, 9, 10 or 12 weeks sailing to Philadelphia, if the wind is unfavourable. But given the most favourable winds, the voyage lasts 7 weeks... During the journey the ship is full of pitiful signs of distress - stench, fumes, horror, vomiting, various kinds of sea-sickness, fever, dysentery, headache, heat, constipation, boils, scurvy, cancer, mouth rot, and similar afflictions, all of them caused by the age and the highly salted state of the food, especially of the meat, as well as by the very bad and filthy water, which brings about the miserable destruction and death of many...
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{44} O'Reilly, \textit{To the East or to the West?} p.193.  
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid, p. 108.
When the ships finally arrive in Philadelphia after their long voyage, only those are let off [the boat] who can pay their sea-freight or can give good security. The others, who lack the money to pay, have to remain on board until they are purchased... In this whole process the sick are worst off, for the healthy are preferred and are most rapidly paid for. The miserable people who are ill must often still remain at sea and in sight of the city for another 2-3 weeks- which in many cases means death... This is how the commerce in human beings on board ship takes place: Every day Englishmen, Dutchmen and High German people come from the city of Philadelphia and other places, some of them very far away, say twenty, thirty, or forty hours away, and go on board the newly arrived ship... From among the healthy they pick out those suitable for the purposes for which they require them. Then they negotiate with them as to the length of the period for which they will go into service in order to pay off their passage...  

Through both personal communications and publications such as Mittelberger's, the untrustworthy nature of newlanders, and the horrendous nature of the crossing, were well known to all potential migrants. Yet thousands continued to use the system unperturbed. The fact that so many were willing to do so was testament to their latent migratory inclinations, the excellent reputation that Pennsylvania enjoyed, and the failing capacity of their socio-economic environs to accommodate them. However exploitative, the Rotterdam-Philadelphia arrangement allowed American migration to reach the maximum number of communities and individuals for whom it was a desirable option. Just when that capacity was being reached, warfare returned to the Atlantic. As before, the rumours and threat of war severely dampened the migration, but this time, in 1756, Atlantic confrontation erupted into the full scale conflict of the Seven Years War, essentially shutting off access. Throughout the second half of the century, access to America would be subjected to drawn out and repeated interruption.

In the interstices between the Seven Years War, American War of Independence and the conflicts brought by revolutionary and Napoleonic France, America could draw anywhere from 300 to nearly 4,000 German migrants, but its share of migration became diluted by constant interruption to its shipping lanes, and favourable offers appearing closer to home. An edict issued by Catherine the Great on 22nd of July 1763 offered free land, freedom of religion and generous tax  

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48 Wocceck, Trade in Strangers pp. 45-46.
exemption in the sparsely populated Russian Volga, Black Sea and South Caucasus regions. Tradesmen were offered 10 years of tax exemption, and the crown was willing to forward all transportation costs to those unable to pay for relocation.\textsuperscript{49} Offering the same benefits but less risk than migration to America, the edict proved popular, although just like America, access was sporadic, as it was subject to intermittent withdrawal and reissue. Other destinations remained open, including the lands in Habsburg Hungary, which owed their overall share of migration to their constant availability and easy access, rather than their desirability. (The area was referred to as the ‘German Graveyard’).\textsuperscript{50} Limited offers of Prussian land appeared in 1769, and newly partitioned Galician Poland became another option in the 1780s.\textsuperscript{51}

In total, some half a million left the South West for these destinations during the eighteenth century. Around 80,000 went to Russia and Prussia, more than 110,000 reached America, and perhaps 300,000 the various Habsburg lands.\textsuperscript{52} The movement firmly established America, specifically Pennsylvania, as ‘the best poor man’s country’, in the village traditions of the South West.\textsuperscript{53} The cumulative volume of this emigration however, did not lead to a life of easier opportunity in the regions from which it came.

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In the source villages, the emigration was never sufficient to balance the number of hands to available work. For every individual who possessed the

\textsuperscript{49} Karl Stumpp, \textit{The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862} Publication of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1973. p. 15.

\textsuperscript{50} For some time in the early settlements of the Banat of Temesvár, the principal South Eastern region of Habsburg emigration, attempts were made to keep German immigrants to the uplands, until decades of improvements by Romanian and Serbian farmers made the marshy and malaria troubled lowlands more viable. See O’Reilly, \textit{To the East or to the West} p. 242.

\textsuperscript{51} The Prussian offer did not include free land, only freedom from public taxes for a period, freedom from import duties on belongings, freedom of religion and from conscription, and some subsidies for farm buildings. Mühle, ‘Colonist Traditions’ pp. 47-48.


fortitude and comfort with risk necessary for emigration, there were many more that stayed behind. Population continued to grow strongly. Wage earners, who, thanks to the system in which they operated, had been the initial party affected by rising numbers, continued a trend of steep decline. For every individual who had left, there were others who showed patience, waited longer, paid higher entry fees, delayed marriage and relied on a wife’s savings from service to establish a household. In return for their strategies, they came up against the logical consequences of the guild system, which had been to drastically constrict earnings and zip the economy into a strait jacket. For the defence of their increasingly insufficient slice of an overly divided (or overly exploited) pie, tradesmen forfeited access to any other form of earnings. An inevitable effect of the system was the sending of protective sanction into every last crevice of the economy, in order to protect even the most obscure money making practices from untrained hands in need of extra cash. Württemberg rulers sanctioned new guilds and monopolies right up to the 1780s. As long as they could glean ever larger amounts of wealth from an aggregate of increasingly diminished producers – all paying their dues and fees – they were quite happy to do so, and the defensive, self-debilitating system remained immovable.

Virtually any activity outside – in some cases even within – one’s own line of work, no matter how trivial, impinging on the rights of one guild or another. In 1793, a citizen in Wildberg, a small town in the west of Württemberg, complained that the wife of an itinerant basketmaker was collecting rags for a village paper miller without an official license, whereupon the communal assembly ordered the village to eject the couple.54 In 1785 in the same community, a tanner complained that butchers and worsted weavers were practicing ‘buying up and regrating’ of calf and sheep hides, counter to his guild privileges; the communal court forbade the practice.55 And in 1765, the butcher’s guild fined a member in the nearby village of Ebhausen for improper slaughtering, counter to guild regulations.56 The most likely explanation here is that the butcher was attempting to work in a hurried fashion in order to earn extra money, which of course went against the

55 Ogilvie, Küpker & Maegraith, Community Characteristics p. 76
56 Ibid, p. 77.
guarded rights of his fellow members by taking work away from them. When a tradesman found work slack in his own line of business, and was not in possession of a large amount of land, there was literally no work other than labouring that could be done to compensate, and labourers of course, were already available in surplus.

The once mutually beneficial arrangement between state and proud master tradesman, now only worked to benefit the former, and had choked off the wealth and social position of the latter. The trend is illustrated by Ölbronn, a typical agricultural community in the Württemberg lowlands. In the 1750s, the average household estate of a local tradesman had been worth 75% that of his farming contemporary. By the 1800s, the average tradesman’s estate was worth 29% of his farming counterpart. Rather than a few tradesmen being marginal earners, the majority now were. In the process of loss of wealth, the trade and artisanal community also lost much of its social power. In his study of another lowland Württemberg community, Neckarhausen, David Warren Sabean observed the shrinking number of Handwerke represented in the village Gericht and Rat. He noted that at the turn of the eighteenth century, the Handwerke had provided 2 of the villages 4 Bürgermeister – the chief financial officers – and had made up around half of the offices in the Gericht and Rat. By 1790 however, they held only 2 out of 23 available offices, most of which were now firmly in the hands of the Bauern.

The situation was not helped by a series of extremely problematic developments over the first decade and a half of the nineteenth century. Those problems eventually resulted in a major push toward the New World that bore remarkable similarity to the movement of 1709, and one which formed a bookend to the established form and traditions of Atlantic migration which had developed in between. The problems began in the Napoleonic era and ended with a subsistence crisis that brought many communities to their knees.

After the Napoleonic Wars broke out, Baden and Württemberg soon allied themselves with Napoleon, and were burdened with supply demands.

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57 Kreisarchiv Enzkreis (KAE) 9133 - Inventuren und Theilungen (I/T) 1096-1099.
58 KAE 9133 I/T 1117-1119.
60 Ibid, p. 65.
Communities faced forced requisitions of grain, troop quartering, carting services and a hike in taxation demands. Village grain stores were emptied, many villagers forced into debt, and local economies put under severe strain. Conditions were not helped by Napoleon’s Continental System. The most common artisanal trade, weaving, suffered severe depression from the loss of its extra-European markets, in particular South America. In 1792, German linens had supplied 60% of Spain’s colonial markets, amounting to some 40 million metres of cloth annually. Constrained by the Continental System, France proved to be an inadequate substitute for this previously huge outlet.

Weavers suffered a severe depression in their trade, and the blockade ensured that the depression would continue long after Napoleon was gone. In 1808, Manchester manufacturers jumped on the Latin market, beginning in Portugal, Gibraltar and Malta, swiftly moving on to Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, where lighter cottons quickly usurped linens as a favoured material. With the British having captured their markets, the return of peace and end of the blockade therefore brought little respite for the weaving artisans of the South West. They were not alone in facing depressed conditions at the end of the wars. Crop failure in 1816 brought communities to the brink of famine. With village grain magazines emptied, villagers forced into high levels of debt, and local economies already struggling, the ‘year without a summer’ was enough to cause breakdown.

Freak weather conditions in 1816 drastically reduced the overall crop yield, and ruined the South Western wine harvest. With no reserve supplies and a shortage of disposable incomes on hand, the rising price of bread was critical. In Württemberg, governmental action took the less than responsible form of

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63 The freak meteorological events of 1816 are now known to be the result of the eruption of Mt. Tambora in Indonesia, which caused something of ‘nuclear winter’ in the Northern and Western hemisphere during the spring and summer months of 1816. See Klaus J Bade, Allison Brown, Migration in European History Malden, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, p. 87. A wonderful and lengthy description of that year’s incredible meteorology is given in Walker Germany and the Emigration pp. 5-9.
exporting grain, so as not to miss out on high prices.\textsuperscript{64} That same government, it should be noted, thereafter thought it necessary to hire investigators to discern the causes of mass migration that followed these events.\textsuperscript{65} So severe was the subsistence crisis, that Prof. Dr Johann Auterieth, professor of medicine at Tübingen University, wrote a book he entitled \textit{Gründliche Anleitung zur Broadbereitung aus Holz} - ‘A Thorough Introduction to the Preparation of Bread from Wood.’\textsuperscript{66} The high price of bread consumed all the money that people had, grinding the economy to a halt. Artisans and tradesmen, reliant on cash incomes and already in a depressed state, once again began to move en masse up the Rhine to Rotterdam, looking for passage to Pennsylvania.

Tens of thousands left Baden, Württemberg, Alsace and Switzerland between the summers of 1816 and 1817. The movement was split between those heading for America, and those heading for Russia, with America the favoured destination. At least 25,000 ventured up the Rhine to Rotterdam, following the route that tradition and relatives had spelled out.\textsuperscript{67} They expected the shippers in Holland to carry them for free, and to pay their debt once they reached Pennsylvania. Continuity of form was matched by continuity of type. The \textit{Handwerker} were dependably over represented, having borne the brunt of decades of marginalisation and now moved by the trigger of economic breakdown. The neighbouring agricultural parishes of Ölbronn, Ötisheim and Lomersheim, running in a north west - south east direction outside the Baden city of Pforzheim, give a good display of the migration in microcosm. Between them they sent over 150 individuals to America, some clandestine, but at least 118 accounted for. Collectively, and in each parish individually, the movement was dominated by tradesmen and artisans with large families. 112 of the overall group were connected to 19 heads of household, of which 13 were \textit{Handwerker}, 2

\textsuperscript{64} Sabean, \textit{Property, Production, and Family in Neckarhausen} p. 46.
\textsuperscript{65} The economist Friedrich List, a Württemberg bureaucrat until his ejection from the civil service in the early 1820s, was tasked with investigating causes. It marked the beginning of a life-long interest in the movement. His comments on 1816/17 are reproduced in Moltmann, \textit{Aufbruch Nach Amerika}.
\textsuperscript{66} Walker, \textit{Germany and the Emigration} p. 6.
\textsuperscript{67} Bade gives a figure of 16,361 American emigrants declared in Baden, 6,000 in Württemberg, \textit{European Migration} p. 88. Walker gives similar figures \textit{Germany and the Emigration}, p. 39.
winegrowers, 1 a teacher, and only 3 Bauern, despite the numerical dominance of this last group in society and the economy.68

Although often referred to as such, this movement was not an anomalous event produced solely by the trauma of 1816; the economic collapse which occurred in that year only catalysed a pre-existing movement. What followed was defined by domestic and migratory developments which had evolved over the previous century. The movement took its outline from the source regions established in the decades following 1709; it followed, or expected to follow, the transportation routes and methods put to use since; it drew from the same sections of society. The one notable alteration was that the Rhine plain region in Baden’s southern Breisgau, a Catholic territory that had traditionally sent migrants east, joined the northern and Protestant Baden-Durlach tradition of sending migrants west. The enormous traffic up the Rhine from neighbouring Switzerland and Alsace, not to mention the movements in the north of the Duchy itself, were evidently enough to envelope this region in the developing fever, much like the progress of the 1709 saga. However, the huge outpouring proved to be a bookend to the form and type of migration which had developed since that year. Its colossal volume was enough to break and bury certain key aspects of existing tradition.

In Rotterdam and Amsterdam, the repeatedly interrupted business of crossing the Atlantic in the second half of the eighteenth century had left the credit system in disrepair. Far removed from the finely tuned operation running at mid-century, the Dutch ports and shippers were overwhelmed. Many of those without the money to buy passage ended up destitute in the cities, having exhausted their meagre funds, unable to gain free transit, but without the means to get home.

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68 Lomersheim: 27 individuals - 1 tailor/8 dependants, 1 cooper/7 dependants, 1 bauer/5 dependants, 1 unknown/3 dependants, 2 other possible migrants from this parish during this period are a weaver’s son and a tailor’s son, although the dates of their emigration are not given. Ötisheim: 16 individuals – cooper/4 dependants, carpenter/1 dependant, cobbler/1 dependant, winegrower/6 dependants. Ölbronn 75 individuals – 3 weavers/18 dependants, 1 wagonright/8 dependants, 1 carpenter/5 dependants, 1 cooper/5 dependants, 1 cobbler/4 dependants, 1 blacksmith/2 dependants, 1 winegrower/5 dependants, 1 teacher/6 dependants, 1 Bauer/4 dependants, 1 single Bauer, 4 Bauern sons, 1 tailors son, 1 teachers son. All migrants listed left in the Spring of 1817. Johannes Haßbacher’s village history Ein Dorf an der Grenze: Chronik von Ölbronn Ölbronn-Durrn, Finkenstr. 4, 1982, states that 116 villagers left in that year, but is only able to list the details of 3 families that travelled to America. The 75 individuals accounted for above are taken from the village’s parish family register, Landeskirchliches Archiv Stuttgart (LKA) Kirchenbuch (KB) Ölbronn roll nr.1120, band 12, also LKA KB Lomersheim nr.1124,bd. 17/18, Hugo Sattler Auswanderer der Gemeinde Ötisheim unpublished document, 1937, printed Landratsamt Enzkreis, 2001. Haßbacher, Dorf an der Grenze pp. 281-287.
Eventually, shippers mustered the capacity to ferry around 20,000 individuals to America. Some ended up doing so at a loss, as the American market in indentured servitude had declined in importance, making it difficult to find any takers for those who risked carrying credit-based passengers. Many of the migrants were both physically and financially exhausted upon their arrival, and simply ended up in poor houses and in the care of charities. The loss to shippers and problems for the Dutch authorities in managing the crowds, as well as the saturation of poverty stricken individuals piling up in American ports, ended the credit system forever. This was reinforced by legislation on both sides of the Atlantic; in America by restrictions on passenger numbers travelling in European ships, and in the Netherlands by laws that prohibited large migrant groups from entering its ports.

Aside from the 20,000 individuals that made it to America, some 15,000, mainly from Württemberg, went to Russia. Just as in 1709, the entire movement was over almost as soon as it began, providing some relief to struggling community economies, and dissuading others from embarking on migration once disappointed and destitute stragglers returned from the North. The symmetry with 1709 is completed by the critical manner in which the movement captured migratory interest in America. The first movement turned migratory attention to the New World; the latter focused it almost exclusively in that direction. Those who left for Russia would be the last significant migrants to the East; once those who had left for America in this huge exodus established themselves and wrote home, the New World would become the unrivalled destination of choice for the overwhelming majority of German migrants.

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69 Bade, European Migration p.87.
72 Walker, Germany and the Emigration p. 31.
The migration between the German lands and America during the eighteenth century was not a movement characterised by religious marginals moving in small groups. Although these groups were a constant, its volume drew principally from an unorganised popular migration, dominated by the socio-economic realities of contemporary South West German life, conveyed by a mass transit system that offered service in exchange for exploitation. Even if the wretched practical realities of reaching America left other, less desirable destinations with a larger overall proportion of extra-territorial migration, the movement still achieved substantial numbers and a wide reach, drawing as it did from the carpenter, cooper and labourer present in every village. As such, American migratory discourse became well established through a large section of German Europe.

Even the term ‘eighteenth century’ is a loose association, a convenient label for what was the opening period of German migratory dialogue with America. ‘Eighteenth century’ in fact encompasses a movement that ebbed and flowed from muted preludes in the late seventeenth century, properly began in 1709, peaked in the mid-eighteenth century, experienced subdued fits and starts in the subsequent decades, and ended with an enormous bang at the close of the Napoleonic era, which destroyed its basic parameters of Dutch embarkation and Pennsylvanian landing. When emigration between the German lands and America restarted more than a decade later, new routes had to be found, new American ports were disembarked in, and new areas of settlement were sought.

There were other changes in this new period. The Bauern, who for so long had been more resistant than their Handwerk contemporaries to American migration, suddenly became fully integrated into the movement, and fully represented in migrant numbers. Joining these new migrants were whole new regions that suddenly sent significant numbers to America. New developments mean new considerations, and ones which must be addressed carefully, as they hold the key to explaining the onset of the pivotal stage of German-American migration.
The Proto-industrial Question –

The emigration entered a defining period between 1830 and 1845. After a hiatus of more than a decade, a movement of considerably increased proportions got underway. In this short fifteen year window, half a million emigrants left for America. The renewed emigration drew from a larger geographical area than the movement to 1817, and from more sections of society. The migrants came from the ranks of agricultural tenants in the German North West – the Heuerlinge – and now from every section of society in the rural South West. Whilst the labourers and craftsmen of Württemberg, Baden and the Palatinate continued to leave, the South Western movement was much expanded by the addition of the region’s farmers, who now left in significant numbers, proportional to their dominance in the rural population.¹

Following the early territorial expansion of the United States, the migrants of 1830 - 45 spread out into the American Midwest of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and north to Wisconsin and Michigan; they also settled in East Texas and in urban clusters in New York; in doing so, they established the settlement regions of German immigrants in the United States for the rest of the nineteenth century. The migrants of this period also provided the impetus for new, modern transportation networks, diffused through various interior river routes, using modern steam technologies, promoted by agents and the press, and handled by innovative business models in the major ports of embarkation. The pathways they established therefore included not only the regions of settlement sought by

¹ In the territorial restructuring of the German states in 1815, much of the migratory heartlands of the old Electoral Palatinate passed into Northern Baden. The remaining part of the Palatinate, which still experienced some emigration, passed into Bavarian control. Although the Bavarian Palatinate was quite disconnected from the main Kingdom, as a Bavarian administrative district, its emigration figures show Bavaria to now be heavily involved in the movement, when in fact the core region, other than some Franconian Main pockets on the North Württemberg border, was largely unaffected. For much of the main Bavarian Kingdom, the introduction of subdivision of land in 1803/04 allowed the breakup of large farms, and the subsequent anchoring of agricultural populations. Rather than refer to Bavarian emigration, as some older texts do, the term Palatinate will continue to be used here. On Bavarian agriculture see W.R.Lee Population Growth, Economic Development and Social Change in Bavaria, 1750-1850 New York, Arno Press, 1977. pp. 138-181.
future generations, but the means of conveyance that would get them there, not to
mention huge volumes of information regarding both, sent in letters and reports to
former homelands. Their movement confirmed the United States as the pre-
eminent destination for German emigration; in the early 1830s, it already
commanded more than 75% of all German migrants, by the mid-1840s, the figure
was over 90%, an average maintained throughout the rest of the nineteenth
century. All other migratory destinations fell by the wayside. In 1846, when
serious subsistence problems in the form of potato blight and grain failure brought
many rural German regions to their knees, the networks inaugurated by the
migrants of the 1830 - 45 period would prompt much of that despair to translate
into mass American flight. Explaining why these pivotal networks were produced
in the 1830s and ‘40s thus lies at the heart of understanding the mass movement
as a whole.

For the period before the mid-century subsistence crisis, more deep-seated
structural considerations are usually cited in order to explain emigration. The two
most generic quotes concern ‘overcrowding in the fields’ and ‘competition from
the factory system.’ Specific detail was given to these broad observations in the
1980s, when the proto-industrial stage theory of growth offered up a potentially
neat marriage of the two, and a persuasive account of pre-crisis emigration which
still forms a historiographical standard.

The basic tenet of the argument relies on the marginal household economy
of small-scale landholders and tenants of the pre-industrial era, and their use of
home textile manufacture as an income subsidy. It suggests that an increasing
reliance on this prop among the land-poor became over-reliance thanks to the
demographic effects it produced among its practitioners. Initially used as an
attractive side-line income for small scale agriculturalists, the intensification of
home textile production through child labour, used to spin yarn and feed
handlooms, offered families potential increases in earnings, encouraging large
household units. Large family units however, put increasing pressure on the land;

2 Kollman & Marshalcck, ‘German Emigration’ p. 518. The remaining 10% was typically made up of
emigration to South America, (principally Brazil, although conditions there gained a terrible reputation
from the 1820s and ’30s, with migration to Brazil actually forbidden by the Kingdom of Prussia by the
1850s), and some emigration to Canada, Australia, and a minimal amount to New Zealand. See Walker
Germany and the Emigration p.39, p.64.
as population density rose, cottagers established themselves on smaller and smaller plots, with large family manufacturing units soon becoming a necessity thanks to agriculturally useless holdings. The practice therefore exacerbated the land poverty that produced it, and over the generations transformed cottage industry from a subsidy into a dependency. As far as emigration is concerned, studies of both pre-famine Ireland and Vormärz Germany have suggested that affected regions had unsustainably large rural populations thanks to home textile manufacture, which were then devastated by competition from English cotton goods after 1815, leaving an overblown surplus of population to be drawn off through migration.3

The most developed account of this process concerns the German North West, which beginning in 1830/1 had pockets of particularly intense American emigration, rivalling the renewed movements from the old heartlands in the South West. The North West German Heuerlinge were a group particularly dependent on textiles. These tenant labourers, given a dwelling and a small plot of 1 - 2 acres in exchange for some unpaid labour for their landlord and a small rent, made their living from hired agricultural work and any other income they could find. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that increasingly meant home textile manufacture. In his study The Westfalians, Walther Kamphoefner noted that in some North Western regions such as Minden-Ravensberg, the Münsterland and particularly the Osnabrück region of Hanover, there was a direct correlation at the district level between the number of handlooms and the volume of emigration.4 Other than the silk-producing town of Bielefeld, which did well in the period of industrialisation, these linen producing regions were the most heavily engaged in rural handloom weaving in all of the North West, and they were also the most heavily engaged in early emigration. Moreover, in Minden-Ravensberg, 22,594 families dependent on spinning were enumerated in the late 1830s, equivalent to 10% of the population.5 In a region heavily dependent on this textile task of

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5 Ibid, p. 21.
women and children, not only was emigration very high, but population density also the greatest in all of Prussia. Correlations for the German North West thus appear to show the tight association between cottage textile dependencies, dense population, and heavy out migration.

Prior to these observations, the original structural explanation for the onset of German emigration in the nineteenth century suggested that the equal division of inheritances caused the movement, through the constant diminution of farms into dwarf holdings. Yet this practice was confined to the South West, and not practiced in the North, where inheritances passed undivided. Both regions however, experienced the collapse of their widespread rural textile industries in the early nineteenth century, leading to the claim that

‘the downfall of cottage industry is the predominant factor that must be super-imposed upon inheritance systems to understand patterns of [German] emigration.’

So accepted has this hypothesis become, that when prefacing a discussion of more current network theory in 2007, Georg Fertig spelled it out with noteworthy compression as the standard structural case for emigration, stating simply that where it was not possible for individuals to earn a living solely from a farm or a trade

‘small peasants and members of the lower classes have to find additional sources of income such as spinning and weaving. In some situations however, even makeshift income strategies fail, and people have to resort to emigration.’

As a structural cause, the rise and fall of proto-industry is highly persuasive. It accounts for both the pre-disposing factor of high population, and the precipitating trigger of collapse at the hands of English manufactures. It weds ‘overcrowding in the fields’ and ‘competition from the factory system’ deftly enough for the downfall of the rural linen industry to have become a staple argument for pre-famine European migration. Such arguments however, were

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7 Ibid.
8 Fertig, ‘Networks and Social Inequality’ p. 12.
initially produced when proto-industrial stage theories of growth were enjoying thorough development and a particular vogue. Despite proto-industrialisation and its economic and demographic effects having been subsequently challenged, the move away from structural causes to network theory in migration historiography at precisely the same moment has left these conventional explanations intact.\(^9\)

The specific relationship between textile work and emigration in the German South West, the most heavily affected region of the \textit{Vormärz} era, has never been explicitly tested. For several clear reasons, it appears a promising and fitting hypothesis for helping to explain that region’s movement. As noted, older structural explanations for the South rely on the idea that equal land-splitting among heirs was an unsustainable practice, and one that eventually propelled the region’s \textit{Bauern} to emigration. However, in examining local records, it is clear that this factor alone was not a sufficient cause of emigration in the 1830s and ‘40s. A survey of 17 rural communities of comparable size and close proximity across South Baden, West, Central and East Württemberg, all of which practiced the \textit{Realteilung} tradition of equally divided inheritances, showed 6 to be affected by emigration as early as 1830, with the other 11 only affected from the subsistence crisis of 1846 onwards.\(^10\) Was the difference between these communities a difference between those that developed a side-line dependency on textiles, and those which did not?

A decision to produce linens as a side-line would allow South Western peasants to overcome splintered holdings by reducing their dependency on the

\(^9\) In the German context, the most comprehensive challenge is Ogilvie’s \textit{State Corporatism}.

land. But it would also deliver those communities to a precarious ledge. The binary income activity of the South Western dwarf farmers is a well-known phenomenon; local historians have noted the fluid transition between Bauer and Weber (weaver) for the same individuals in village records, whilst demographers have noted the use of textile work as an anchor for those unwilling or unable to migrate in the eighteenth century. Indeed, precisely such observations led to the succinct summary of pre-migration conditions by Fertig.

Moreover, the South West was a prime candidate for a serious depression of the linen trade in the post Napoleonic era. A veritable hub of the pre-Napoleonic German textile industry, it traditionally exported millions of metres of cloth annually to international markets, sending it up the Rhine to the Atlantic and over the Alps to Genoa and the Mediterranean. Not only did Manchester exporters capture these principal German export markets during Napoleon’s continental blockade, as figure 2 shows, they also glutted the German home market at its end, flooding it with a greater volume of exports than any other European territory.

Fig. 2:
British Cloth and Yarn Exports to Europe, 1815-1850.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{11} Sabean, \textit{Property, Production & Family in Neckarhausen} p. 49; Hochstadt, ‘Socio-Economic Determinants of Increasing Mobility’ p. 145.


It is therefore not merely the move away from structural causes to network theory that has left the proto-industrial model of textile collapse untested for the German South West; the broad observations stack up neatly enough to deter detailed examination. Yet devastating work that uses South German data to destroy long-held beliefs about the dynamics of home textile manufacture suggests that these easy-fitting assumptions are worth a closer look.\textsuperscript{14} In a bid to understand the structural causes behind the defining period of German-American emigration, established theories are also the logical place to begin. Firstly, a more complete outline of proto-industry as an economic theory, and why the other famous German textile regions do not appear in the emigration discussion, will be necessary.

Franklin Mendels coined the phrase proto-industry in the late 1960s to describe the intense, de-centralised cottage textile industry of eighteenth century Flanders. The term ‘proto’-industry was used because Mendels believed that the cottage trade had been a ‘pre-industrial industry’, which eventually helped to generate industrialisation proper.\textsuperscript{15} Mendels saw the large family labour forces...

\textsuperscript{14} Principally Ogilvie, \textit{State Corporatism} pp.229-303.
and the capital accumulation of the merchants who sold their cloth as foundation stones for the industrial revolution. Essentially, the proto-industrial stages of development provided the perfect elements for the founding of the factory system—cheap labour and investment capital—once the necessary innovations in materials and machinery were available. During the 1970s and 1980s, Mendels and others consolidated the theory into a general European model.\footnote{The most developed discussion is Peter Kriedte, Hans Medick, and Jürgen Schlumbohm’s \textit{Industrialization before Industrialization Rural Industry in the Genesis of Capitalism} Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981.}

Although similar stage theories of growth go back as far as Marx, the key contribution of the proto-industrial model was its account of the populatory ‘ratchet effect’ displayed by home manufacturers, wherein large families among the land-poor begat further large families, and eventual proto-industrial dependence. At the heart of the ratchet effect is the assumption that handloom weaving offered young couples an alternative to waiting for their meagre inheritances in order to set up a household, instead using a loom and a rented cottage to do so. This allowed them to marry younger, with knock-on effects for improved fertility, home labour forces, and thus eventually the overall volume of producers available in proto-industrial regions. Historians were relatively quick to note however, that this ‘rural proletariat’ did not always go on to provide the labour pool for any nascent factory system.\footnote{This possibility was in fact discussed by Kriedte, Medick and Schlumbohm in \textit{Industrialization before Industrialization} pp. 145-154.}

In order to introduce new machinery and methods, institutional freedoms to alter the system of production had to exist. This may have been the case for the Low Countries and England, but for much of Europe, including many of its German regions, it was not. Where tightly gripped monopolies were in place at the time of new mechanical and material innovation, monopoly holders were often inclined to stifle their introduction and application, lest their strangleholds on hand producers and their wares be compromised. If a monopolistic merchant or guild in one town or district was able to give its producers access to new methods of vastly increased production, all of their neighbours would be at a disadvantage. Such practices were therefore prohibited, often by mutual co-operation, and on occasion by laws designed to maintain the status quo. Of course those regions shortly found
themselves at a competitive disadvantage to others with greater freedom of evolution. Whilst localised industry stagnated, the ‘ratchet effect’ of population growth would leave these unindustrialised regions with a massive population surplus whose support prop had evaporated in the face of factory competition from elsewhere.

Regional experiences of this process however, were highly diverse. The German North and South West were not alone among regions with heavily developed proto-industry in the eighteenth century. As well as Württemberg and Westphalia, other notable examples were the Rhineland, Saxony and Silesia. Yet none of these latter regions went on to experience heavy American emigration, and the local institutional frameworks largely account for the discrepancy. In the first instance, the Rhineland and much of Saxony were success stories. Rather than victims of stagnation, they were the regions in which the full industrialisation process was realised. The central Rhinelands had been a patchwork of tiny micro states during the Holy Roman Empire; a subject could leave a territory in a morning’s walk if he wished to seek better prospects in the neighbouring fiefdom. Rather than being able to tie their populations to heavily regulated monopolies, leaders were forced to offer the most competitive environment possible, with each ruler vying for population and economic activity. This led to economic freedoms, weak guild structures, and the early investment in innovative materials and technology.\(^{18}\) It was quite the opposite of the large, easily controlled system of monopolistic privilege seen in bigger territories like Württemberg. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the central Rhinelands were thus far more adaptable to the challenges and possibilities of industrialisation.

Saxony, although relatively large, was not as adequately regulated by the state as some other territories. Rulers failed to sanction blanket monopoly privilege, and also failed to uniformly regulate conflicts between urban and rural producers. In the interstices left between rather patchy privilege and regulation, illegal village traders were able to promote the shift from linen to cotton in the 1770s, and introduce mechanical cotton spinning after 1800.\(^{19}\) When the state

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removed all monopoly trading rights in 1817, the industrialisation process took off.\textsuperscript{20} At the opposite end of the spectrum, the exemplar of state backed monopoly can be seen in the case of Silesia.

The Silesian weavers were settled on agriculturally meagre lands that had been subdivided into small plots designed purely to house textile production. As elsewhere in the core Prussian lands, producers existed on these lands as tenant serfs, and had to pay their lord if they wished to remove themselves from the domain, which essentially tied them to their plots.\textsuperscript{21} These families were entirely dependent on their textile wares for income, and those wares were given, without choice, to merchants who had complete control over market access. The landlords and merchants were given unaltering support by Prussian rulers to keep out any new materials or machinery that might compromise this exploitative and lucrative arrangement. The weavers were thus locked into a system of enforced stagnation and destitution. Their poverty was unrivalled, and led to revolt in 1844. Getting access to the United States was not a realistic option for these impoverished individuals, even if they could negotiate an exit from the plot to which they were tied. For those that managed to do so, they migrated internally, the natural course being down the Oder and into Berlin, where they may have been able to find other paid work.\textsuperscript{22}

In the North and South West, circumstances therefore proved to be unique. Both had strong institutional controls. Württemberg had its monopolistic trading companies, and in the Westphalian region, all who wove cloth were forced to sell their product to merchants through the local inspection offices, (\textit{Legge}) a monopolistic institution that was strengthened by the state in the 1770s.\textsuperscript{23} In both regions, just as new materials and methods were being introduced to the textile industry, innovation was deflected by these institutions. Subsequently, they failed to enjoy the take-off seen in the Rhineland and Saxony. However, unlike the Silesian weavers, they were not bonded to their land. With freedom of movement but no freedom of innovation, it is easy to see emigration as the logical result.

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\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22} Kamphoefer, \textit{The Westfalians} p. 38.
\textsuperscript{23} Ogilvie, ‘Proto-industrialisation in Germany’ p. 132.
emigration in the North West certainly demonstrate a strong case, but what of the German South West? Here, broad correlations between the overall number of weavers and looms and the overall volume of emigration from Baden and Württemberg have been cited as explicit corroboration of the theory.²⁴ A specific examination of whether or not proto-industry played a pivotal role in the heartlands of the nineteenth century German-American movement is long overdue.

The Württemberg region with the heaviest presence of hand-loom weaving was the Swabian Alb. For many on this chain of rocky hills, work in cottage industry was a necessity of life. Three of the four major Württemberg textile merchants guilds, including the largest linen firm - the Uracher Linen Trading Company - had in fact been established on and around the Alb, whilst the other was in the Black Forest, a similarly poor spot for agriculture. However, from a starting point of basic occupational figures and regional emigration intensity, initial correlations between the rural textile trade and emigration from nineteenth century Württemberg appear weak. Although proto-industry was most prominently developed in the agriculturally marginal regions of the Swabian Alb and Black Forest, both of these regions had little emigration in the first half of the nineteenth century compared to the lowland farming region that lay between them. (See Map 2) When proto-industrial villages of the Swabian Alb were tested more closely, they in fact showed a curious inversion of expected results; massively high crude fertility rates, but very low emigration.

In the Swabian Alb village of Donnstetten, in Oberamt Urach, nearly 60% of all men married between 1801 and 1848 gave Weber [weaver] as their profession, nearly five times as many as the next most common occupation of farming. The village was as close to a monocultured textile community as possible in pre-industrial Württemberg. Yet in the first half of the nineteenth century, this village of 670 inhabitants sent only 2 individuals to America. In the village of Ersingen, another proto-industrial community on the Alb, the most common occupation given in the eighteenth and nineteenth century was Seldner. A Seldner was the Württemberg equivalent of a cottager, living on a parcelled plot with no land other than a vegetable garden, the apogee of rural industry. There was not a single case of emigration from the village in the first half of the nineteenth century.

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25 Between 1801 and 1848, 131 weaving households were established in Donnstetten, compared to just 28 farming. Tailoring was a distant third, with 12 households established on the trade over the same period. LKA KB nr.1760 bd.14.
Interestingly, both of these villages showed staggeringly high fertility in the second half of the eighteenth century. In Ersingen, the crude birth rate had been 9.6 per family, and in Donnstetten 7.8. Such statistics from textile monoculture communities seem to confirm that proto-industry encouraged large households, but one need only look at child mortality to explain the figures, and the subsequent lack of emigration.

In Ersingen, nearly 7 of the 9.6 children born to each household in the village died before reaching the age of five, representing a mortality rate of over 70%. In Donnstetten, the number was less, at 3.8, but so was crude birth rate, so that figure still represents nearly 50% mortality among young children and infants. Even in the nineteenth century, in the Danube and Swabian Alb region of Württemberg, infant mortality remained at around 40%. These villages were desperately poor, very short on resources, and had very high gross fertility in order to establish something resembling a regular family unit. It is an accepted wisdom of migration history that an individual can be too poor to emigrate. Communities that were impoverished even before their staple income was undermined, fall into just such a category; these regions were, to all intents and purposes, the Silesian quarters of the Württemberg textile trade. Although the *Seldner* and their kind were not bonded to their plots, their poverty was great enough and their plots agriculturally and monetarily worthless enough that generating the capital to make it to America was out of the question.

The lack of emigration from abjectly poor villages with high numbers of full-time weavers, but its heavy presence in the agricultural lowlands, does not contradict the suggestions of the proto-industrial model. In fact this accords succinctly with the detailed study of the relationship between proto-industry and emigration in the German North West, which demonstrates that rural households engaged with home manufacture on a *part time* basis were those most likely to emigrate. The point of the proto-industrial model is that the migrants it created

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27 LKA KB nr.1460 bd.11 LKA KB nr.1760 bd.14.
28 LKA KB nr.1460 bd.11.
30 The district of Calw, home to Württemberg’s Black Forestworsted linen trade, and seat of the *Calwer Worsted Linen Company* until its dissolution in 1797, also had very low emigration, with only 74 individuals leaving the entire Oberamt for foreign territory between 1812 and 1846. Königlichen statistisch-topographischen Bureau, *Beschreibung des Oberamts Calw* Stuttgart & Tübingen, Königlichen statistisch-topographischen Bureau, 1860. pp. 42-43.
were those able to leave just *before* their situation became truly desperate. For several reasons this hypothesis is promising for the agricultural regions of the South. Firstly, in agricultural regions where land was scarce, it fetched high prices. If farmers were no longer able to make a living from a combination of their small plots and any extra textile subsidies, the sale of their land generated enough money to pay a passage to America, such was its value to other farmers. Secondly, the penetration of textile work into the household economy of Southern *Bauern*, followed by the collapse of the industry, would explain why these individuals would suddenly join an emigration which had previously been confined largely to craftsmen and tradesmen. Lastly, and most significantly, the model can explain why some communities in agricultural *Realtteilung* regions built migratory networks between 1830 and 1845, whilst their neighbours did not, only following later, with an ill-fated slide into secondary textile work the difference between them.

The heaviest area of emigration in all of the South West during the crucial 1830-1845 period was the central lowland region of Württemberg. The unique records of Württemberg allow very specific testing of the extent of textile work in rural households in the run up to, and during the renewed and heavy emigration of that period. In combination with parish records, fertility patterns can also be examined in order to test the applicability of the proto-industrial model. The *Oberamt* (administrative district) of Maulbronn (now within modern-day Enzkreis) lay in the heart of the heavily affected region. Maulbronn saw population increase flat-line by the mid-nineteenth century, as emigration drew off all growth that should have resulted from a healthy excess of births over deaths.\(^31\) Within the district, the village of Ölbronn was the most heavily affected by emigration during the period 1830-1845.

During that time frame, some 170 people left Ölbronn, a village of around 800, in order to start a new life in America.\(^32\) The village had been involved in American migratory movements since the mid-eighteenth century, but as was

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\(^{32}\)Emigration total taken form Burkhart Oertel’s village genealogy *Ortssippenbuch Ölbronn*, cross-referenced with parish register LKA KB nr.1120 bd.12.
typical of renewed movements in the region, the makeup of its emigration changed fundamentally from 1830. Throughout the period 1750-1846, that is, from the point at which population levels had recovered from pre Thirty-Years War levels, through to the heavy emigration of the 1830s and 1840s, a full set of household inventories (Inventuren und Theilungen) exist for Ölbronn. As such, the tools owned by every villager throughout that period can be tracked. It is therefore possible to examine whether side-line work in textile manufacture became an increasing feature of Ölbronn households as population levels rose, preceding a new emigration of unprecedented scope.

Of the 116 complete Ölbronn inventories examined through the period 1750-1846 in which the subject gave Bauer as their stated occupation, only three owned a handloom. In addition, this marginal loom ownership did not correlate with an increased dependency on ancillary income over time. Of the looms that do appear, the first two show up in the 1750s and 60s, the last in 1800. The trend was also tested for the village of Massenbach, in the neighbouring Oberamt of Brackenheim, another district which experienced heavy emigration. Massenbach was a community of comparable size to Ölbronn, and one which sent nearly 100 villagers to America in the 1830s and 1840s. Its 35 surviving farming inventories through the period 1800-1850 do not bring up a single handloom.

This is not, however, the final word on the association between farming and textile work. A far more common occurrence in the inventories are household estates which clearly show an active involvement in farming, but where the subject has in any event declared themselves Weber by trade. As weaving was a guilded trade, any individual wishing to practice it would have had to become a member of the local weaver’s guild, and declare themselves Weber by profession. In order to comply with guild regulation, it was therefore the un-guilded farming work that took the role as side-line occupation. Some individuals declared themselves Weber

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33 KAE I/T 1087-1158
34 KAE 9133 I/T 1089, 1093, 1119.
36 The Inventuren & Theilungen for Massenbach are housed in the villages’ old school-house, and are numbered B508-526 and A106-149. I am sincerely indebted to Herr Werner Clement for showing me these records, and, at 85, for fetching me from the train station on more than one occasion to do so.
despite significant landownership, even draught animal ownership, and ownership of a cart and plough. And this arrangement certainly did become increasingly common over time. Weaving estates inventoried in Ölbronn averaged 1,100 Gulden in value in just one decade prior to 1790; in all but one decade thereafter, they were valued at an average of 1,450 Gulden or more, with the increase in value generated by the increased amount of land in each inventory.³⁷ Farmers did therefore become more involved in weaving work, but where this was the case, it was officially stated, meaning that given occupations are a fairly reliable measure of change over time.

The proportion of newly formed households in Ölbronn that gave weaving as their stated occupation represented just 4% of all those established during the period 1750-1775, but increased to 14.1% during the period 1776-1800.³⁸ In Massenbach, the same development took place, albeit over a slightly longer period, rising from 7.4% of new households during 1750-1775, to 8.7% of new households formed between 1776 and 1800, and peaking at 11.1% of declared occupation for new households formed between 1801 and 1825.³⁹ In a third community heavily affected by emigration during the period in question, Diefenbach, which sits between Ölbronn and Massenbach, the transition was sharper still. Between 1750 and 1775, only 3% of Diefenbachers gave Weber as their occupation upon establishing a household; between 1776 and 1800, the number rose to 15.5%.⁴⁰

This trend was backed up by an increase in spinning activity in the villages concerned. Spinning was a task perfectly suited as a by-employment for those engaged in agriculture. It could be picked up and put down whenever there was spare time on the farm; the tools required were cheap, and crucially, it was an un-guilded activity, meaning it was available to anyone, including women. In fact, outside of labouring, spinning was the principal money-making task available to women in pre-industrial Württemberg.⁴¹ As an un-guilded activity, it was also not officially enumerated, making the household inventories particularly useful for tracking its frequency. In the 1750s, only 1 in 5 Bauern in the Ölbronn inventories

³⁸ LKA KB nr.1120 bd.12.
³⁹ LKA KB nr.1022/II bd.13.
⁴⁰ LKA KB nr.1151 bd.14,15.
owned a spinning tool of any description.\textsuperscript{42} By 1800, the number was just under 1 in 2. Inventories taken in the 1840s show the frequency to be 3 in 5, with every third Bauer owning multiple spinning tools. In Massenbach, the frequency was 1 in 2 Bauern in the 1800s, and by the 1840s every Bauer inventoried owned at least one spinning tool, with 1 in 4 owning multiple tools.\textsuperscript{43}

It is therefore clear that in Württemberg villages affected by renewed emigration from the 1830s, textile work had begun to increase during the late eighteenth century, and had become more commonplace as a binary income activity of farming households by the first third of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{44} However, in order to guard against a corroborative fallacy, lowland villages that were not affected by emigration during the growth phase, and which only used established American networks after agricultural crises, must be subjected to the same tests. It is at this point that the key role of proto-industry in Vormärz emigration begins to appear considerably less persuasive.

If textile work is investigated in lowland communities unaffected by emigration until mid-century, the increases seen in Ölbronn, Massenbach and Diefenbach do not appear extraordinary. In the village of Neckarhausen, in Oberamt Nürtingen, the number of couples who established themselves on weaving as their declared source of income rose from 10.8\% of new households between 1750 and 1775, to 13.5\% of those formed between 1776 and 1800, and 20.8\% between 1801 and 1825.\textsuperscript{45} There were no recorded cases of emigration from Neckarhausen to American between 1830 and 1845. The village of Neipperg, which fell in the same district as Massenbach, Oberamt Brackenheim, saw a far less prominent increase in weaving as a declared occupation, from just 4 to 6.3\% through the third and fourth quarters of the eighteenth century, and back down to 5.3\% in the first quarter of the nineteenth, but the village inventories show that spinning was more common as a side activity than in either Ölbronn or

\textsuperscript{42} Either spinning wheel or individual spindles. KAE 9133 I/T 1087-1089, 1117-1119, 1156-1158.
\textsuperscript{43} Massenbach (MA) B516-18, MA B524-526, MA A106-106a, MA A108-112.
\textsuperscript{44} The initial trend of a late eighteenth century increase in spinning was also shown in a dataset of 5 year cohorts taken for the emigration affected village of Lomersheim, with spinning tools increasing from 50\% of Bauern inventories in the 1760s to 80\% in the 1790s. Stadtarchiv Mühlacker (SM) B479 (1764-9) B481-482(1774-79) B483-484 (1784-89) B485-487 (1794-99). Data for the nineteenth century was incomplete, with only 12 relevant records across a sporadic range of dates available before 1850, making it problematic to ascertain and substantiate subsequent trends.
\textsuperscript{45} LKA KB nr.430 bd.12, nr. 431 bd.13.
Massenbach. As earlier as 1800-1809, 4 in 5 Bauern inventoried in Neipperg owned at least one spinning tool, with 1 in 3 owning multiple tools. As a side-line income activity, spinning diffused far earlier and far more prolifically in this village than in either Ölbronn or Massenbach. Unlike those villages however, Neipperg experienced virtually no emigration between 1830 and 1845, with only 2 villagers leaving for America. Much like increased weaving activity, a profusion of side-line spinning work is thus not a good predictor of whether or not a village experienced early and heavy emigration. A closer look at the diffusion of spinning in South Western communities invites further caution in seeking simple causal links between proto-industry and emigration.

Spinning is key to the proto-industrial model. It was the task that involved women and children, and would thus support a ratchet effect of household labour forces. It was a task available to those with the slightest of means because of the cheapness of the tools and labour required. However, a closer look at the individual circumstances of those involved in spinning work shows very little consistency with a task that was conducted by those in desperate need of extra income, or an industry that encouraged high fertility. Firstly, the individuals who owned spinning tools in Ölbronn, Massenbach or Neipperg were as likely to be rich as they were poor.

Of the farming estates inventoried in Massenbach in the 1800s, spinning tools were owned by 2 of the 3 richest Bauern, and 2 of the 3 poorest. In Ölbronn in the same time period, among the four Bauern who had above average wealth, 3 owned spinning tools, but only 2 owned them among the six poorest Bauern. In Neipperg in the same period, 2 of the 3 highest valued farming estates included spinning tools, as did 6 of the 7 poorest. A generation later, in the 1840s, the Massenbach inventories show both the richest and poorest Bauern equally involved in spinning, whilst in both Ölbronn and Neipperg, ownership of multiple spinning tools was actually more common among the better off. This is not consistent with the idea of a by-employment increasingly reserved for, or

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46 LKA KB nr. 1026/I bd.7.
47 Stadtarchiv Brackenheim (SB) 9133 I/T 793-797, 800.
49 MA B516:518.
spreading among, those dependent on extra income. In fact, spinning as a by-
employment was a general feature of village life, regardless of stated occupation or wealth. Among all those not engaged in either textile work or farming work, from the common labourer to the village mayor, 45% of inventories studied in Ölbronn showed ownership of spinning tools; 42% in Neipperg, and 37% in Massenbach, from those with only a few pennies in their estate to those with thousands of Gulden.\footnote{KAЕ 9133 I/T 1087-1093, 1096-1099, 1103-1106, 1109-1113, 1117-1119, 1131-1135, 1146-47, 1151-54, 1156-58, SB 9133 I/T NA 793-814, MA B516-B518, A106-A106a, B524-526, A108-A112.} Spinning work was not a prop of the poor, but a largely ubiquitous task which featured heavily in all Württemberg communities by the early nineteenth century, quite simply because it was a source of income which existed outside of guild restriction.

This has significant repercussions for proto-industrial theory and its applicability as a structural cause for emigration. The one group not yet mentioned with regard to spinning work, are weavers themselves. In Ölbronn, where the number of weavers in the village increased through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the frequency with which spinning tools show up in their household inventories is virtually identical to that shown among Bauern; 46.5% of all Bauern examined owned at least one spinning tool, and 46.4% of all weavers.\footnote{54 of 116 farming inventories, 13 of 28 weavers. KAЕ 9133 I/T 1087-1093, 1096-1099, 1103-1106, 1109-1113, 1117-1119, 1131-1135, 1146-47, 1151-54, 1156-58.} Not only were weaving households not uniformly engaged in the textile tasks most suitable to women and children, where they were, it was not in a particularly prolific fashion. They did not need to be, because the popularity of spinning in rural communities as an un-guilded source of income made yarn so cheaply and easily available, that weavers themselves were not compelled to produce it in any great quantity.

Weavers did not, therefore, produce large familial labour forces in order to set their children to spinning tasks. This was true of all sections of society; yarn was rarely produced, by anyone, on a large scale. So common was the small-scale production of yarns by the turn of the nineteenth century, and thus so low its overall value, that very few households attempted to make it in any great quantity. Of 395 complete inventories examined across Ölbronn, Massenbach and Neipperg, only 24 individuals owned three or more yarn spinning tools; the number of cases
in which a considerable home industry of yarn production prevailed was therefore extremely low. Only one of these instances was a weaving household. If it was not commonplace for Württemberg weavers to produce significant amounts of yarn, that is, to enlist wives and children in their enterprise, then they would be highly unlikely to produce large families that exerted unsustainable population pressures on the community. Net fertility levels for the villages discussed bear this out.

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when weaving began to peak as a declared occupation in the emigration affected communities of Diefenbach, Massenbach and Ölbronn, the net fertility (infants surviving past the age of 5) for households declared Weber (weaver), and households declared Bauer, was as follows: Diefenbach, Weber, 3.4, Bauer 3.8; Massenbach Weber 3.8, Bauer 4.4; Ölbronn Weber 4.0, Bauer 3.6. At its numerical peak, the weaving community of each village accounted for less population growth than the farming community. This was true in absolute terms in Diefenbach and Massenbach, where weavers were both numerically outnumbered by Bauern, and produced smaller households, and in relative terms in Ölbronn, where weaving households had slightly higher fertility, but were outnumbered 2.6 to 1 by agricultural units, thus accounting for much less of the village's population growth. Rather than any institution of child labour, the family size of both handloom weavers and farmers in these communities was related to the average age at which the couple were able to marry, itself a product of social institutions and the particular circumstances of matrimonial couples in each village.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, marriage in Württemberg communities depended of course on the community council, local church, and if relevant, the local guild, all aligning in agreement over a couple's intended union. Weaving guilds permitted greater elasticity of admission than other tradesmen's guilds, which put weavers at a certain advantage over other tradesmen regarding young marriage, but if the community council and other villagers felt that a couple did not have the capacity to support a family, then a further wait ensued whilst they gathered the necessary means. As land and pre-marital wealth were the best pre-requisites to early matrimony, this usually meant that Bauern were able to

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52 LKA KB nr.1120 bd.12, 1022/II bd.13, 1151 bd.14, 15.
53 LKA KB nr.1120 bd.12.
marry younger than most of their contemporaries. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, this proved to be the case in both Diefenbach and Massenbach. Although weaving was on the rise as a choice of occupation in both villages, local Bauern were still able to marry younger than their contemporaries, hence the fertility advantage they enjoyed over them. In Ölbronn, weavers were able to marry slightly younger than their farming counterparts, perhaps because they remained heavily involved in farming themselves, and as a result had a slight edge in fertility; according to the inventories, weavers in early nineteenth century Ölbronn retained more land than their equivalents in Massenbach.

The fertility levels of Württemberg communities in the decades prior to the onset of heavy emigration were dictated by social and community convention, not any ‘ratchet effect’ produced by proto-industry. The labour structure of rural communities meant that no such effect was ever likely to exist; virtually every other household produced yarn in some quantity, due to the un-guilded and convenient nature of the work. Hence we see in the case of Ölbronn that even where weavers were able to marry slightly younger than their contemporaries, there was no inclination toward large household units, and fertility levels were found in precisely the same range as those produced by the wealthy Bauern of neighbouring communities. In none of the instances examined did an increase in textile activity in the last quarter of the eighteenth century produce a surplus of young adults in the first quarter of the nineteenth, who thereafter might have served as a ready pool of migrants.

Any final support for the proto-industrial model of pre-famine emigration would require the increasing number of weavers in villages like Ölbronn, Massenbach and Diefenbach, to have driven the movement from those communities. In such instances, it would at least be sustainable to claim that those individuals conformed to an accepted historical argument, and turned to weaving for lack of alternatives, then resorted to emigration as a last option. Even if they did not cause a structural overpopulation in their villages, this would leave depression in their industry as a significant precipitating factor in renewed migrations. Of the 37 heads of household that left Ölbronn through 1830 - 45, only
8 were weavers.\textsuperscript{54} In Diefenbach, only 1 of the 11 heads of household leaving between 1830 and 45 was a weaver.\textsuperscript{55} In Massenbach, the number was 0 in 12.\textsuperscript{56} If Bauern in these villages were transferring their title and much of their time to weaving, they were not thereafter driving local emigrations. The migrations of these communities involved the Bauern, various Handwerker and Taglöhner without precedence for any group, and in largely representative proportions. Their emigrations were caused by factors affecting the entire community, they were not emigrations caused or driven by particular victims of proto-industry.

Such victims were in fact never likely to exist. Because initial wealth and related issues of social legislation and community management were so important when it came to approving the establishment of households in the South West, the proto-industrial hypothesis was only ever likely to happen in an entirely inverted form. Of the 24 instances in which households owned a considerable number of spinning and textile tools, the most prolific levels of ownership were found among the richest individuals; that is, the individuals able to marry youngest, who had the most children, and therefore the largest number of available hands around the house. To take just a few examples, in the 1790s, the Ölbronn inventory with the most spinning tools, including 3 spinning wheels, a yarn winder for feeding looms, as well as extra bobbins for storing yarn, belonged to the second richest Bauer inventoried that decade, who owned an estate worth nearly 5,000 Gulden.\textsuperscript{57} The head of the community council in Neipperg, Phillip Rucker, also evidently ran an extensive side-line in yarn spinning. Head of a family of 9, upon his death in 1837 he left 2 spinning wheels, 3 hand spindles, at least a dozen bobbins for storing yarn and a winder for feeding looms.\textsuperscript{58} He also happened to own over 8 hectares of land, a very impressive sum for his day, a draught ox, and left behind total assets worth over 4,500 Gulden.\textsuperscript{59} All in all, of the 24 individuals across the whole sample who owned a considerable stock of spinning tools, just one, an Ölbronn joiner, was poor in comparison to his contemporaries, with an estate worth just 837 Gulden.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{54} LKA KB nr.1120 bd. 12.
\textsuperscript{55} LKA KB nr.1151 bd.14,15.
\textsuperscript{56} LKA KB nr.1022/II bd.13.
\textsuperscript{57} KAE 9133 I/T 1110.
\textsuperscript{58} SB 9133 I/T NA810, LKA KB nr. 1026/I bd. 7.
\textsuperscript{59} SB 9133 I/T NA810.
\textsuperscript{60} KAE 9133 I/T 1147.
In pre-industrial Württemberg, those who might plausibly have employed their extensive families in textile work were in fact those least likely to emigrate; they were the richest in society, not the poorest.

The proto-industrial explanation for emigration posits that the movement was induced by a slide among the land-poor into a dependence on spinning or weaving, which encouraged a dependency on household labour, producing a structural over-population, thereafter leaving those involved only the option of emigration upon the collapse of their support prop. This is not a sustainable explanation for the South West German emigration that began around 1830. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, an increase in textile work was a *general* phenomenon in the rural South West, and it was not one that produced any significant demographic effects. Increases in weaving activity can be observed in villages which provided migrants between 1830 and 1845, and in villages which did not; increases in spinning activity are likewise observable in communities which sent migrants early and often, and those that did not. This latter form of work was also so ubiquitously diffused among the household economies of rural villages, that those who were involved in weaving had no incentive to produce large household labour forces, and thus to exert any particular pressures on population levels and community resources. Any corroboration of the 'last resort' role of proto-industry in South Western emigration eventually rests on weavers being the predominant element of the emigration in affected communities. They were not. If villages like Ölbronn and Massenbach produced the heavy growth phase of emigration between 1830 and 1845, but Neckarhausen or Neipperg did not, the difference between them was not textile work.

Ultimately, any correlation between proto-industry and emigration from the South West can only be made by crudely aggregating *state wide* numbers of handlooms against *state wide* emigration. In doing this, prolific loom numbers from non-migratory regions like the Swabian Alb and Black Forest are superimposed on the migratory lowland regions, creating a false association. At the local level, where emigration actually took place, the correlation does not stand up. The structural causes behind the growth phase of this region’s emigration thus require further investigation. Firstly however, it is worth considering the implications of the failure of proto-industrial theory to accommodate the early migratory
movements, or economic realities, of the German South West. The stage theory of proto-industrial development was initially based on observations of Flemish weavers; as with all meta-narrative, it breaks down when subjected to the evidence of regions with different institutional frameworks to those where the theory was formulated and observed. If proto-industry did not always lead to industrialisation due to differentiation in institutional frameworks, there is no reason that it should uniformly produce any ratchet effect on population across different institutional frameworks. If no such connection can be found in the heavily affected migratory regions of the German South West, what of the connection between proto-industry and the coterminous Heuerling emigration from the German North West?

Textile work was far more heavily developed in the household economy of the North West German tenant labourer than it was among the peasant households of the German South West. Despite almost no mechanisation, as late as 1841, the Kingdom of Hanover outstripped Silesia and even Saxony in the value of linen exports via Bremen. In 1836, one tenth of all the land in the Osnabrück region was given over to flax cultivation and even this was not enough to supply the Heuerlinge with their full requirements; one third of Osnabrück’s raw flax was procured via Russian import. The tiny size of the plots onto which the tenant labourers were sectioned necessitated this import, which in turn greatly reduced their profit margin. Spinning a thin yarn in order to make the most of their meagre supplies, such households had to survive on a yearly income of 50-55 North German Thaler; 60 years before, a side-line in yarn production had generated a 80 Thaler income supplement, on top of other wages and work.

This downward pressure on wages however, was not generated by a self-fulfilling oversubscription of suppliers. Marriage and family establishment in the

61 Gewerbe-Verein für das Königreich Hanover, Mittheilungen des Gewerbe-Vereins für das Königreich Hanover, Kommission der Hahn’schen Hof-Buchhandlung, Heft 8, 1836. pp. 544-546.
62 Ibid.
German North West was subject to much of the same social legislation as any other German region. Whatever the freer social institutions of the Low Countries and England may have permitted, the North German tenant labourer was not able to establish a household with merely a loom and a rented cottage. As elsewhere, the ability of a couple to provide for themselves and their future offspring, and not to potentially burden the local poor-box, loomed large in dictating marriage age and fertility. Given their incredibly slight economic means, it is unsurprising that in examinations unrelated to emigration, the Heuerling households of the German North West have been consistently shown to be the smallest in the community, not the largest.

In heavily proto-industrial regions like Ravensberg, where landowners had sectioned their farms into cottager plots in order to promote rural industry, the availability of housing meant that Heuerling men intending to work with textiles were in fact able to marry younger than their farming counterparts, who in a system of primogeniture, had to wait a considerable amount of time for a farm to become available. However, for those attempting to establish a household outside of farming, initial means were slight, and a woman’s savings from service were necessary to finance the marriage and the founding of a home. As an acceptable sum to support matrimony took time to accumulate, Ravensberg Heuerlinge therefore took older brides than their farming counterparts, for whom such savings were frequently unnecessary. As bridal age is the determining factor in fertility, it was therefore the farming households, with their younger wives, that produced the highest fertility rates in the region, not the Heuerling households, which were constrained by their initial lack of means. In the Ravensberg parish of Spenge, substantial nineteenth century Bauern maintained households of around 6.6 individuals, smaller Bauern 5.3. Among the groups reliant on proto-industry, the smaller cottagers and Heuerling labourers, household size was just 4.3 and 3.6 respectively.

In the Osnabrück region, landlords were less inclined to section off their plots purely to house proto-industry, and kept their Heuerling tenants tied to agricultural duties until a much later date. In this region, statistically the heaviest

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64 Ogilvie, *State Corporatism* pp. 262-3.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
migratory section of the North West, a less abundant housing stock for Heuerlinge than in neighbouring Ravensberg meant that both men and women married later than local Bauern. Again, localised fertility statistics demonstrate that wealth, not the intention to make future profits from children, determined family size. In the Osnabrück parish of Belm, Jürgen Schlumbohm found that in 1651, 1772 and 1858, the households of small peasants and Bauern were considerably larger than those of cottagers and the landless.67 Throughout the period in which the 'ratchet effect' should have taken place, those dependent on proto-industry were producing the smallest households, not the largest.

The oversubscription of labour in the North West had little to do with proto-industry or its theoretical influences upon family labour. Despite lower reproductive rates than their farming counterparts, the Anerbrecht system of impartible inheritance produced a natural disproportion of the landless and an exponential rise in their number. All but one individual born into a farming household contributed to the wage dependent group, as did every individual born among the wage dependent. This naturally kept the farm-owning class relatively static in size, whilst constantly increasing the number of those who had to make their living elsewhere. Without any significant incidence of warfare or disease to disrupt this process, the proportion of Heuerlinge in the rural population of the North West rose drastically. Whereas just after the Thirty Years War less than 35% of households in the parish of Belm were landless, at the beginning of the nineteenth century the figured had almost doubled, to 68%.68 Away from the proto-industrial heartlands of the North West, and toward the North Sea coast, the pattern is the same. In the community of Hastedt, near Bremen, the number of Bauern remained unchanged from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, oscillating between 11 and 12, but the number of Heuerlinge rose dramatically; from 11 in 1717, to 43 in 1748, 107 in 1803, and 184 by 1823.69

Where it was practised, cottage industry in the North West was a consequence of population growth, it did not cause it. The increased intensity with which it was practiced coincided with the worsening position of the Heuerlinge

67 Ibid.
68 Marschalk, ‘Bevölkerung und Sozialstruktur’ p. 16.
group, but did not expedite that worsening. Only in Ravensberg might proto-industry be reasonably judged to have caused population density, but that was not down to the birthing practices of producers themselves. It was the decision of landlords to section their plots entirely for the purpose of manufacturing cottages during the 1770s that caused the density of population; the availability of housing swelled the region's population by one third through immigration at the end of the eighteenth century.\(^{70}\)

It is not possible to maintain that proto-industry caused a structural overpopulation of the wage dependent throughout the German North West. In most instances, Ravensberg apart, the incumbent system of land distribution ensured the saturation of labouring classes, whose proliferation exerted downward pressure on their labour value, and encouraged the search for alternative incomes. In the South West too, the explanation for heavily increasing population lies within local practices and circumstance, rather than deterministic economic theory.

During the eighteenth century, social endogamy among marriage partners became an increasingly common feature of the *Realteilung* South, as landed families looked to protect their assets. The mechanistic view of partible inheritance that sees land as divided and sub-divided into miniscule oblivion is quite misplaced. Rather, plots were increasingly managed shrewdly and strategically. Whereas in the early eighteenth century ‘vertical’ marriage between partners at any point on the social scale was common, as the century progressed, ‘horizontal’ marriage between partners of the same social standing began to increase.\(^{71}\) The most prominent members of the village, the *Bürgermeister* and *Schultheiß*, usually pioneered this practice in order to protect their wealth, but it was quickly adopted by larger *Bauern* and even their smaller counterparts.

Marriage among members of the same social and economic standing helped to protect household resource level, essentially by entering into a large familial ‘market’ for land; marrying someone with an equally substantial inheritance, who was connected to a good family with equally substantial plots, brought manifold benefits. Young couples in such a situation not only received a healthy plot on which to raise an income when they first wed, but had a good credit rating in the

\(^{70}\) Ogilvie, ‘Proto-industrialisation in Germany’ p. 127.

\(^{71}\) This concept and strategy is explored in detail by David Warren Sabeau in *Kinship in Neckarhausen, 1700-1870* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.
local community, tilled large family estates that added to their income, and were part of the generally larger agricultural holdings that might soak up extra scraps of land from indebted villagers, adding to future inheritances. By the time their full inheritance came, with the death of both parents, their good connections ensured that through purchase, mortgage and accumulated legacies, an estate was achieved of near comparable size to that which their parents had worked. On occasion families amassed even more than their elders.

Through this defensive strategy, the creation of large, well connected kinship groups eventually led to a common practice of inter-familial marriage. Second cousins married so often that the Duke of Württemberg implemented a fee for the right to marry a cousin - a savvy form of tax on the intense management of village resources.\(^\text{72}\) In the long run the practice failed to completely arrest the development of smaller and smaller holdings; as a finite resource, land ownership inevitably decreased to well below the farm sizes of Anerbrecht regions, but the rate of decrease was invariably slowed and productively structured by the strategy of kinship networking. The practice ensured that the Bauern of South Western communities, particularly those of the largest and best-connected families, remained at the top of the social and economic order, able to drive populations forward through the retention of resources and maintenance of healthy fertility rates. As we shall see, in emigration-effected Southern communities, structural difficulty brought even these large family groups into developing migrations; even complex strategies of resource protection would eventually fail where there were insufficient resources to protect. The point here however, is that whether South German or North, growing populations in the eighteenth and nineteenth century were defined by local systems, and were not related in any way to the demographic mechanisms noted of eighteenth century Flanders and its economy.

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Ultimately, proto-industrial explanations are far too narrow and inaccurate to be placed at the centre of the pivotal phase in German-American migration. The neatness with which proto-industrial theory – without demographic testing –

\(^{72}\) Sabean, *Property, Production & Family in Neckarhausen* p. 49.
promises to account for population rise and industrial collapse may have led to the general acceptance of its role in the emigration, but as with any application of metanarrative, the devil of the detail provides a stark qualification of its true role. Home textile manufacture did not contribute to the population increase of the German South or North West, and as such played no role in inducing structural crisis in either region. The central role of textile work in the Heuerling economy of the North West meant that industrial collapse post 1815 must be considered a significant part of the rural misery of that region, but proto-industry is certainly not ‘the predominant factor that must be super-imposed over inheritance structures to understand patterns of [German] emigration.’

In the South West, in both migratory and non-migratory communities alike, textile work was on the increase by the turn of the eighteenth century; with rising populations and prohibitive guild structures came a need to earn extra money wherever possible. The elastic nature of weaving guilds and the unprotected task of spinning afforded such work a general increase, but it was not sufficient to induce migration once markets collapsed. Even in the South Western communities that did send significant numbers of migrants from the early 1830s, weavers were no more common among them than any other individual, suggesting that here, not only was the linen trade unconnected to population level, its collapse did not have a particularly pronounced effect on emigration flows. Moreover, the proto-industrial model was originally proposed and explored in order to explain a nineteenth century North West German emigration that had no prior precedent, and as such fails to take account of prior South West German emigration to America, and the obvious role it could play in renewed nineteenth century movements. Since textiles, either in populatory terms, or through market collapse, played no major causative role in emigration from the South, an investigation of structural cause for that region must explore more promising avenues; avenues that include the agricultural economy, around which so much resource intensification focused, and existing migratory precedents, which played a clear role in sculpting community habit.

For the North West, whilst the collapse of the linen industry remains a more significant consideration than for the South, even here, the chronology of events

warns against accepting even this collapse as a central, mono-causal explanation. It must be remembered that depression in the textile trade began in the years of the Continental Blockade, and that markets, both local and international, had been subject to a constant British onslaught since 1815. A profusion of producers also depressed the value of production throughout much of the same period. Yet emigration from the North West did not begin until the early 1830s. Moreover, the Osnabrück region, whilst heavily proto-industrial, was less so than neighbouring Ravensberg, and produced a far greater intensity of emigration. Other precipitating triggers must be considered. In order to explain the decisive phase of the German-American movement, a more nuanced approach is required.
Local Dynamics –

Replacing one mono-causal explanation for German-American emigration-inheritance structures - with another, the consequences of proto-industry and its collapse, brings us no closer to understanding the defining phase of the movement. Mono-causal explanations are not particularly useful even at a regional level. Land-splitting in the South did not drive every community to emigration early in the nineteenth century, and there was no populatory ratchet effect in the heavily proto-industrial North, which modifies somewhat the impact that industry had on local subsistence pressures. The implication is that more complex factors, specific to the local level, harbour the greatest potential for explaining the emigration. This need not relegate emigration study to local histories with no hope of attaining a bigger picture, but necessarily implies studying locally specific movements, and making subsequent, rather than prior conclusions about any shared features among them.

This chapter will focus primarily on the German South West, where neither land splitting nor proto-industrial theories can consistently account for the heavy movement that got underway around 1830. By working to a finite level of community focus, it will offer more precise conclusions on the structural causes behind this pivotal phase of the movement. The discussion will then conclude by looking beyond proto-industry in the North West. For this region, if one looks beyond that factor and incorporates other locally and regionally specific considerations, reasons for the onset of its American-emigration are quite readily intelligible. Conclusions drawn from the separate analysis of these two regions reveal the fundamental characteristics of the German-American movement, unlocking the development of the migration and allowing the consequences of the early and heavy exodus of the 1830s and 1840s to be explored.

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The difficulty in explaining the renewed emigration from the South West during the nineteenth century lies in the fact that despite a regionally established Atlantic migratory practice, a shared Realteilung tradition, and shared political boundaries and structures, some communities began to lose hundreds of people from 1830, whilst others remained unaffected until the subsistence crisis of 1846. As the difference between these communities was not their reliance on linen, answers must be sought elsewhere. For some communities, obvious factors account for variation in the emigration experience. The presence of heavy industry was one.

The village of Itzelberg on the Swabian Alb had practised land splitting for generations, was in an agriculturally poor position, and yet had virtually no emigration. Located in Oberamt Ostalbkreis, where rural metal working was widespread, as early as the eighteenth century much of the village was employed in metal work of some description, either at the hammer mill in Itzelberg itself, or in the finishing factory just north of the village, in the town of Oberkochen. By the first half of the nineteenth century, employment in trade and industry totally dominated the village. The community expanded significantly, displaying the rare characteristic of an increase in gross fertility between the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and a decrease in child mortality, displaying a phenomenal degree of economic health and capacity for the era. There were no recorded cases of emigration until 1868. Itzelberg was a village able to expand and support its population throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century because of the absorbent presence of industry. Yet such instances in contemporary Württemberg were exceptionally rare.

The Ostalbkreis district was an island of industry in a sea of agriculture, and its industry was present through the fortunate endowment of local iron ore. It is unsurprising that a village in such an industrial position should be immune to

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2 Of 110 marriages in the village between 1801 and 1848, only six men gave Bauer as their occupation. Of those, two combined farming with another job; 1 as a labourer, 1 as a soldier. LKA KB nr.1311 bd.28.
3 In collecting the birth, marriage, occupation and death data of 13 Württemberg communities for this study, between 1750 and 1850 Itzelberg was the only community to show an increase in fertility and coterminous decline in child mortality, a phenomenon not generally seen in Germany until industrial take-off; all other communities reflected declining material circumstances and showed either a drop in fertility, or an increase in child mortality if high birth-rates were maintained. Ibid.
4 Ibid.
emigration, as the population could expand into gainful employment, but it is also unrepresentative of much of the rest of the region. For much of the South West, if a fortunate quirk of position did not afford industry, it failed to present itself; the conservative restraints on industrial development and the wage economy that existed in the eighteenth century had persisted into the nineteenth, fatefuly undermining industrial innovation or development where it was not already well established. As a result, much of the region remained overwhelmingly agrarian through the first half of the nineteenth century. Restraints on development will be discussed in detail later. The key theme here is that industry was a clear foil to migration, but villages like Itzelberg were so rare that they cannot provide any consistent explanation for the differences between early emigration communities and follower communities.

Another preliminary point to address and then discount is local politics, in the dynastical sense. In the 1815 peace settlements that followed the Napoleonic era, Baden and Württemberg were allowed to keep huge swathes of land that Napoleonic administration had annexed to their territory. The annexation followed three basic lines: the folding of independent fiefdoms in the lowland regions into the larger territories which surrounded them; the addition of formerly free imperial cities and ecclesiastical territories; and finally the expansion of highland territory in both states; Württemberg on the Swabian Alb, Baden in the mountainous regions of the Breisgau, both largely at the expense of Austrian territory. For the purposes of emigration study, it is worth noting that neither the former imperial cities nor the highland territories made any great contribution to the early emigrations of the South West.

The former, being urban, were never likely to, and the latter were culturally, economically and religiously different to the lowlands. The Austrian territories had previously practiced an Anerbrecht system of undivided inheritances, and other than the most southerly regions sloping to Lake Constance, existed around topographical extremes. Their already sparse populations thus had a great amount of land to divide when they adopted the Realteilung tradition after the war. They failed to join the emigration until it matured to mass dimensions around the mid-nineteenth century, and had little to do with the building of the movement. In the lowland regions however, former dynastical allegiance brought less of a clear
break in migratory developments. Lowland fiefdoms that had traditionally been independent followed the same Realteilung system as their larger neighbours, and were inextricably bound to them in economic and social interaction; in terms of emigration, they could be either a path building migratory community or a path follower. Thus in the lowlands of the South West, former political position mattered little to subsequent migratory experience. Two of the case study communities in this chapter in fact fell either side of the line; Massenbach, formerly an independent fiefdom, annexed first to Baden and then to Württemberg in 1806, contributed to the emigration early and often, whilst the neighbouring village of Neipperg, another independent entity which ended up in Württemberg after 1806, had virtually no involvement in the emigration until the late 1840s.5

In the lowland regions of the simplified South Western map of 1815, the search for early migratory cause does not therefore end with a dynastical answer. What remains is something of a culturally defined, rather homogenous zone, a lowland farming region that spread through the river valleys of Baden, Württemberg, the Palatinate and Hesse, within which many communities built the substantial American migratory chains of the first half of the nineteenth century, whilst their neighbours looked on. As obvious disparities between migratory and non-migratory communities are not forthcoming, more subtle differences among their shared features form the next logical line enquiry. The following analysis breaks down the obvious common denominator that dictated village life – agriculture – and examines variations in the basic primary economy of rural communities that could have a decisive impact on material wealth, and ultimately, emigration.

Comparative investigation will focus on the same sample communities of lowland Württemberg discussed in the previous chapter. This includes the early migratory villages of Ölbronn, Massenbach and Diefenbach, and the only belatedly migratory Neipperg. Further communities are also included; Lomersheim, which like the first three was a path-building migratory community, and Pfaffenhofen, which like Neipperg was a path follower. David Sabeau’s closely analysed village of Neckarhausen, around 40km south east of these villages, but part of the same

5 Neipperg was also first annexed to Baden, then in short order switched to Württemberg. Beschreibung des Oberamts Brackenheim p.313, p.344.
lowland agricultural economy, also serves as a useful inclusion of a path-following community. (Map 3) The structure of each village followed a generally shared basic blueprint for the rural communities across the region. Each was predominantly agricultural, was supported by the traditional handicrafts and trades, practiced partible inheritance, and fell within the area that had been previously affected by Atlantic migration. As such they were representative of the heavily affected southern provinces, from the southern Rhine plain, to North Baden, Central Württemberg, the Palatinate and lower Hesse.

Map 3:
South West Case Study Communities
Two among the sample villages, Neipperg and Pfaffenhofen, were characterised by rapid growth prior to 1846. Between 1813 and 1846 their populations grew by 42% and 25% respectively, with emigration in that period confined to a butcher's son and a potter's son in Pfaffenhofen, and two young brothers, an indebted labourer and a wealthy cooper in Neipperg. Such emigration might reasonably be classed as speculative, rather than a structurally induced chain phenomenon. Rather than emigration, population growth and retention was the dominant demographic characteristic of these communities. Conversely, after short periods of growth in the very early nineteenth century, the villages of Massenbach, Ölbronn, Lomersheim and Diefenbach were all unable to retain their populations as the nineteenth century progressed. In each of these villages, American emigration after 1830 either stalled growth or sent previous gains into reverse. In Diefenbach this began as early as the mid-1830s, in Ölbronn reverses began in the early 1840s, and in Massenbach and Lomersheim had begun by the mid-1840s.

The growing, non-migratory communities were both characterised by diverse and profitable agriculture. In existing literature, the wine grower is often cited as a key figure in the early emigrations of the South West. In fact, wine growers, although they lived a precarious existence between failed and bumper crops, were among the least likely individuals to emigrate. Among the near 4,500 South Western households for which occupational and migratory records were taken for this study, there were only 5 cases of winegrowers or their children emigrating in the first half of the nineteenth century. Before the subsistence crisis, viticulture helped to anchor population. In the village of Neipperg, an abundant and healthy viticulture supported around 30% of all new households that were established in the first half of the nineteenth century. As a cash crop grapes could be raised in an intense form of agriculture on a relatively small scale. This meant that more households could be successfully established and sustained on small plots of land than in the traditional agricultural sector, which required more substantial acreage. The concentration of village occupation in the winegrowing

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7 Beschreibung des Oberamts Brackenheim pp. 54-55, Beschreibung des Oberamts Maulbronn p. 47.
8 30 of 107 new households formed between 1801 and 1848. LKA KB nr.1026/I bd.7.
sector meant that traditional farming was conducted by relatively few Bauern, being the basis on which just 20% of new households were established over the same half century period.\footnote{Ibid.} As viticulture could develop on compact plots, the fewer traditional Bauern held arable and pastoral plots of a significant size. While viticulture provided a form of intense land use that allowed the village to grow, the larger farms of the Bauern were also a benefit to the wider community and economy.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the average Bauer plot in Neipperg was inventoried at a size of nearly 6 hectares.\footnote{SB 9133 I/T NA793-797, NA800.} This was well above the 2.5 hectare holding reckoned to be enough to keep a Württemberg Bauer occupied in full time agriculture.\footnote{SB 9133 I/T NA810-814.} Consequently, unlike many traditional Bauer in Realteilung regions, the Neipperg farmers were less anxious to maintain their plot size, usually done by buying land from indebted villagers or liquidated estates. They were in fact able to take advantage of their substantial plots and the real estate market to release and sell some of their property, which supported the further establishment of household units in the village; by the 1840s, the average Bauer plot had shrunk to 4.6 hectares, still comfortably enough to support a household, but a drop in size of more than 20%.\footnote{SB 9133 I/T NA793-814. 15 instances of ownership (17 animals) in 31 farming inventories.} As we will see, the less buoyant Bauern of other villages were far less inclined to allow their more meagre plots to decrease in such a manner.

Large landholding also provided employment; 1 in every 2 Neipperg Bauern inventoried in the first half of the nineteenth century owned a draught animal, a testament to the size of their landholding.\footnote{LKA-FR nr.1026/I bd.7.} Farms which were large enough to require animal labour also had a requirement for human labour, which meant employment for the local landless and land-poor. Between 1826 and 1848, a full 10% of new households in Neipperg were established on labouring as the primary source of income.\footnote{LKA-FR nr.1026/I bd.7.} Labouring employment was also provided by the Graf (Count)
of Neipperg, who owned half the land in the village, including the best part of the forest and the best vineyards.\textsuperscript{15}

Not only were the \textit{Bauern} large landholders, able to accommodate labourers, they evidently practised their own cash rich form of agriculture, further enhancing their wealth. A closer look at the draught animals they owned shows that more than 50\% were bull or steer, rather than ox or horse, suggesting that these \textit{Bauern} doubled up their draught stock with beef cattle farming.\textsuperscript{16} A stratum of cash rich large landholders also provided a buoyant market for the goods and services of the village artisans and tradesmen. The entire community existed on an economic structure that allowed it to accommodate and retain significant growth.

The second non-migratory village of Pfaffenhofen enjoyed a similarly diverse and profitable agriculture. The village, falling in the broad Zaber valley along with Neipperg, occupied a sheltered position that protected its vines from hail – a frequent enemy of Württemberg vineyards, damaging the harvest 20 times between 1730 and 1830 - and it also enjoyed particularly fertile soil.\textsuperscript{17} Viticulture was highly prevalent in the village, though not as dominant as in Neipperg. Here, rather than a profusion of winegrowers and a few large farms, there was a different balance, with around 18\% of households devoted to viticulture, and 30\% to agriculture during the first half of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{18} Whilst vineyards allowed for intensified land use and supported growth, a lower proportion of land use for wine than in Neipperg had less of a cushioning effect on the farm sizes of traditional \textit{Bauern}. This was likely balanced by need; smaller farms in Pfaffenhofen were still able to maintain good profitability without the need for large acreage, as the fertile soil meant they could produce a broad mix of staples at particularly good yields.

Figure 3 gives the aggregate yields and types of staple arable produced by the 2 non-migratory villages, and the 4 villages which were heavily affected by migration. The annual yield of 1 Morgen of land (around $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre) was

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{15} Irmtraud Farrenkopf, \textit{Neipperg die Geschichte eines Dorf und seiner Einwohner} Brackenheim, Stadtverwaltung, 1989. p. 17.
  \item \textsuperscript{16} SB 9133 I/T NA793-814 show 9 Bull and steer, 4 horses, 4 Oxen. Neipperg was too far from any significant urban centre for these cattle to have been part of an extensive dairy industry.
  \item \textsuperscript{18} LKA KB nr.1034/II bd.13.
\end{itemize}
measured in *Scheffel*. The final column gives the total arable yield if 1 Morgen of land were laid down for each staple crop in these villages:

![Table](https://example.com/table.jpg)

Fig. 3:
Agricultural Yields of Case Study Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Spelt</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Barley</th>
<th>Rye</th>
<th>Tot. Scheffel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pfaffenhofen</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massenbach</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neipperg</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ölbronn</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diefenbach</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lomersheim</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data: Beschreibung des Oberamts Maulbronn, pp. 84-5, Beschreibung des Oberamts Brackenheim, pp. 100-101.

The emigration affected villages of Ölbronn, Diefenbach and Lomersheim are placed lowest in the table of total yield, at the opposite end to Pfaffenhofen. The other village affected by early emigration, Massenbach, is placed higher, but like the above three did not support a common wheat crop. Unlike its neighbours in *Oberamt* Brackenheim, Neipperg and Pfaffenhofen, Massenbach also could not support any viticulture. There was not a single specialist vintner in the village; any wine that was produced came from hobby production of the local *Bauern*, and was of a poor quality. It was consumed locally and never sold outside of the community. Ölbronn, Diefenbach and Lomersheim fared little better in this respect, supporting only minimal winegrowing. In each village winegrowing was the primary occupation for just 2.1%, 3.4% and 3.6% of households established in the first half of the nineteenth century respectively. Each of these villages occupied exposed positions unfavourable to the crop. As a group, the emigration communities existed on an unfavourable mix of the least agricultural diversity, and

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19 Scheffel equating to ‘bushel’. This model is taken from Ogilvie, *State Corporatism and Proto-Industry* pp.283-285.
20 Beschreibung des Oberamts Brackenheim p. 311.
21 Between 1801 and 1848, 6 of 285 families in Ölbronn gave ‘winegrower’ as their stated source of income, in Lomersheim 8 of 233, in Diefenbach 9 of 248. LKA KB nr.1120 bd.12, LKA KB nr.1124 bd.17/18, LKA KB nr.1151 bd.14/15.
the lowest agricultural yields. Such narrowly defined primary economies were problematic.

As the topography of these communities was unfavourable to viticulture, dependency on traditional agriculture was high. The higher number of traditional Bauern, who required more acreage to support a household, put more strain on available land. The inevitable result of more farmers was a smaller average farm size than in communities cushioned by wine growing. In terms of acreage, the 4-plus hectare farms seen in Neipperg in the 1840s had not been seen in a village like Ölbronn since the 1780s. The average farm inventoried in Neipperg in the 1840s was worth the substantial sum of 4,892 Gulden; in emigration affected Massenbach, farms in the same time period were worth just 3,609 Gulden, and in Ölbronn, even less, just 1,534. More Bauern, depending on small farms only capable of producing a narrow range of crops at modest yields, had a negative overall impact on the community.

Firstly, Bauern in villages only able to produce limited arable worked tirelessly to maintain the size of their holdings, given their marginal profitability. Through various strategies, discussed above in chapter 2, Bauern combatted the Realteilung tradition in order to sustain as large a holding as possible. The intense land markets of these communities made it difficult for wage dependent individuals to hold and secure plots that could subsidize their incomes. Whereas in Neipperg the land rich Bauer were part of a more flexible property market, in a village like Massenbach, Bauern who had to exist on an already insufficient 2.1 hectares at the turn of the nineteenth century lived frugally and worked stringently to still maintain an average of 1.9 hectares forty years later.

Whilst smaller farms heightened the intensity of the land market, they also provided less employment to the community. In the first half of the nineteenth century, whereas 1 in 2 Bauern in the Neipperg inventories shows ownership of a draught animal, in Ölbronn and Massenbach the frequency was just 1 in 4. In poorer arable communities, farms required less ancillary labour, providing less...
work to the landless and land poor, meaning fewer homes could be established on the basis of labouring; in Ölbronn and Massenbach between 1826 and 1848 just 3.9% and 4.4% of new households respectively were able to do so.\textsuperscript{26} In both Lomersheim and Diefenbach over the same time frame, the figure was just 3.4%\textsuperscript{27}.

Less substantial Bauern not only offered less employment but also represented lower purchasing power at the local level. Not only did much of the money spent by Bauern go on land in order to maintain their insufficient holdings, thus also making it harder for the Handwerker to obtain much needed subsidiary plots themselves, subsistence rather than profit-level farming reduced purchasing power for the goods and services that local artisans and tradesmen offered. As the contemporary saying suggested, Hat der Bauer Geld, hat’s die ganze Welt – if the peasant has money, everyone has money.\textsuperscript{28} And if he did not, neither did anyone else. The already guild-restricted earning potential of the Handwerker took another hit from poor demand. There was a clear contrast in wealth among the Handwerker of an agriculturally rich community like Neipperg, and the same individual in communities like Ölbronn and Massenbach. In the buoyant economy of Neipperg, the average wealth of a Handwerker in the first half of the nineteenth century was inventoried at 2,112 Gulden.\textsuperscript{29} In Ölbronn over the same period, the figure was nearly 300 Gulden less, at 1,832, and in Massenbach, it was just 1,613.\textsuperscript{30} The poorer material condition of the Handwerker in these villages is also clearly reflected in levels of home ownership. In a sample of the first half of the nineteenth century, only 52% of Handwerker inventoried in Ölbronn owned their own home; in Massenbach, the number was even lower, at 40%; in Neipperg, home ownership among the Handwerker stood at over 80%.\textsuperscript{31}

Entire communities therefore suffered from an overstretched and underproductive primary sector. In each of the communities characterised by just such a sector, emigration began to take effect from around 1830. Available data from Lomersheim, Massenbach and Ölbronn between 1830 and 1845 shows the

\textsuperscript{26} LKA KB nr.1120 bd.12, LKA KB nr.1022/I bd.13.
\textsuperscript{27} LKA KB nr.1124 bd.17-18, LKA KBnr.1151 bd.14-15.
\textsuperscript{29} Comparative sample collated from decade intervals; 1800s, 1820s, 1840s, SB 9133 I/T NA793-797, NA800, NA798, 798b, 799, 805-807, NA810-814.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid, SB 9133 I/T NA793-797, NA800, NA798, 798b, 799, 805-807, NA810-814.
proportional nature with which emigration came to affect each village. In Lomersheim between 1826 and 1848, Bauern headed 39.7% of newly established households, tradesmen headed up 42.2%; of those leaving the village between 1830 and 1845, 50% were Bauern, 50% tradesmen. In Massenbach over the same periods, 44.5% of new households were Bauern, 52.1% of emigrants Bauern; 29.9% of households were trades, 21.7% of emigration came from trades. In Ölbronn, the correlation was extremely close; 31.5% of new households in the period were Bauern, 32.4% of emigrants Bauern; 46.4% of new households were trade, 45.9% of emigration from came from trades. The closeness of correlation between a village’s occupation structure and its emigration depended simply on the number of cases of emigration; the more cases, the closer the emigration was to a perfect slice of community life. The correlation between occupation and emigration was broadest in Lomersheim, with 8 cases of emigration, closer in Massenbach with 23 total cases, and almost identical in Ölbronn, with 42 total cases. In both Ölbronn and Massenbach, the remaining migrant percentage is drawn largely from single young men and women with no stated occupation, as well as the smallest occupational groups, such as labourers, who were also represented proportionally. The emigration in these villages, whether moderate or heavy, was a community-wide phenomenon, not the emigration of one marginalised economic group.

The differing number of cases from each village depended on internal migratory dynamics. In Ölbronn, the high number was generated by the fact that the village’s largest family, the Böhringers’, who were several hundred in number, became drawn into the emigration, thereafter creating a substantial migration chain. Such substantial family networks thickened the entire community chain of emigration thanks to frequent use and the overall volume of information passing between the village and its former members settled in the New World. However,

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33 LKA KB nr.1022/II bd.13 Also Angebauer ‘Auswanderer im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert’ p. 530.  
34 Oertel, Ortsippenbuch Ölbronn, LKA KB nr.1120 bd.12.  
35 21.7% of Massenbach’s emigrants, and 16.2% of Ölbronn’s, were single young men and women. In Massenbach 4.4% of households were labourers, as were 4.4% of emigrants. In Ölbronn 3.9% of households were labourers, 2.7% of emigrants labourers, and 1.5% households were wine growers; 2.7% of emigrants winegrowers. Ibid, also LKA KB nr.1022/II bd.13 Also Angebauer, ‘Auswanderer im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert’ p. 530.
whilst this self-generative effect was a sculpting internal dynamic, the impetus of these communities to emigrate to begin with lay in the shared feature of inelastic local resource.

The case of the Böhringers’ shows that complex community network and kinship patterns could have a significant effect on the size and scope of local emigrations, essentially by catalysing the self-generative effect; it also shows however, that local networks only become significant when the resources they were attempting to protect and re-allocate were already insufficient. Neipperg had its own large and influential families, principally the Rucker and Lang families, and when the precipitating crisis of crop failure hit the village, these families in turn helped to shape the local emigration. Until that point however, these local kinship groups existed as a benign local feature. They did not, for example, push out the local poor by monopolising the best resources. The total economic capacity of a given community, rather than internal community networks, consistently determined the onset of emigration, even if the latter had the potential to eventually contribute to its weight.

Structural approaches based on the flexibility of resources like agriculture remain open to criticism of denying agency and labelling migrants as merely the passive masses of ‘surplus population’. An agency based approach that revolves around the self-generative effect of migration would argue that Öbron, Massenbach, Diefenbach and Lomersheim all had strong prior histories of emigration – each had sent emigrants to Pennsylvania, some as recently as 1817 - which were not shared by Pfaffenhofen or Neipperg. As such the emigration from the former could simply be considered part of the dialogue of village life, with inhabitants moving along and within paths formed by others in their group. However, this would conveniently overlook the obvious link between rich resources and lack of prior emigration in the latter villages, and puts too singular a weight on the continuing importance of networks as a motivating dynamic. When and how heavily networks were engaged with depended very much on structural

36 On the relationship between local community networks and emigration, see Fertig ‘Göbrichen Revisited’.
37 See Fertig, ‘Göbrichen Revisited’ pp. 12-13, also Fertig ‘Balancing networking and the causes of emigration’ pp. 419-422.
conditions, and emigration was not continually embarked on merely through availability or habit. The village of Neckarhausen, another lowland Württemberg community, clearly demonstrates that even where migratory dialogue was already in place, it was not a sufficient cause in itself for emigration; precipitating factors had to encourage individuals and groups to engage with that dialogue.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, Neckarhausen had a very similar occupation structure to Ölbronn, Massenbach, Lomersheim and Diefenbach. Like all four of these villages, its agriculture was relatively basic, producing a poor quality wine that was abandoned after 1817.\(^{39}\) Like each of them, it had been involved in Pennsylvanian emigration.\(^{40}\) However unlike them, the community engagement with American emigration thereafter ceased for nearly a century, not resurfacing again until the subsistence crisis of 1846. Following the logic of a network based, self-generative approach to migration, Neckarhausen should have been part of the early growth phase of mass migration. Yet it fell into the category of ‘follower’ village, only using the new transport networks and information lines set out by others when crisis engulfed the community. Again, it is the adaptability of local agriculture that accounts for this community’s timeline of emigration.

A reorientation of agriculture began in Neckarhausen in the late eighteenth century, when the village began to move its animals to stall feeding as a method of intensification. By taking the animals off permanent pasture, a rotation of peas, vetch, root vegetables and brassicas could be sown into their grazing plots.\(^ {41}\) This was a common strategy of intensification in the region, but Neckarhausen was greatly aided in its transition to stall feeding through reclamation of land from the banks of the Neckar, which flowed through the village. At the end of the eighteenth century the draining, clearing of gravel, and planting up of formerly unusable common land on the flood plain of the Neckar began to increase the available area for raising animal fodder. One such plot, the aptly named Insel (island) pasture, ended up at 7 hectares, whilst dozens of others were given the same treatment.\(^ {42}\) The process came to a head in the 1830s when the course of the river was

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\(^{39}\) LKA KB nr.430 bd.12; Sabean, *Property, Production & Family in Neckarhausen* p. 43.

\(^{40}\) LKA KB nr.430 bd.12; LKA KB nr.431 bd.13,14.

\(^{41}\) Sabean, *Property, Production & Family in Neckarhausen* p. 53.

\(^{42}\) Ibid, pp. 55-56.
straightened.43 Two of the reclaimed bank lands ended up producing the richest hay crops in the village.44

By 1830, the switch to stall feeding had been completed, and the village had become home to substantial stocks of beef cattle. Not only did the formerly permanent pasture ground now yield annual crops for the villagers, but some of the reclaimed land on the river bank was also divided up into small vegetable strips of an acre or so, and given to the land-poor and landless, in return for a small entry fee, and no annual rent.45 As the population of the village grew, both human and animal, the local construction industry also underwent a boom, providing the new housing, barns and cattle cribs the community needed.46 With the resources available, the community was able to alter and expand its economy, allowing for strong growth and retention of population.

Ölbronn and the other communities experiencing emigration had no river to straighten, no viable alternatives to their traditional agricultural structures, and no chance of those traditional structures providing sufficient means to maintain a growing population. As a result, these communities maintained a constant dialogue with emigration. The increased emigration from the South West around 1830 therefore depended on both existing migratory dialogue and the adaptability of localised agricultural resource bases. Structures and networks were inseparably linked. The frequency with which inelasticity in the primary economy could interact with the well-established practice of Atlantic migration ensured the weight of renewed Southern movements. Prior American emigration had established a wide foot print because inflexible and exclusory socio-political structures had encouraged the departure of groups common to every village – the labourers and tradesmen – who had continued to leave right into the earliest decades of the nineteenth century. By 1830 inelasticity in the basic parameters of the agricultural economy caused entire communities to exploit the traditions and networks established by those earlier migrants. The emigration that began in this region in 1830 was not new, but an evolution of an existing movement. From an

43 Ibid, p. 53.
44 Ibid, p. 57.
introductory phase which ended in 1817, it evolved into a growth phase, drawing from entire village populations.

The chronology of the movement followed a logical rhythm. In a manner highly reminiscent of the aftermath of 1709, the number of failed cases of emigration in 1816/17, and reports of chaos and difficulty in the Dutch ports, initially dampened intentions to migrate. The relief that the movement had provided to local economies and land markets also reduced the need. What emigration did take place in the 1820s was highly sporadic and once again fell to more well established individuals moving in a more speculative than necessary manner, and able to pay the significant passage costs of reaching the U.S. With time, the heightening pressure of limited and fixed resources soon began to give, however.

An interesting indicator of the rise of this new movement is the number of farm bankruptcies in Württemberg during the 1820s. With many Bauern heavily indebted by the Napoleonic wars, a series of heavy harvests in the mid-1820s worked to exacerbate their position. After initially allowing a recovery, constant surplus exerted downward pressure on prices, forcing a rise in insolvencies. In 1822 there were 1,608 such cases; in 1826 there were 2,283; then a peak was reached in 1828, with 2,660.\textsuperscript{47} It was at this point that emigration began to impact the most fragile Württemberg farming regions. It increased considerably between 1828 and 1830, at which point the number of farming insolvencies showed a coterminous decrease (see fig. 4.) -

Fig. 4:
Declared Farming Insolvencies/Declared Emigration, Württemberg 1826-1832.48

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Insolvencies</th>
<th>Emigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>2,283</td>
<td>1,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>2,563</td>
<td>1,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>2,660</td>
<td>1,361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>2,018</td>
<td>1,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>1,740</td>
<td>3,642</td>
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<td>1831</td>
<td>1,511</td>
<td>4,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>7,066</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


To take Mack Walker's phrase, for many of those who had something to lose, and were losing it, emigration to the New World clearly represented a better alternative than bankruptcy at home.49 This assertion has been highly criticised by the new school of migration history, largely thanks to the conservative characteristics it bestows on the migrants involved, and because the decision to migrate can in some degree be taken as forced upon the agents. But under the weight of closely read, localised quantitative data, it is very difficult to discard it out of hand. Later in the nineteenth century, when the size of the German movement began to excite the attention of the international community, a British commission in the German South West gave accurate description to the communities caught between high populations, low yields and insolvencies:

Better than anyone else, they [the peasant] know how many mouths a given amount of land can feed... It therefore frequently happens that, at the death of the head of the family, instead of dividing the land in naturâ, it is sold by auction, the youngest households departing with the proceeds of the sale to America.50

48 Represents only declared emigration. Hippel puts declared emigration between 1823 and 1832 at 22,997 individuals, but has tracked actual emigration over the same period as at least 27,129 individuals. Hippel, Auswanderung pp.138-139.
49 Walker, Germany and the Emigration p. 47.
The enormously high value of land in lowland Realteilung communities and the migratory networks they enjoyed ensured that the option of life in America was readily available, and the interaction between these factors began to steadily increase in the early 1830s.

In the mid-1830s emigration decreased slightly, but remained well above the average of the previous decade; in the early 1840s, it once again began to rise. At this point comment on the emigration began to substantially increase in the German lands themselves, with contemporaries acknowledging the problem in the countryside to be one of structural overpopulation. Whilst subsequent historical analysis has moved away from ideas of migrants as population surplus, it was precisely the terminology used by contemporaries to describe the developing phenomenon. In his 1842 article ‘The Land Question, Small Holdings and Emigration’ the economist Friedrich List discussed the Überfluß – overflow – of population from its agricultural container, and the need for his Württemberg homeland to industrialise in order to soak up a growing surplus of population.51 As we will later see, List’s ideas for industrialisation were far-fetched and unrealistic in the extreme, but even his more low-key, pragmatic suggestions were rather improbable. Despite his well-known despair of dwarf farming, only the son of a dwarf farming region could suggest the introduction of Peruvian alpacas to the Swabian Alb and Black Forest as the next step in agricultural intensification. These animals, List claimed, were more self-sufficient than sheep, and could be a cheap supplement to the tiny plots cultivated by winegrowers or those on agriculturally poor land.52 He reckoned that his Swabian homeland might be able to support 100,000 such animals.53

Unsurprisingly no such scheme went ahead, but neither did any other proactive measure in the inert and conservative states of the South West. To all


53 Ibid.
contemporaries, whether the inhabitants of rural communities, intellectual commentators or political figures, the problem of too many people with too little means was obvious. However, few saw the active encouragement of industrialisation as a suitable solution. Whilst politicians joined List in commenting on the dangers of overpopulation in the rural districts, they feared overpopulation in urban areas even more. For some in the rural villages, not struck with unrealistic or inert views on the situation, the practical solution of emigration was readily at hand. At the precise moment the idea of American migration began to return to South Western villages, it was also given a boost by another timely and enormously influential German publication promoting life in the New World.

Gottfried Duden’s 1829 Bericht über eine Reise nach dem westlichen Staaten Nord-Amerika’s und einen mehrjährigen Aufenthalt am Missouri in den Jahren 1824, ’25, ’26 und 1827 (‘Report on a journey to the Western states of North America and a stay of several years on the Missouri in 1824-7’) was an enthusiastic, highly favourable literary account of farming life in the American Midwest. Its influence was thought to be so great and its appraisal so one-sided that Duden himself felt called upon to publish in 1837 a ‘Self-accusation concerning his Travel Report, to warn against further rash emigration.’ Where such a strong latent propensity to American emigration and such strong personal information networks were already in place, a report such as Duden’s was enough to generate further public interest and discussion of the movement, and further encourage a return to an active dialogue with Atlantic migration.

That dialogue would not remain confined to communities like Ölbronn or Massenbach forever. In the late 1840s they would be joined by neighbours during

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54 Gottfried Duden, Bericht über eine Reise nach dem westlichen Staaten Nord-Amerika’s und einen mehrjährigen Aufenthalt am Missouri in den Jahren 1824, ’25, ’26 und 1827, in Bezug auf Auswanderung und Übervölkerung, oder: Das Leben in innern der Vereinigten Staaten und dessen Bedeutung für die häusliche und politische Lage der Europa Elberfeld, S. Lucas, 1829. A second edition including further additions was printed in short order in Bonn, 1834, with a shortened title ending at Übervölkerung. The work was taken to be such an important part of the history of Missouri that more than 150 years later in was translated by the State Historical Society. See James W.Goodrich, George H. Keller, eds., trans., Report on a Journey to the Western States of North America and a Stay of Several Years along the Missouri (during the years 1824, ’25, ’26, and 1827) Columbia, State Historical Society of Missouri, 1980. For a discussion dedicated to its impact, see the still informative William G. Bek, ‘Followers of Duden’ serialised in Missouri Historical Review, vol. 14, no. 1 (1919) through vol. 19, no.2 (1925).

55 Walker, Germany and the Emigration p.60.
a crisis that affected the entire region, and one that would prove to be particularly difficult for communities like Neipperg, whose economy was so reliant on their agricultural cash crops. But when these communities entered serious difficulty, it was the pathways established by their neighbours, by other villages in their districts and parishes, and by members of extended family, that made America the obvious response. The destinations which they sought out were far from coincidental, guided by local knowledge and others leaving from the long-affected emigration communities. Thanks to the long ties with Atlantic migration in the South West, and the considerable increase in their use during the early nineteenth century, the region was poised to generate an enormous migration after the crises of the 1840s. For regions without such a long precedent of emigration, it was not uncommon to see their nascent movements directed somewhat less organically, their early structural difficulties often commuted into regions of American settlement they had heard of from widely available literature and public discussion, and this proved to be the case for the earliest North West German migrants. For them, Duden’s book was even more influential than in the South West, clearly evidenced by the fact that when they first began to head for American soil, Missouri was the land that they overwhelmingly sought.

In the absence of existing networks of relatives and former villagers who had fanned out from Philadelphia to the American Midwest, Duden’s report was decisive in directing the Osnabrück and North West German emigration that began around 1830. However, whilst the report influenced the direction of this movement, it did not cause it. Duden’s Bericht was available to any German reader; the decision of the Heuerlinge of the North West to seek out the region discussed in its pages depended on locally specific factors. The fact that in this region, American emigration was largely characterised by one group, as had been the case in the South during the eighteenth century, immediately focuses attention on what could adversely affect these individuals, and what caused them to leave for America when they did. The textile support prop had been in decline for
decades by the time the *Heuerling* emigration began, so the role of other specific triggers must be considered.

For the landless and land poor of the North West, textiles were not their only support strut. In the decades following the Thirty Years’ War, the region had become as familiar with large scale migration as the South, but of a temporary, rather than permanent nature. A phenomenon of major importance to the North West was the North Sea System, a summer migration concentrating on Holland, which increased strongly after the war. Because the labour force of the North West was employed seasonally by landlords and on local farms – sowing in the spring and harvesting in autumn - opportunity for summer work in Holland was well-fitted to the rhythms of their labour. Each year, streams of migrants entered the Dutch fields to cut hay, dig peat for fuel, and fire bricks, replacing the native Dutch labour force that was being rapidly absorbed by the growth of commercial cities on the coast. As the number of landless began to increase within the North Western populations, and Dutch urbanisation gathered pace, so the volume of migration increased, with the number of migrants – *Hollandgänger* – reaching a high point in the second half of the eighteenth century.

At its peak, the migration drew from an area between the Ems and Weser Rivers that stretched 250 – 300km into the German interior from the North Sea coast, providing some 30,000 migrants annually. In areas of Oldenburg, Osnabrück, the Münsterland and adjacent parts of Hanover such as Diepholz, nearly every other adult male might leave their village over the summer months. The movement was characterised largely by young men; older labourers rarely continued with the migration, which involved a long trek and exhausting work, especially in certain tasks such as peat digging or working on irrigation ditches. Those who worked the arduous summer labour route did not travel every single year like clockwork, but went with need; even indebted farmers occasionally took the opportunity for extra money in the summer, but mostly, those who needed it

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58 Hochstadt, ‘Socio-Economic Determinants of Increasing Mobility’ p.145.
59 Rössler, *Hollandgänger* p. 82
were the increasingly oversubscribed and underemployed Heuerlinge, and the land poor cottagers.\textsuperscript{60}

Within the agricultural rhythms of spring sowing, summer migratory work and the autumn harvest, winter downtime could be used profitably to spin yarn. Dutch markets were important for this product, as were the weaving centres of the North West, such as Bielefeld, and increasingly the rural weavers of Tecklenburg and Ravensburg. These were the markets that ensured a good 80 Reichstaler a year in side income from yarn during the mid-eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{61} A third and final lifeline for the landless and land poor was the village commons. On this ground a cow could be kept, a little flax raised, and a little wood collected, in order to provide vital supplements to the small cottage plots that the Heuerling rented from their landlords. On this system of seasonal rhythms, various income streams and balanced support bases, the labour force of the North West supported itself as best it could, becoming more dependent on each as their number grew and normal agricultural work grew even more scarce.

The first prop to go was the commons. The \textit{Markenteilung}, or division of the commons, saw communal land divided up proportionally among local landowners, who passed the measure by simple majority in the community councils that they dominated. The process was part of the so-called \textit{Bauernbefreiung} – peasants ‘liberation’ – designed to commercialise agriculture, which was taking place throughout the German lands. Those who depended most on the communal plots had little choice in the process. In some of the North Western districts, it began especially early; it had begun in Ravensberg in 1770, as landlords looked to parcel and intensify land into manufacturing, rather than agricultural use; it began in Osnabrück in 1785; it had begun in Tecklenburg before 1800, and had taken place in most districts by the first decade of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{62} The loss of access to grazing ground and free wood and fuel was the difference for many between poverty and solvency, even before other systems began to give out.

Problems in the linen trade of course began with the Continental Blockade and the loss of export markets for finished cloth. Matters worsened in 1815 when

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{61} Schmitz, \textit{Leinengewerbe} p. 27.
\item \textsuperscript{62} Kamphoefner, \textit{The Westfalians} p. 36.
\end{itemize}
those markets failed to return and cheap British goods flooded the German market. Then in the summer of 1830, revolution and war in the Kingdom of the two Netherlands blocked the summer migration. It was precisely at this point that emigration from the North West began. Rather than difficulty in a single industry, it was the sequential collapse of the combined resource base of the Heuerlinge that instigated their movement.

Wherever it began, the movement quickly gathered pace. In the Osnabrück parish of Ankum, 8 single men emigrated in 1832; in 1834 they were followed by 73 people, 47 of whom belonged to 12 families; in 1836, 234 persons left the district for the New World. In 1834 when the local authorities began gathering information from the individuals leaving, the term Hollandgängerei appeared in a third of cases. In 1835 when a group of Heuerlinge were leaving another Osnabrück district, Fürstenau, they remarked first on the Markenteilung, and then on the Hollandgängerei. In fact, the Osnabrück district with highest intensity of emigration, Amt Bersenbrück, also had the highest number of Hollandgänger in the principality, sending nearly 3,000 according to an 1811 statistic. But this should not give this factor correlative precedence; the district of Minden also had especially intense emigration, but far less Dutch migration. Here, ancillary income was weighted in favour of spinning. The dependencies of different districts were weighted in different ways. The point is that the Heuerlinge as a group were not in the position to survive the decline of both the loss of the commons and the loss of migratory work, or the loss of the commons and the loss of textile work, to say nothing of those dependent on all three. Once every available prop had gone or entered decline, the Heuerlinge economy as a concept simply gave out.

The decision to turn specifically to America at that point was heavily influenced by the chronology of other local events. At the end of the Napoleonic era, the Hanseatic city state of Bremen had decided to try and foster Atlantic trade in order to revive its flagging fortunes. The city docks on the river Weser were silted up and unsuitable for ocean-going vessels, so the city senate purchased land

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64 Ibid, p. 30.
66 Kamphoefner, The Westfalians p. 35.
from the Kingdom of Hanover, 60km downstream at the mouth of the river, on which a dock was built purposely to serve American shipping. Between 1827 and 1830, work gangs of several hundred *Hollandgänger* at a time had been recruited to help build Bremerhaven, (lit. the 'Bremen harbour') the new port on the North Sea. In 1831, more than 3,500 individuals from the migratory *Hollandgänger* heartlands of Oldenburg, the Münsterland and Hanover used this newly completed port to gain passage to America. A neat convergence of events thus worked to lay the first contacts and networks between the North West and the New World.

Explanation for the onset of heavy German-American emigration around 1830 does not lie in one size-fits-all metanarrative or single broad observations, but in highly localised factors and timing. In the North West, it was not some populatory consequence of proto-industry, or merely the downfall of the rural textile trade that caused emigration, but an amalgam of factors that worked in conjunction and sequence to trigger and direct a new migration to America. In the South, heavy emigration was the result of evolution in a long established movement. It was not just about the institution of divisible inheritance, but what was divided, and how it could be used. Agricultural economies constrained by unvaried and limited production experienced an expansion of the potential migrant pool into all sectors of the community as material conditions worsened.

The key to understanding the subsequent action of American migration is a correct awareness of earlier periods; prior Atlantic emigration had not been the product purely of pietists and adventurers, but had been a much more popular phenomenon, involving individuals common to every rural community. A broadly established dialogue of Atlantic migration was therefore available to an increased number of potential migrants, resulting in a new weight of emigration.

An evolved and a new movement, produced by very different causes, coalesced to create a substantial American emigration from the German lands.

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Throughout the nineteenth century, this would be the defining characteristic of German-American emigration. It gained volume and mass dimension through a process of accumulation; a layering effect which further increased its weight when the collapse or re-orientation of other regional economies folded them into the migration. This process of accumulation however, was decisively influenced and accelerated by the initial developments and layering of the Western districts. Although the migrants of the South West and North West began to leave for locally different reasons, their uniform response had significant consequences for the further development of emigration. It was the discussion of their movements, and above all the infrastructure that was put in place to accommodate them, that made American emigration a feasible, logical and accessible alternative to economic struggle elsewhere in the German lands, whenever and wherever it appeared in the future.
If the emigration was a developmental phenomenon based on the layering and accumulation of different processes, some of the most vital early processes took place outside of the emigration regions themselves. The movement set in motion inevitable discussions and logistical reaction which were not in themselves causes of migration, but were pivotal elements in its evolution and progression. As a product of the initial stages of the emigration, and in turn a facilitator of its growth and expansion, the infrastructure that arose around the movement during the 1830s and 1840s forms a crucial part of understanding the phenomenon.

By the late 1840s, a considerable machinery of advertising, legislation, vastly expedited internal transportation and purpose-built emigrant shipping had arisen to accommodate the migrants of the North and South West. When the subsistence crisis of 1846 occurred, this apparatus allowed the crisis to translate easily into an Atlantic exodus. Villages in the South West which had previously been immune to emigration were served not only by a wealth of local knowledge about where to head and how to get there, but by a web of agents and offices providing tickets, and steamers working the local river routes able to convey them quickly to ports with regular Atlantic shipping. New regions, previously untouched by the emigration, knew how and where affordable and safe passage could be secured, and where the best regions of settlement were in America; both popular public discussion and the national and specialist press had kept them informed, and following these routes was a logical, practical, and attainable solution to their problems. Before the localised developments which caused the final expansion of emigration can be considered, the consequences of the growth phase, such an interrelated and functional part of that expansion, must be considered.
The first third of the nineteenth century saw the decline in importance of Dutch ports for German migration. After the exodus of 1816/17 had dumped thousands of underfunded and ill-equipped South Germans and Swiss in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, the Dutch authorities passed legislation that prevented German migrants from entering their ports in large number, or from entering the Netherlands at all if they did not have adequate funds to procure passage to America.\(^1\) On the American side, the poor condition of the tens of thousands of Germans who had arrived in 1816/17 also prompted a federal law, passed in 1819, that stated no passenger ship should carry more than 2 passengers per 5 tons.\(^2\) This legislation was designed to prevent the cramped on-board conditions that left so many travellers in a wretched state upon their arrival. Along with the glut of starvation-cheap labour which the post-Napoleonic immigration provided, this measure meant the passage-for-servitude system frequently employed by the Dutch was no longer viable. Whilst there was little call for Atlantic passage in the 1820s, when demand arose again around 1830, access to Dutch shipping was then blocked by the revolutionary turmoil in the Kingdom of the Two Netherlands. This diverted emigrants west and east to a variety of other ports. After a series of less than fortuitous events, the Dutch harbours never regained their prominent position as handlers of German emigrant traffic. They continued to serve some of it, as did the Belgian port of Antwerp, but the major departure points in the nineteenth century lay to the east, north and west of the Low Countries.

In their renewed search for passage in the 1830s, emigrants from the German South West initially found a convenient port of departure at Le Havre. The French harbour was an importer of raw American cotton, a material that was then forwarded on to the mills of Alsace. The freight made its way up the Seine by steamboat and barge to Paris, and then onward by coach to Strasbourg. This meant hundreds of empty wagons and barges returning along the same route, and emigrants from Baden and Württemberg either filled them, or followed them, meeting empty cotton ships at the coast, providing fee-paying ballast for the

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\(^1\) Walker, *Germany and the Emigration* p. 29.

\(^2\) Bretting, ‘Organising German Immigration’ p. 33.
shippers on their return leg to America.³ It was a long journey, often lasting several weeks, but the frequency of traffic between the port and America – principally to New Orleans, allowing access up the Mississippi and Missouri to Duden’s fabled lands – ensured that the city enjoyed good custom.⁴

German ports did not enjoy such good links with America, although in the years after the Napoleonic Wars, the city-state of Bremen had been busy trying to cultivate them. Whilst neighbouring Hamburg flourished on a virtual monopoly of trade with Britain, and enjoyed profitable links with the German interior along the Elbe River, Bremen’s position was far less favourable. Hamburg served as a natural outlet for the timber and grain of Prussian estates, as well as the manufactured goods of Saxony and Bohemia, whilst Bremen, lying on the Weser River, snaking as it does through the empty marsh and moorland of the North West, lacked not only export goods but any significant trading partner whose goods it might import. Being a German entrepôt for American produce was a strategy for overturning at least one of these problems.

Prior to the Napoleonic period, Bremen shippers had begun a nascent but regular traffic with Baltimore, importing American tobacco. In 1799, there were 19 Bremen shippers working the route, and 6 more between the city and Charleston.⁵ After the lifting of the Continental Blockade, the city saw its future in developing this line of commerce.⁶ In the years after the wars, not only did tobacco importing resume, but concerted efforts were made by the city senate – predominantly made up of local merchants – to build closer official ties with America. The city opened a string of consulates in American coastal towns; the first in 1817 in New Orleans; a second in Baltimore in 1818; then New York, 1822; and Philadelphia, in 1827.⁷ Then, in 1827, Bremen achieved most favoured nation status in the U.S., allowing its citizens to conduct business in American ports on the same footing as American nationals.

⁴ Ibid, p. 188.
⁶ The Continental Blockade did not directly prevent Bremen from dealing with America, but the American Embargo Act of 1807 blockading French shipping – of which Bremen, after 1808, was a part – greatly hindered the process.
To really improve trading links with America however, the city needed more than favourable diplomacy; it needed docks capable of handling Atlantic trade. It was this requirement that led to the founding of Bremerhaven. The arrival in Bremen of several thousand North West German migrants seeking passage to America, almost immediately after Bremerhaven was completed, was an instant and unexpected boon for the city, and one which was capitalised upon with incredible swiftness and foresight.

When the initial flurry of migrants arrived in Bremerhaven, it was recognised at once by the Bremen senate and its prominent merchants that the influx of emigrants from the North West would propel the American trading links for which Bremerhaven had been purposely built. Emigrant traffic could of course provide the same valuable ballast for the tobacco ships docking at Bremerhaven as it did for cotton shipping at Le Havre. Cutting through Oldenburg, Hanover and Minden, just to the east of Osnabrück, the one export the Weser was well positioned to carry was the emigrant of the embattled North West. The city’s merchant-senators however, were also astutely aware that a far larger, potentially very profitable emigration market might be tapped in the South West, and so set upon an immediate course of action to try and attract the migrants of that region to their city and port.

In 1831 prominent city officials travelled through the South and West, opening a string of agencies on the major interior river routes. The first was opened in Frankfurt in 1831, followed by Darmstadt and Gießen, before the heart of emigration territory was penetrated in 1832 with offices opening in Würzburg, Mosbach am Neckar, Mannheim, Karlsruhe and Stuttgart. Agents representing Bremen carried an important message to these interior destinations; security and protection were guaranteed to all emigrants passing through their city. In 1832, Bremen’s emigrant shipping laws were passed, and this farsighted legislation would prove to be the defining aspect of the city’s relationship with, and role in, the emigration - not to mention its future wealth.

Policy planners in Bremen capitalised on a consistent theme of emigrant letters and the emigration experience, by attempting to protect emigrants from the swindling and mistreatment that famously accompanied the Atlantic crossing. It

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8 Engelsing, *Bremen als Auswandererhafen* p. 28.
was frequently suggested in immigrant guidebooks that only those with more than 1,000 Prussian Thaler (nearly 2,000 Southern Gulden) attempt the journey, in order to have enough money to buy land in America after Rhine boatmen, agents, innkeepers and shippers had been given their money in exchange for handling customs duties, procuring supplies, providing board, and finally providing passage. There were also extra costs and losses to negotiate with the array of individuals in the harbour towns offering to carry luggage and provide recommendations for lodging, often throwing in theft and extortion as part of the service. The policy planners in Bremen knew that most emigrants had nowhere near that kind of money, and that the best way to ensure custom was to prevent these issues in the first place, by offering board and passage that came with fixed guarantees of fair prices, treatment and care.

The 1832 laws demanded that all inns providing emigrant board be subject to regulation and state inspection; the requirements of passenger space stipulated in the 1819 American legislation were strictly enforced; shippers were also obliged to carry enough insurance money to reimburse passengers in case of shipwreck on European shores, and the sea-worthiness of vessels was rigorously checked; finally, captains had to carry enough food for 90 days for each passenger. This last stipulation was significant. Aside from the cramped conditions, poor diet and lack of food had traditionally been one of the biggest problems on the transatlantic voyage. With the average crossing being only slightly more than 40 days, the 90 day stipulation essentially doubled the amount of food carried for each passenger. The protection of emigrants was not confined to the passage itself either.

Individuals at the docks taking money for any service imaginable were known as Litzer (lit. ‘ribboners’) and were the equivalent of the New York City ‘runner’. They worked for inns, shipping lines, money changers and stores selling utensils for the voyage, targeting incoming emigrants and running the kind of rackets that guides and letters warned of. As early as 1833, Bremen agents began working on the Weser giving out information brochures that allowed emigrants to orientate the city and the docks before they arrived, in the hope that

10 Walker, Germany and the Emigration p. 88.
they could avoid some of the more unscrupulous ‘help’ offered by the Litzer.12 The city also worked to generate and protect a good name on the other side of the Atlantic, attempting to lure more American shipping with the promise of respectable passengers who had been good for the cost of a ticket, and would be no trouble on American shores.

For fear of damaging trading relations, and on advice from its consulates in both Baltimore and New York, Bremen took special care to prevent the transportation of criminals from the port to the U.S. After small-scale deportations of criminals were attempted by both Bremen and Hamburg in 1819, alarm from the other side of the Atlantic halted the practice.13 Thereafter, Bremen sent vagabonds to Nicaragua, Brazil, Canada and Australia.14 To shift further onus onto ships captains, legislation was passed in 1845 that brought a 100 Thaler fine on any captain found to be transporting, or attempting to transport, a known criminal.15 The city quickly acquired an excellent reputation on both sides of the Atlantic, and began to command a significant share of emigrant traffic.

After the initial 3,500 had passed through in 1831, the city transported some 38,506 migrants between 1832 and 1835.16 This huge upswing was coterminous with significant increases in tobacco shipping, as Bremen’s capturing of valuable export material encouraged an increasingly profitable two-way trade. The city was soon a near monopoly importer of vast amounts of the raw American product, absorbing fully half of all U.S. exports, yet by just 1836, the emigrant trade had outstripped tobacco in overall value to the city.17 A new high of 14,157 individuals passed through that year, and unlike tobacco, which only benefitted the merchants and shippers, passenger traffic brought a multitude of advantages.18 Emigrants had to stay in Bremen inns and lodging houses; they had to feed themselves, and buy provisions for the journey; ship owners had to provision their

14 ibid, pp. 218-219.
15 Walker, Germany and the Emigration p. 89.
ships – generously – for the journey, and bought from local suppliers to do so; they had to broker insurance with local firms to cover their voyage. Bremen’s new found success, based on top-down city-wide initiatives, pursued with clear leadership, was achieved rapidly, and to the surprise of its hanseatic neighbour, Hamburg. Although Bremen’s immediate success was based on farsighted legislation which was ahead of its time, and which one day would serve as a model for other ports looking to compete in the trade, it did not achieve immediate market dominance.

Despite the fair treatment of emigrants in Bremen, it still had to compete with other ports that held different advantages. Geographic position was one. Many still preferred the more logistically simple route of crossing the Rhine at Strasbourg, going on to Paris, then to Le Havre. There was an established tradition among emigrants who did not wish to pay for a ride in a cotton wagon to do the overland journey on their own horses, and then to sell the animals at Paris’ horse fairs in order to raise money before the final barge trip down the Seine.\(^{19}\) The route was long, but straightforward, and covered some of its own costs. During the 1830s Le Havre still benefitted from more regular transatlantic traffic than Bremen, another point that proved to be decisive for many migrants in the early days. A cost which had to be factored into the migrant’s journey was board in the port of departure. The less time spent at the docks, the more money saved. In fact, the poorest emigrants were willing to negotiate even greater initial distances than the trek to Le Havre. Ironically, the most convoluted passage across the Atlantic was actually the cheapest. The European dock doing the most business with the New World was Liverpool. For many emigrants, despite the enormous distance involved in reaching the port, it was the cheapest and most economic point of departure, especially if a large family were moving all at once, which was an expensive undertaking.

The Liverpool route began in Hamburg. Hamburg itself was slow to pick up any emigrant traffic; the city made excellent profits from its trade with England, and emigrant shipping was seen as unnecessary and problematic. Having observed from afar the debacle taking place in Holland in 1817, and prompted by the arrival of several impoverished Württemberg families at the city gates the

same year, the city followed the Dutch example and banned large groups of emigrants from entering its districts. During the early 1830s, the city’s free-trade philosophy also caused its shippers to reject protective emigrant legislation of the type seen in Bremen. But whilst Hamburg took a rather punitive view of emigrants, it was happy to forward them on to British ships traversing the trade route between their city and Hull.

The lack of state regulation in Hamburg encouraged shipping firms and agents to advertise ballast space on the boats plying the North Sea route, as part of a connecting emigration service. The ships working between Hamburg and Hull were small, dealt poorly with bad weather, and often carried livestock. They disembarked their migrants on the Humber, who then went on a short cross-country trek to the Mersey, where ships in Liverpool, bound for New York, could be boarded with daily regularity. The passage from Liverpool carried none of the protections and benefits seen in Bremen; its shippers, until forced to do so by the U.S., did not adhere to any passenger regulations until the late 1840s, but the ticket price was the cheapest to be found anywhere, and the waiting time at dock virtually nil. Thus despite the unfavourable position of Hamburg in relation to the main German emigration regions of the 1830s and ‘40s, the unhygienic and unregulated passage between Hamburg and England, and the cramped conditions in the Liverpool-New York vessels, the indirect route offered cheapness and economy for poorer migrants, and was used by tens of thousands. It was not until steam technology began to diffuse more completely into the interior German river routes that Bremen was able to fully challenge the natural advantages of its competitor ports.

As early as 1817, specialist emigrant shipping had been established on the Rhine, when a Basel ship owner attempted to profit from the fever of that year with a shuttle service to Holland. The real advances came with steam, however. In 1827, the Cologne Rheinisch-Preußische Dampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft [Rhenish-

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Prussian Steamship Company] appeared on the Rhine, and by 1833 was operating as far south as Strasbourg, in order to pick up Palatine, Baden and Württemberg emigrants and bring them to the northern city; it also ran connecting services along the Main River.\textsuperscript{23} By 1835 it had 15 steam ships, and in 1838 a rival firm, the Düsseldorf Dampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft für den Mittel- und Niederrhein [Steamship Company for the Middle and Lower Rhine] opened for business.\textsuperscript{24} The firms expanded their number of vessels quickly, and advanced the speed of south-north transportation significantly, from a matter of weeks to a matter of days. As the emigration began to gather pace in the early 1840s, localised river connections also began to spring up in order to accommodate the trade, until a network spread from all the major emigration regions to the coastal ports.

Steam shipping was established on the Neckar in the spring of 1841. The first vessel disembarked on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} of May, and steamers worked a daily route from Heilbronn, in the heart of the most heavily affected Württemberg territory, to Mannheim, where the Rhine and Neckar meet.\textsuperscript{25} From there, connections could then be made with the dozens of steamers now traversing the south-north route. In the following year, 1842, Bremen senators and merchants established the Vereinigten Weserdampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft auf der Oberweser [United Weser Steamship Company on the Upper Weser], bringing steam-driven emigrant transportation on to the Weser and thus directly into Bremen. Although an overland journey through Westphalia between the Rhine and Weser remained, it was now possible to reach Bremerhaven from the Neckar Valley, Kraichgau or Black Forest region in 5 to 6 days. When emigrants had travelled up the Rhine to Rotterdam in 1816/17, the average journey time had been 4-6 weeks. The Rhine steamers also offered deals to emigrants, attempting in turn to fill the obligations they had with coastal shippers to deliver payloads of migrants, and soon vastly expedited speed and improved cost began to overturn the advantages which other docks enjoyed over Bremen. By 1843 Bremerhaven had begun to at least equal

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, pp. 215-216.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, p. 216.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid. Württembergische Jahrbuch für vaterländische Geschichte, Geographie und Topographie Stuttgart, Statistisch-Topographisches Bureau, 1841. p. 52.
Le Havre as the principal port of embarkation, and new passenger milestones were hit every year from 1844 to 1847.\textsuperscript{26}

During that same short time span, the final, decisive evolutions in the technology of transportation began. During the mid-1840s, Bremen’s mayor, Johann Smidt, had coveted a rail connection that would link the city to the western and southern German interior; to achieve it Smidt worked in conjunction with Prussian officials who desired a link between Cologne and Bremen.\textsuperscript{27} By the summer of 1846, a line between Cologne and Minden – the Rhine-Weser Railway – had been completed. In December of 1847, the goals of the Bremen and Prussian officials were achieved when a section of track was laid linking this line to the Bremen-Hanover railway, forming a continuous line between Cologne and Bremen. Even before further railways had worked their way into the South West, a combination of steam boat and train ride now made the most reputable emigrant port easily accessible from the far South. From Mannheim, a Rhine steamer could connect to Cologne within a day, followed by a rail journey into Bremen the following morning. After a night’s board, a final day’s journey took the migrants along the last stretch of the Weser to Bremerhaven, just 3 to 4 days after they had departed from the heart of Baden or Württemberg (see map 4).\textsuperscript{28}

In that same year of 1847, the final evolution in shipping began that would eventually accommodate and encourage huge increases in the volume of German emigration. Bremen was once again behind the initial innovation. On the 19\textsuperscript{th} of June 1847, the ship Washington arrived in Bremerhaven for the first time.\textsuperscript{29} It was one of two paddle steamers (its sister was the Hermann) owned by the joint Bremen-American venture The Ocean Steam Navigation Company, fronted on the German side by the formidable Bremen merchant H.H. Meier. It was the first German-backed ocean-going steamer to dock in a German port. The fact that a Bremen figure was behind the introduction of steam technology to German shipping was indicative of the city’s desire to take an unassailable lead in the transatlantic arena.

\textsuperscript{28} Brück, ‘Die Verbesserung’ pp. 216-219.
\textsuperscript{29} Bickelmann, ‘den Vorzügen’ p. 132.
By this point, the immediate and vast increase in the wealth of the city of Bremen had convinced some in Hamburg to change their stance on the emigrant question, and attempt to capture some of the trade for themselves. After rebuttals in 1836, the city's shippers agreed the following year to improve the standards of treatment for emigrants. The Hamburg authorities however, were powerless to regulate the multitude of British shippers and agents operating via their port. As these groups commanded virtually all of Hamburg's emigrant traffic, the city continued to enjoy a rather poor reputation in comparison to its hanseatic neighbour. It was very much the spirit of private enterprise that began to alter the situation, with the creation of a reputable, specialist emigrant shipping line.

On the 27th of May 1847, 41 interested parties gathered at the Hamburg Stock Exchange with the intention of founding a specialist passenger line able to
capture some of the profit to be had from emigrant traffic. They founded *Hamburg-Amerikanische-Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft*, or *Hapag*, the Hamburg America Packet-Travel Stock Company. It was capitalised with 60 shares at 5,000 marks banco each, for a total of 300,000, and the first shares were reserved for citizens of Hamburg. The company intended to ferry mail packets between Hamburg and New York, and to offer pleasant on board conditions for an accompanying passenger trade. The first four ships the company had built, all sail, were designed for speed, and built with a capacity for 20 cabin passengers and 200 in steerage. Those in steerage however, were to receive a level of treatment unprecedented in the passenger trade, even by Bremen’s standards. Rather than having to provide their own, passengers were provisioned by the company with bedding and crockery, and received ample and excellent quality food. Each passenger, in both cabin and steerage, was given a code of conduct, and the ship’s crew wore uniforms, serving under captains ‘who are not simply skilled sea-farers but also have approachable and pleasant personalities and are thus capable of rendering their passengers’ sojourn as pleasant as possible.’ Adolph Godeffroy, the company head behind such directives, noted with satisfaction that ‘the sound policy of providing such comfortable appointments has already proved worthwhile, since once having inspected our vessels, passengers who had intended to travel aboard ships owned by other companies have opted for ours.’ The *Hapag* venture marked the beginning of customer travel, rather than passenger freight.

By 1846-7, a network of fast interior travel routes, and an abundance of embarkation ports - all with agents vying for emigrant cargo - were in place. Agents were no longer the unscrupulous figures known by previous generations; in Baden Württemberg and Hessen, they were licensed, bonded and kept under surveillance, with contracts legally obligated to guarantee that passengers would

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33 Ibid.
34 The words are those of Hapag’s first chairman, Adolph Godeffroy. Ibid, p. 27.
35 Ibid.
reach their stipulated destination at the agreed price.\textsuperscript{36} An agent with a bad name or without a licence for business soon found himself out of work anyway, in a market where dependable service usurped exploitation as the primary business model, spearheaded by the policy makers in Bremen. The business had become about keeping customers, and not losing them to other lines or ports. Even Liverpool agents, for all the discomfort of the route they offered, had a specific angle of sale, offering as they did the fastest and cheapest route. At the precise moment this new infrastructure began to reach full development, the emigration was beginning to evolve. Whilst much of that evolution came down to events in the late 1840s, and issues within particular regions, the specific response of American migration to those events and issues was inevitably tied to considerations not only of access, but information.


argument. The former were in favour of the emigration as a remover of dissatisfied proletarians, the latter argued that it wasn’t proletarians leaving; rather, the emigration was seen as bleeding the state of its most industrious labour whilst the underemployed and lazy stayed at home. Every small holder or artisan that liquidated his lot before his debts overcame him was an individual whose energies and skills the state would rather keep. The completely impoverished landless labourer or widow living from the poor box was not the one leaving.

The supposed solution tied the arguments together in a fashion characterised by the political thinking of Vormärz Germany. In the eyes of some, the emigration was seen as being both a relief valve and a component of national strength. Many, including List, pointed to the fact that there were no German colonies and that every year 30,000 were leaving the fatherland to serve the commerce and manufacture of other nations. What better use for this apparently unstoppable movement than to direct it, usefully, into organised settlements that could retain the culture of the fatherland, and serve as producers of raw materials to trade with and stimulate the economy at home? For many, the necessity of organising the emigration on national lines became a pressing issue. Some individuals with the money to exercise their ideas attempted to turn such theory into practice, with significant consequences for public awareness of emigration, and its subsequent development.

Emigration societies seeking organised settlement and the creation of centres of ‘German culture’ had operated on a small scale for many years. Among many others, five such societies had gone to Missouri alone, following Duden’s path, attempting to generate a ‘rejuvenated Germania’ west of the Mississippi; the subscribers for such things were almost always intellectuals living well outside of the main emigration regions. In 1842 however, a concerted attempt was made at large-scale, organised assisted settlement of poor migrants, on the initiative of several nobles and princes who formed the Adelsverein (‘nobles’ society’)

37 Ibid, p. 110.
38 Ibid, p. 111.
Officially the *Mainz Verein zum Schutze der deutschen Einwanderer nach Texas* ['Association for the Protection of German immigrants in Texas'], the *Adelsverein* was the initiative of Carl Count von Castell, and involved some two dozen aristocrats, including Prince Frederick of Prussia (the King’s cousin), and the ruling prince of Solms-Braunfels, who led the initial settlers. The manifesto of the society was to ‘provide a new home abroad for the poor masses in Germany; create a profitable trade between the settler colonies and the fatherland; and protect those emigrants who settle in the associations colonies.’ In 1843 land was purchased from speculators in Western Texas, and in 1844 the *Adelsverein* formally established itself as a joint stock company, beginning a widespread publicity and recruiting campaign in short order. The society promised to give ‘free land’ with tools, provisions and animals to be offered at discount prices. Land and conveyance was offered to an individual for 300 Gulden, 600 for a family. 300 Gulden was more than many self-organised emigrants took, and 600 for a family was not particularly cheap. In fact, the society's prices immediately discounted the poor whose aid had been its declared mission.

Nevertheless, thanks to a huge amount of publicity, 700 individuals left on ships chartered by the company at the end of 1844. Solms-Braunfels failed to find the land that the company had purchased, and led the group to a way-station between the coast and the site, founding the town of New Braunfels. He then left swiftly as he had neither the supplies nor the experience to make a success of the colony. He was back in Europe the following year when 3,000 further subscribers landed under a new leader, no better able to find the land, also woefully under provisioned, and who was forced to set up a temporary campsite on the coast for the arrivals. They were not fed or housed properly in the tent city, were ravaged by fever and disease, and perhaps half their number died. The Mexican-U.S. war in 1847 then interrupted the affairs of the society and the region further still. The reputation of the *Adelsverein* plummeted, its well-publicised failures steering further members well clear.

Yet some of the settlers got a toe-hold on life in Texas, and the region had become hugely well known throughout the German kingdoms. When new regions

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40 Ibid, p. 163.
41 Walker, *Germany and the Emigration* p. 83.
with little prior precedent of emigration, such as Mecklenburg, began to look to permanent migration as a solution to their problems, areas like Texas, which had received so much attention, attracted their immigration. The state even had its own Duden, in the form of Austrian novelist Charles Sealsfield and his historical novel *Das Kajütenbuch, oder, nationale Charakteristiken* (published in English as ‘The Cabin Book, or, Sketches of Life in Texas’) depicting the newly created republic as a land of opportunity.\(^{43}\) Whatever the failures of the *Adelsverein*, by 1852, (the year the society was formally dissolved) 10,000 Germans had arrived at Galveston, a port which would become a regular terminus for ships operating out of Bremen.\(^{44}\) Even if emigration societies had minimal success or experienced failure in their official capacities, they generated publicity – in the case of the *Adelsverein* a great deal of publicity – and brought national attention to American emigration.

Discussion and reporting of the movement, from the theoretical wrangling of ministers, dukes and economists, to its physical development, the activities of settlement societies, the regions of America favoured by German migrants, and conditions in the docks, were a constant source of interest for the press. Between 1830 and 1846, the nationally oriented *Allgemeine Zeitung* ran hundreds of articles on the movement. Other nationally oriented papers such as the *Zollvereinsblatt* were also frequent commentators. By 1846, the emigration had even spawned its own specialist national weekly, the *Allgemeine Auswanderungs-Zeitung*. In the first ever edition, the second and third page were dedicated to coverage of the *Adelsverein*.\(^{45}\)

The *Auswanderungs-Zeitung* ran all manner of articles such as ‘Where should we settle in North America?’, ‘Should I emigrate?’, ‘The topography of the state of Ohio’, and ‘The relationship of parents to their children in North America.’\(^{46}\) These discussions and descriptions of American life were unlikely to override or supersede the impact of similar information received from former emigrants themselves, but the paper also contained reliable logistical information,


\(^{44}\) Senger und Etterlin, ‘New Germany’ p. 164.

\(^{45}\) AAZ 29/9/46.

\(^{46}\) AAZ 4/1/51-16/1/51, AAZ 18/1/51, AAZ 10/4/48, AAZ 20/10/46.
including regular shipping timetables, currency conversion rates, maps and land values, ships captain’s names, and which unscrupulous agents were to be avoided. Many of the articles also contained a great deal of practical advice. Although ‘Where should we settle in America’ was not likely to guide a great deal of specific settlement, there was valuable information in the reporting. The above article for example, spelled out the roads and railways that could be taken from Philadelphia, through the Appalachians, and onto Pittsburgh and Ohio, from where the expanse of the Midwest was open to the migrant.\[47\] The Auswanderungs-Zeitung originally ran weekly, within a year was twice weekly, and within four years every other day. It was joined in 1847 by the Bremen-backed Deutsche Auswanderer. Outside of the press, regular publishing added to the weight of information; between 1815 and 1850, more than 50 travel books by Germans who travelled in America had been published.\[48\]

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By the time economic problems and social unrest began to spread through the German regions during the subsistence crisis of 1846/7, there was a mass of information and transportation infrastructure in place. American emigration offered a solution to mounting problems, and in the process of incorporating this new boom, Bremen and Hamburg brought the transportation system fully into the modern era. As the emigration began to expand, the two cities ratcheted their competition with one another, and entered a technological race that ended with the full diffusion of steam into the German transatlantic passenger trade. The race was instigated from the Hamburg side, in order to combat the dominant lead of its hanseatic neighbour.

Whilst there was a fortuitous synchronicity to the opening of Bremerhaven in 1830 and the onset of emigration that year, as well as the advent of railways in the North West in 1846/7 when the migration began to surge, policy and business efforts in Bremen had done much in between to exploit these developments and this new market to the full. The crowning monument to the city’s new economy

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\[\[47\] AAZ 16/1/51.\]

\[\[48\] Walker, Germany and the Emigration p. 62.\]
and the astute approach which had captured it was the building of the Auswandererhaus (emigrant’s house) in Bremerhaven in 1849. The housing block could sleep 2,000 in its dormitories, and feed 3,500 in its hall. It added a final layer of organisation and simplicity to travelling through Bremerhaven, removing the need to find an inn or lodging house. The Auswandererhaus was opened in 1850. That same year, Hamburg finally began to attempt a serious duplication of Bremen’s approach. The Association for the Protection of Emigrants was founded to provide those arriving in the city with information about all emigration procedures and to protect them from all fraudulent practices.

Advancements in passenger care in Hamburg were met by advancements in the fleets operating from the city. In 1850, a Hamburg shipper, Robert Miles Sloman, had become the sole owner and operator of the first fully German owned Atlantic steamer, the Helena Sloman, as opposed to the half American-owned Washington and Hermann. Sloman had a long association with Atlantic shipping, having established a packet line to New York in 1828. He had also operated two paddle steamers between Hamburg and Hull since 1841. However, as an operator of the ‘indirect route’ via Liverpool, in a time when Hamburg had a poor reputation for emigrant handling and that route was notorious for poor conditions, Sloman had acquired something of a poor reputation. In Bavaria, which included the Franconian Main region and Palatinate, his agents had been banned. The entry of the Helena Sloman to the Hamburg fleet, offering rapid direct connection to America, with improved cabin and steerage standards, was an attempt to offer a superior service and compete with Hapag and the Washington and Hermann, operating from Bremen.

The Helena Sloman however, did not enjoy a decorated career. She first set sail on the 29th of May, 1850, and was in service for all of 5 months. On the 26th of October 1850, she set out for New York carrying 142 passengers and 180 tonnes of French and German goods – but also having to carry over 500 tonnes of stone and iron ballast – and it proved to be her final voyage. On the 20th of November she

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49 Ibid.
50 Bracker, ‘Hamburg als Auswandererstadt’ p. 7
53 AAZ 2/1/51.
was wrecked on rocks off the coast of Newfoundland.\textsuperscript{54} The indefatigable Sloman was apparently not deterred, continuing his attempts at capturing the transatlantic market throughout the ‘50s, although further investment now went into an expansion in sail, with Sloman unable to re-join the steam race.

The next steps into that technology would be made by \textit{Hapag}. In the early 1850s, the company had added two further sail ships to its fleet, on the back of increasing business. It was not only the increase in potential custom in the late 1840s and early 1850s that helped \textit{Hapag} to boost its business, but the comfortable services that the company offered in order to attract it. Adolph Godeffroy noted that his company’s arrangements ‘had already been copied in Bremen’ and that complaints could be heard from Bremen shippers who knew \textit{Hapag} was luring away emigrants with good food.\textsuperscript{55}

In 1850, just 10,000 passengers had passed through Hamburg; in 1854, the number was 50,809.\textsuperscript{56} Of those, Hapag carried 8,601, and Sloman 8,571, although some of Sloman’s custom remained linked to the indirect route.\textsuperscript{57} In fact 18,509 passing through Hamburg that year still went via Liverpool.\textsuperscript{58} In the 1850s a Liverpool ticket remained the cheapest on offer, at just 45 Southern Gulden, compared to prices of around 70 Gulden from Bremen, 75 from Le Havre and around 80 from Hamburg.\textsuperscript{59} But whilst Liverpool remained a feature in the emigration, (the \textit{Union Steamship Line} of Liverpool still had 21 agents in Württemberg in 1853) its share of the Hamburg traffic was decreasing.\textsuperscript{60} The city authorities were clamping down on the myriad of agents operating the route.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid. Also Just, ‘Schiffahrtsgeellschaften’ p. 20.
\textsuperscript{55} Wiborg & Wiborg, \textit{The World Is Our Oyster} p. 27.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid. ‘Schiffahrtsgeellschaften’ p. 20.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, p. 21. In total, 25,700 Germans emigrated via Liverpool in 1854, among which 3,000 Hessians, 6,000 Württembergers, 6,000 Badeners, 1,600 Palatines and 1,500 from the duchy of Nassau were enumerated. Fen, ‘Entwicklung des Auswanderungswesens und Auswanderungsrechtes im Großherzogtum Hessen’ p. 227.
\textsuperscript{59} Prices of departure from Liverpool and Le Havre are for 1853 and taken from Sattler, \textit{Auswanderer der Gemeinde Ötisheim} p. 6. For Bremen, the price is taken as the cheapest available in 1855, at 35 Thaler calculated at 2:1 value to Southern Gulden, Engelsing, \textit{Bremen als Auswandererhafen} p. 119. Price from Hamburg is taken from the standard ticket value sold by Hamburg agents operating in Mecklenburg in 1854, (40 Thaler) at the same rate of conversion. Mecklenburg Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin (MLHAS) Domanialamt Boizenburg, 2.22.10.1, Nr 9d. From Hamburg, Bremen and Liverpool, adult tickets were for passengers over the age of 12, from Le Havre, passengers over 10. Child tickets were typically 66% to 75% the cost of an adult.
\textsuperscript{60} Walker, \textit{Germany and the Emigration} p. 168. In 1853 Liverpool had transported 20,414 German emigrants, from a smaller yearly total, AAZ 14/1/54.
Hapag’s fortunes, meanwhile, were headed firmly in the other direction, and doing so strongly enough that in 1854, the board made major outlays on its first steam liners, in order to further advance the company’s competitive edge. In 1854 it ordered its first two transatlantic steamers from the Caird & Company shipyard in Greenock, Scotland.\textsuperscript{61} The Borussia and Hammonia went in to service in 1856, and enjoyed far more industrious careers than Sloman's Helena Sloman. They could each carry 500 passengers and complete a round trip to New York in a little over thirty days, less time than a single leg of the journey using sail.

Developments in Hamburg were paralleled by efforts in Bremen to maintain the lion’s share of the emigrant trade. In 1854 the city processed nearly 77,000 migrants; the previous year it had taken a 52% share of all German emigration, taking the absolute statistical majority for the first time.\textsuperscript{62} The Auswandererhaus was an enormous success; in 1853 it had housed and fed 37,492 of the 58,111 emigrants that had passed through the city.\textsuperscript{63} In order to combat the natural advantage which the Elbe now gave Hamburg in procuring a new migration from the German East, Bremen also had specialist trains laid on to service this trade. By 1853 Pomerania, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg and Saxony were all connected to Bremen (and Hamburg) by rail. Daily trains ran directly from Berlin and Leipzig to Bremen, and specialist Auswanderer-Züge – emigrant trains – were arranged from Leipzig, departing at 5 AM on the 6\textsuperscript{th}, 13\textsuperscript{th}, 20\textsuperscript{th} and 24\textsuperscript{th} of every month.\textsuperscript{64} But the Bremen shipping magnate Hermann Heinrich Meier, mindful of the strides taking place in Hamburg, and having watched his American partners drive the Ocean Steam Navigation Company into virtual bankruptcy, was keen that Bremen remain at the forefront of the main business; passenger shipping itself.

In 1853 Meier gathered several prominent Bremen merchant houses with the idea of forming a new ocean-going steamship firm offering the best in passenger travel. Meier had a hugely ambitious plan of founding a firm on 40,000 shares at a 100 gold Thaler each – 4 million Thaler in total, more than 10 times the initial capitalisation of Hapag. The idea of an all-German joint stock company was

\textsuperscript{61} ibid.
\textsuperscript{62} Just, ‘Schiffahrtsgesellschaften’ p. 38.
\textsuperscript{63} Walker, Germany and the Emigration p. 89.
\textsuperscript{64} Brück, ‘Die Verbesserung’ p. 219.
floated to the Prussian gentry, who had little interest in the concept. In 1856 Meier’s fortunes changed when a young Berlin businessman, Eduard Crüsemann, joined the cause and refocused the search for investors on Bremen itself. Evidently, this group was more aware of the profit to be made from shipping than Prussian landowners, and Crüsemann and Meier raised 1.5 million Thaler, a sum which was matched by a bank in Dessau, the Kreditanstalt für Handel und Industrie.65 On three quarters of his planned start-up, Meier decided to go ahead with the venture, and on the 20th of February 1857, his firm went into business. It was the beginning of the mighty North German Lloyd. The same year, two more Hapag steamers went into action. The following year they were joined by Lloyd’s first quartet of ships. The passenger trade had reached the modern era, and Bremen and Hamburg had come to dominate it; in the 1850s they shipped 63% of all German emigrant traffic, and they claimed a virtual monopoly on it every decade thereafter.66

In the 40 years between 1816/17 and 1856/7, the entire mass transit system of German emigration was built. The impetus for building this system came from the emigrant trade of the North and particularly the South West, which led to farsighted policy and business strategies in Bremen, and greatly supported the early steamers of the interior river routes. The growth of emigration helped interior transit providers to grow and expand in turn, thus allowing them to carry ever more migrants. By the mid-1840s, the approach of Bremen in handling emigrant traffic, and the diffusion of modern technology throughout the internal transport system had carved the path for the future of emigrant transportation; the convenient and cheap routes offered in France and England would fall by the wayside as the traffic became increasingly internalised and was competed for between the hanseatic ports. The most competitive strategies for acquiring migrant traffic and the most modern means of conveyance – rail and ocean steamer – were all established precisely by the point the emigration began its

major upswing in 1846/7. The hanseatic ports were now perfectly poised to take their lead, and competition among shippers for the new masses of emigration led to the final evolution of modern transatlantic fleets.

That upswing was the product of acute hardship throughout the German lands, but it translated into transatlantic migration because the preceding movement from the North and South West had generated huge attention in the press and political arena. The attention paid to the movement, and the particular schemes and instances that generated great discussion, made American emigration well known throughout the German Confederation. When poverty and hardship hit during the late 1840s, the actions of South Western Bauern and Handwerker and North Western Heuerlinge, as well as the colonist dreamers and travel writers that followed them, combined with the easily accessible transport routes that had arisen in their wake to make America appear open to those in despair. Fighting at the barricades was not the only option in 1848. Rather, a huge number decided to leave, so many so that the massive investments made by the Hamburg and Bremen merchants in their steamers were quite justifiable. The emigrants did not leave for abstract political reasons of national unity; if they had political grievances, they were inextricably tied to their powerlessness to change their material conditions.\(^67\) More accurately, they left because their conditions were unfavourable, and specifically, thanks to the movement that had preceded this mid-century collapse, they understood that their conditions were unfavourable in comparison to America. They also perfectly understood, thanks to the transport routes and information available to them, that America was an attainable and viable alternative.

Between 1846 and 1854, the emigration achieved its final and complete stage of evolution. Existing migratory pathways interacted with extensive structural crises to deliver the movement to truly mass dimensions. The North East was layered atop the North and South West as a further core provider region, and emigration from the South West, where the mid-century agricultural crisis was most prolonged, became especially intense. In 1854, the number of departures from across the German Confederation reached a quarter of a million, and virtually every German region had established some active involvement with the movement. That same year, the anti-immigrant nativist movement was reaching its peak in America, and migrant letters also began to speak of economic downturn. Combined with the relief provided in many communities by heavy out-migration, the emigration figures began to show signs of retreat. But it was only a temporary dampening; within two years the number again began to rise, and for the rest of the century, barring interruptions of war or economic downturn, heavy emigration was virtually constant, at three quarters to one million migrants per decade. This chapter is about that final upshift, to 1854, which brought the German emigration to its mass dimensions; it is about the structural crises that interacted with existing emigration pathways to widen them so significantly, that for the rest of the century, mass migration was a self-sustaining phenomenon.

The decisive upshift was characterised by two things; the geographic increase in regions affected by emigration, and its increased intensity in regions where it was already established. The onset of heavy emigration in the German North East was the most significant geographic expansion. The East Elbian movement is typically cited as beginning in the mid-1860s, when American grain imports began to appear as a major feature in European markets, undermining the staple agriculture of the region’s large estate-style farms. That factor however, worked merely to spread and intensify an existing movement, which had established itself in the wake of earlier structural changes in estate and farm
management. Since the early 1850s, Pomerania, Brandenburg, and particularly Mecklenburg had experienced heavy American emigration. They set the regional precedent, established regional connections with America, and provided a substantial new market for the agents and shippers of Hamburg and Bremen. As the most acute exemplar of the North Eastern movement, and a region rarely discussed in detail, Mecklenburg will serve here as a case study for the development of the East Elbian movement. Attention will then return to the South West, where many communities previously immune to emigration began to follow their neighbours to the New World, marking a new threshold in the volume of emigration, delivering the region's movement to its absolute peak.

In the rural German North East, (See Map 5) emigration began later than in the South or North West, due to the later onset of structural difficulty. Where the two Western regions had been in some stress at the beginning of the nineteenth century, one already involved in emigration, the other teetering on props that it had no power to hold up, in the North East the problems were only beginning during that period. In the early nineteenth century, the process of peasant reforms East of the Elbe began to fundamentally restructure the region's economy and society. They did so in a manner that revised downward its structural capacity for population, and it was at mid-century, triggered by the subsistence crisis of 1846, that this reorientation began to translate into emigration. It was an easy transition, facilitated by the presence of the Elbe, which sent Hamburg agents and advertising one way and receptive migrants the other, not to mention cheap trains heading directly to Bremen on specialist deals. Moreover, local landlords regarded the loss of population positively, and were not struck by the theoretical debates about the effects of emigration on the Fatherland that were discussed in the pages of the Allgemeine Zeitung or the chambers of West German Diets. In order to understand the crisis that developed east of the Elbe from the mid-point of the nineteenth century, it is first necessary to understand what structures had traditionally prevailed in the region, in order to appreciate the impact of agrarian change and character of local emigration.
Until the turn of the nineteenth century, East German landlords had been at the head of a feudal agricultural order, the Gutsherrschaft system. The system of land management east of the Elbe and Saale rivers was very different from that practised in the German South and West. In these latter regions, the king or ruling duke represented the seigneurial lord of all his subjects; the entire territory was affectively his manor. The land in that territory was technically rented out to his subjects in return for a share of the produce it created, taken as an annual tithe. In practice, land functioned as private property, as the land titles the subjects held could be freely bought, sold, mortgaged and bequeathed, either to individual or multiple heirs. Land in the North East however, was divided among large feudal landlords – Gutsherren – all lords of their individual manors, who engaged in direct agricultural production on their own account. Very few among the general population owned flexible title to any land, and the populace largely paid its dues not to the presiding monarch, in either tithe or rent, but to the local Gutsherr, in
uncompensated labour, raising his crops in exchange for settlement on a small plot that could sustain a family.

The monarchs of these regions were the largest landholders, heads of historically the most prominent and powerful families; the rest of the land was divided among nobles, who represented a powerful interest group. These distinctions also served as the administrative structure for the North East; in both the duchies of Mecklenburg and the Kingdom of Prussia, land of the sovereign was classified ‘Domanium’, whilst the ‘Gutsbezirk’ or ‘Ritterschaft’ districts were those of the nobles. Whether the stewards of royal holdings or noble owners in their own right, all Gutsherren managed their estates through a nuanced system of labour, configured around the social stratification of their subjects.

Throughout the Gutsherrschaft regions, the amount of labour demanded of a subject depended on their own economic standing. Some peasants in the North East held similar land titles to the independent peasantry of the other German regions, holding them in hereditary tenure with the right to sell, mortgage and bequeath the land. They might hold anywhere from 20 to 70 hectares, and as a rule of thumb were expected to provide 2 – 3 days unpaid labour a week on the estate of the incumbent Gutsherr.¹ That obligation, like the land title, was hereditary; the heir to the title was tied to the same plot with the same level of duty, in a perpetual system of hereditary servility. Far more common, however, was the smallholder, settled on the lord’s land and given a lifetime or part-time lease of 5 to 10 hectares, who was expected to give 4 - 5 days unpaid labour a week.² If the smallholder wished to leave the plot to which he was contracted, a suitable replacement and permission from the lord had to be agreed. During the course of the eighteenth century, this group was added to by the increasingly common cottager, given a farmhouse and just 1 - 3 hectares, who might also be compelled to give 4, 5 or even 6 days labour a week.³

In order to meet their obligations and run their own farms, the peasantry had to rely on their own labourers, who fell into two categories. The children of all

² Ibid, p.47. Harnisch gives the maximum level of holding for this group as 15 hectares.
³ Ibid.
individuals, between their confirmation and their marriage, were required to enter service as a farmhand (Knecht) or maid (Mägd). They were given lodging and a minimum wage, and worked almost constantly tending the requirements of the farm. A second source of labour were the landless, those who had no title at all and depended entirely on wages for income. These individuals would lodge with a peasant farmer, as Einlieger, and accompany him onto the lord’s estate to help with draught duties and other heavy labour, as well as helping on the farm itself. In total, a substantial peasant farmer might need 2 – 5 labourers and servants if he wished to produce a decent yield from his own holding and meet all of his feudal obligations (which also included the upkeep of buildings and the maintenance of plough teams, which if he held over a certain acreage, he had to provide himself). Even smallholders and cottagers needed at least one servant and plough equipment to meet their obligations.

From a social aspect – though not an economic one – the last rung on the ladder were the Gutstaglöhner, or Hoftaglöhner in Mecklenburg, the contracted labourers of the Gutsherr, who lived on the estate in complete bonded servility. The energies of the Guts or Hoftaglöhner were entirely devoted to the demesne land. They were given a house and a yard, where they could keep a few pigs and poultry, and had access to a small amount of grazing ground where they might keep cattle or sheep, or raise flax or potatoes. The area was not sufficient to raise any surplus or income. Instead, they were sustained almost entirely by payments in kind. Every three weeks they were given a bushel of rye or oats (about 80 pounds of cereal), along with one Thaler.4 In the autumn this rose to two bushels, along with two bushels of dried peas. They were also entitled to every 17th bushel of wheat at harvest time, and in the winter were given peat and firewood.5 The Gutsherr was also responsible for the care of his labourers in old age. Life for the contracted labourer was strictly regimented by the rigours of estate production, with little downtime or personal freedom, and he was entirely dependent on the lord and his personal level of philanthropy, which might wane significantly when the labourer ceased to be useful. Not only did the bonded serviceman lack the freedom of his own time, he also lacked any freedom of mobility, either physical or

4 Lubinski, ‘Overseas Emigration’ pp. 73-74.
5 Ibid.
social. He lived in relative comfort, but unlike the *Knechte* and *Mägde*, there was no life beyond servitude.

From this combination of sources, the large landed estates of the *Gutsherren* were worked to generate the grain surplus from which they drew their wealth. If any of the lord’s subjects wished to practice a craft, they had to ask permission, and were frequently turned down; the *Gutsherren* preferred that artisanal work be confined to the towns, so that the energies of the rural population remained bound to the land and to the estate. Those energies were rarely fully committed, however. Feudal duties were understandably a reluctant task for the peasants and cottagers, as every minute spent on the lord’s land took away time spent on their own. But whilst the managing of estates with enforced labour might not have produced the highest yields, as the head of provincial government in Pomerania noted, it was certainly ‘convenient and cheap.’

During the second half of the eighteenth century, demand for the grain of the estates began to rise sharply. Markets in Britain and urban regions like Berlin and Potsdam began to absorb vastly increased quantities. In 1757 German grain imports to Britain totalled just 311 tons, in 1777 the figure was 4,352 tons, and by 1800 had risen to nearly 45,000 tons. Berlin’s grain consumption grew from 36,300 tons in 1777 to 53,400 in 1803. This increased demand for production, along with the *Gutsherrschaft* system of economy, allowed the region east of the Elbe to comfortably absorb the post-1750 population increases seen across the German lands.

Some regions, such as Brandenburg-Prussia, had of course been home to recruiting campaigns during the 1760s to bring more land under cultivation. Württembergers, Badeners, Swiss and even neighbouring Mecklenburgers had moved into Brandenburg to take up the plots offered on favourable terms by Frederick the Great. As well as the reclamation of land and establishment of new farms in Mark Brandenburg, throughout the region the creation of cottager plots had also helped to meet the new demand for production. When population figures

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7 NA Treasury (T) 64/274/85-95, NA-CUST 5/1b. Totals are converted from customs measurement (British bushel/c. 80lbs) to imperial tons. By 1800 wheat was by far the most significant of the grains imported at 27,921 tons, with oats a distant second, followed by minimal imports of Barley and Rye.
8 Harnisch, ‘Peasants and Markets’ p. 50.
began to rise, the settling of cottagers on small plots with high labour duties was an agreeable method of increasing the number of farmhands available to each estate. In Mecklenburg the cottager title of Büdner had only come into use in 1756, but by the end of the eighteenth century these individuals were commonplace. For the whole East Elbian region, cottagers and day-labourers were the largest section of village society almost everywhere by the end of the century.10

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century the incentive for increased production was so high that wage labour also began to make an appearance. As bonded labourers, cottagers and small holders were already working as much as 6 days a week, landlords were compelled to hire in extra labour in order to further increase activity on their estates. Because increasing demand was driving up the value of grain, outlays on wages became more acceptable, and in a circular fashion, that outlay boosted productivity and profit in a self-supporting cycle. It was soon realised, unsurprisingly, that the productivity of paid labour was much higher than that of forced labour. In the last decades of the century, the ‘convenient and cheap’ philosophy of feudal estate production began to be challenged by the new realities – and profits – of the market.

In the 1790s ministerial discussion about agricultural reform began to increase, encouraged by Friedrich Wilhelm III after his accession to the Prussian throne in 1797. The profitability of privately run farms was tested by limited reform in 1799, although Prussian ministers had little power to enforce large scale changes on the noble estates, where landlords were not keen to abandon completely the principle of unpaid labour.11 Muted attempts were however transformed into complete legal overhaul after crushing defeats at the hands of Napoleon at Auerstedt and Jena in 1806, which induced a crisis in Prussian society. Modernisation of military and economic arrangements suddenly seemed long overdue, and the comfortable arrangements of old were cast aside in an attempt to release the region’s full productive power. Universal military service was introduced, taxation standardised, and most significantly, beginning in 1807, the

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11 Just before the defeats at Auerstedt and Jena, about 6,000 Prussian peasants and 2,000 small holders had gained legal property rights over their holdings. Ibid, p. 65.
system of serfdom abolished, in order to allow full agricultural rationalisation and achieve maximum production and profitability from the land.\textsuperscript{12} The resulting privatisation of the land fundamentally altered the socio-economic and demographic realities of life east of the Elbe.

The process of overturning the feudal agricultural system began on the 9\textsuperscript{th} of October, 1807, with the first of a series of legal edicts and reforms. The October Edict transformed land from the agent of feudalism into modern private property; the labour dues that burdened it and the restriction of its ownership to the noble classes were lifted. The hereditary ties of service for those who held title to the land were also abolished. Only when land was actually transferred into a peasant’s ownership were duties and hereditary ties actually broken, however, and on the 14\textsuperscript{th} of September, 1811, a second edict – which included compensation to the landlords for loss of labour – established the mechanism for transfer. Peasants who held land in full hereditary title were invited to cede one third of their holding to their lord in return for ownership of the rest and abolition of their duties. In 1816, those peasants with less favourable titles, who held lifetime or part time leases to their farms, were invited to cede 50\% of their holding in redemption for their services. Then, in 1821, the commons were divided among landowners, with the size of an individual’s holding determining the share of the commons they received; whilst the new landowning peasantry received minor benefits from this, the \textit{Gutsherren} were the major beneficiaries. Finally, in 1850, cottagers were invited to redeem their duties, usually for cash.

The big winners of the agrarian reforms were the landlords themselves. By mid-century they had received 1.3 million hectares in additional land from the peasantry, and a further 6 million hectares from the division of the commons.\textsuperscript{13} They were not the only beneficiaries, however. The decision to allow the Prussian peasants to devote their full energies to their own farms was not merely a measure to lift overall productivity. It also addressed social tension by appeasing the growing antagonism of the larger peasants. The small surpluses raised by these individuals had traditionally been drained of all useful profit by having to pay for


\textsuperscript{13} Friedrich Lenger, ‘Economy & Society’ in Sperber, \textit{Germany} pp. 91-114. p. 94.
labourers, servants and the lord’s farm maintenance; the improving markets for grain began to increase these meagre profits, but at the same time made the peasantry aware of the potential revenues to be had if they could devote one hundred per cent of their time to their own farms.\textsuperscript{14} A key principle of the reform era was to diffuse the growing landlord-peasant tensions of the late eighteenth century and increase the attachment of the population to the Fatherland through the medium of private property.\textsuperscript{15} For many of the more substantial peasants, the reforms were indeed the beginning of new prosperity. For the rest of the population however, they signalled the beginning of acute difficulty.

Practical problems for the landless and land-poor immediately arose with the loss of the commons, which were as much a lifeline here as they were for the Heuerlinge and cottagers of the North West. The most significant structural problem, however, was that these individuals, once a benefit to the feudal system, were now a burden to commercial production. Where once the cottager and the bonded labourer could be settled on minimal ground in return for maximum labour, in a commercial system, that outlay was no longer justifiable. Giving 1 – 3 hectares of the estate to a cottager, supporting a bonded labourer with food even when there was a shortage, and caring for them in old age when they were no longer of any use, were all drains on the productivity of the estate. The settlement policies of the second half of the eighteenth century were replaced by an increased refusal of settlement in the first half of the nineteenth. The creation of cottager plots and the hiring of bonded labourers slowed to a trickle; in short order a structural overpopulation of the wage-dependent developed. The non-inheriting offspring of the peasantry, and all of the offspring of the land-poor and landless, now simply swelled the ranks of paid labour, which depressed its value, and allowed the estates to be run on cheap seasonal employment with just a skeleton staff of bonded servicemen.

Particularly hard hit were the Knechte and Mägde, who found it increasingly difficult to establish a life beyond service. Not only were landlords unwilling to


\textsuperscript{15} For an exposition of the use of the reforms to strengthen patriotism and statehood, Henry Aimé Ouvry, Stein and His Reforms in Prussia, with Reference to the Land Question in England: And an Appendix Containing the Views of R. Cobden and J. S. Mill’s Advice to Land Reformers London, 1873.
provide cottager plots for these individuals, they had even begun to tear down basic housing on their estates, particularly the cottages of those bonded labourers who had ceased to be useful and had been released. Anything from old age to a fall in crop prices might result in the release of labour from the estate. The removal of unwanted buildings then allowed the Gutsherren to bring more of their land under cultivation. The application for a resident’s permit in Mecklenburg, which precluded the right to establish an independent household and to marry, was commonly met with the low German reply ‘kein Hüsung’ – no housing. So common was this response, that it inspired the widely published epic verse of the same name by Fritz Reuter, lamenting the fate of Mecklenburg workers. By 1848, one official in a single Mecklenburg district estimated the shortfall in housing in the demesne area at 1,100 units. Often unable to establish households of their own, young people who once may have become small holders, cottagers or Haftaglöhner, were forced to lodge as tenant labourers, with no clear future ahead of them other than underemployment and low wages. The extent of this problem was greatly dictated by the community structure in which newly landless individuals found themselves.

Historically, the settlement of the East Elbian region had developed in clear clusters, with the peasants owning hereditary titles forming Bauerndörfer, (peasants villages) and landlords settling lease holding cottagers and small holders in Gutsdörfer (manorial villages). Of the two, the Bauerndörfer were better able to accommodate growth after the rationalisation of agriculture, by continuing to parcel cottager plots to their kin and by housing them as tenant labourers. The Gutsdörfer however, were in crisis. After the reforms, it was these villages that suffered the most severe housing shortages as landlords refused to sanction the establishment of new units and tore down the existing ones. Without the means to establish a household, and therefore no right to marry, illegitimacy rates soared, and increasingly became socially acceptable because of the obvious crisis engulfing the labouring classes.

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As early as the 1830s poor working prospects for oversubscribed labour and the lack of settlement opportunity for young people began to send rural migration from Mecklenburg and Brandenburg into Berlin.\textsuperscript{18} Then in 1846, structural problems were severely heightened by a crisis of production. The failure of the grain harvest that year lowered already insufficient employment opportunities whilst simultaneously increasing the price of foodstuffs, producing a precarious situation in the countryside. As in 1816, bread was in such short supply that novel attempts were made at ersatz production, including the publication of one Pomeranian recipe for bread made of dried common grass roots, ground into flour.\textsuperscript{19} In 1848 the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz began leasing small plots at low rents to the cottagers in manorial villages in order to lower their dependence on wages.\textsuperscript{20} It was in this period, when the fortunes of the labouring class began to bottom out and tension with the landlords began to increase, that long distance emigration also began.

In 1846 and 1847 applications for emigration to America began to appear, and were often willingly signed by authorities who, in a period of mounting tensions, thought it wise to allow unhappy individuals to leave. America was not a totally unprecedented choice for the would-be migrants of the North East. The Adelsverein and publicity for Texas was at its peak during this period, and between 1838 and 1843, religious refugees, the Old Lutherans, had also left in organised groups from Brandenburg and Pomerania, heading for America. In protest of the forced merger of the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia in 1817, these individuals sought new land elsewhere, and whilst one initial group headed for South Australia, the rest went to the United States, first to New York State and then to the Midwest.\textsuperscript{21} Just like the settlement attempts in Texas, their movement was much publicised, and directed a nascent North Eastern movement from Mecklenburg, Brandenburg and Pomerania which both Bremen and Hamburg were well positioned to carry. However, the outbreak of revolutionary activity in 1848 ensured that these early beginnings remained muted. The ‘fight’ response to

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, p. 60.
\textsuperscript{20} Lubinski, ‘Overseas Emigration’ pp. 68-69.
\textsuperscript{21} Walker, Germany and the Emigration pp. 78-79.
the hardship of the hungry forties had the effect of temporarily interfering with the ‘flight’ response, especially when the hanseatic ports were blockaded by Denmark between 1848 and 1850. However, once civil strife subsided, and the blockades were lifted, emigration grew tremendously quickly.

From 1851, the number leaving Pomerania, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg climbed rapidly, particularly from the latter two regions. Because much of Brandenburg-Prussia was so recently colonist in nature, readiness to leave was high. In fact, the American emigration that established itself in this region was dominated by the ‘colonist villages’ which had been set up in the late eighteenth century. Where parents and grandparents had been offered not only peasant plots but favourable tax arrangements and building subsidies, the stark contrast of reformed and rationalised agriculture was enough to generate a renewed migratory response from the second and third generations. The heaviest American emigration from the North East however, came from Mecklenburg.

Occupying a solid geographic block of the North East, the two Duchies of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz were politically independent of the other East Elbian agricultural regions, which fell under Prussian rule (Pomerania, Posen, Brandenburg, West and East Prussia) but they shared the same Gutsherrschaft tradition, social structures, and agriculture. The abolition of serfdom also came slightly later here than elsewhere east of the Elbe, being completed by edicts which were officially adopted on the 22nd of April 1821. But once the region joined its neighbours in the agricultural revolution, peculiarities in the Mecklenburg legal code made its effects particularly harsh.

Legally a Mecklenburger had no homeland, in the sense of statehood, but rather a home location or community, a ‘Heimatort’. An individual was tied to their home district, rather than the duchies themselves. If an individual left their Heimatort and could not find work or settlement elsewhere, they were legally regarded as homeless, in effect stateless, and in accordance with article 12 of the Mecklenburg constitution, had to be delivered to the poorhouse. This was a relic of feudal management designed to give legal weight to hereditary servility, and prevent peasants from leaving demesne land. Under that system however,

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22 Unless specifically stated, the two duchies will hereafter be referred to collectively.
23 Koch ‘Folgen der Aufhebung’ pp. 80-81.
peasants were tied to their farms and had little incentive to leave, and landlords were obligated to find work and settlement for the offspring of their bonded labourers and peasants if it could not be found elsewhere, which was usually manifested in the form of cottager plots or further labouring contracts. Once the workforce was no longer rooted to the estate, however, and competition made work scarce and wages low, a greater fluidity of labour was inevitable. It was also inevitable that with increasing oversupply, the number of people in danger of falling foul of the law would grow. If Knechte, Mägde and labourers were denied a settlement permit, could not find anywhere to lodge or were released from the lodging they had, they were in real danger of being committed. As rationalisation measures tightened – threshing machines were introduced in Mecklenburg in 1850 – and the oversubscription of labour continued apace, the life options for many workers and young people literally boiled down to either poorhouse or permanent migration.24

In 1851, official statistics show that 3,519 individuals left Mecklenburg for America; the next year it was nearly 5,000; then in 1853, 6,561, and in 1854, 9,025, which equated to about 1.4% of the total population.25 Official figures however, are unrepresentative, as they only account for those who made the local authorities aware of their departure. Individuals with outstanding debts and taxes, or who owed military service, were not likely to flag attention to their emigration. On the 30th April, 1854, Hamburg authorities reported that around 7,000 people had already left ‘the little country’ of Mecklenburg that year.26 Given that this figure was taken just four months into the year from just one of the two major North German ports, the total figure of 9,000 for the 12 months of 1854 would appear a gross underestimation.

Data at the local level shows the clear degree to which the young and the wage dependent completely dominated the emigration. In the Domanialamt of Sternberg, in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the first incidence of American emigration


25 4,918 in 1852; totals from Lindig, ’Auswanderungswesens in Mecklenburg’

26 AAZ 6/5/1854.
was a local inn-keeper in 1851.\textsuperscript{27} Then, in 1853, 3 \textit{Knechte} left the district for America, marking the beginning of a movement dominated by their colleagues. Over the next 20 years, 43 emigration permits were registered in the district, with at least 74 individuals leaving. Of the 43 permits issued, 42\% went to \textit{Knechte} (6 travelled with an unmarried partner, 2 with illegitimate families), 23.3\% went to single young women (a significant number among them, and 9.3\% of the whole, were women travelling alone with illegitimate children) and 14\% of the group were older day-labourers, leaving with their families.\textsuperscript{28} In total, 80\% of those who applied to leave Sternberg for America were single young men and single young women, unmarried couples and labourers with their families.\textsuperscript{29} A sample of emigrant files from across Mecklenburg-Schwerin for 1863, the middle year of the Sternberg sample, shows remarkably similar data. Of 133 files from districts right across the Grand Duchy, 87\% were single young men and women, often with illegitimate children, and day-labourers and their families.\textsuperscript{30} In this larger sample, the largest and smallest group within the majority were exactly the same as in Sternberg. \textit{Knechte} were the most prominent, at 34.2\%, and unmarried girls with children the last major group, accounting for 10\% of the whole, an almost identical figure to the 9.3\% seen in the district sample.\textsuperscript{31}

Locally, the principal variation in the movement was between the \textit{Ritterschaft} and \textit{Domanial} areas. The \textit{Gutsherren} in the \textit{Ritterschaft} regions were particularly zealous in tearing down the cottages of labourers they no longer needed, and stringently denying settlement rights (\textit{Niederlassungsrecht}). They also commonly assisted the removal of population through emigration subsidies; the entire approach of the noble owned estates amounted to active de-population. The \textit{Domanial} areas were by no means immune to emigration however. Although they assisted less emigration, rationalised production still left the state-owned areas with an oversubscription of labour, and as these districts covered a larger area than the \textit{Ritterschaft}, they provided the highest volume of emigration, whilst the

\textsuperscript{27} MLHAS Domanialamt Warin-Neukloster-Sternberg-Tempzin 2.22-10/30 Bd1. P.68.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
Ritterschaft provided the greatest intensity.\textsuperscript{32} There does appear to be some consistency between the Domanial districts with the earliest and heaviest emigration, and their proximity to the Ritterschaftliches districts. This suggests that the landlords of the state owned demesne who were nearer to the harsher Ritterschaft emulated more closely the practice of their immediate neighbours, but the correlation requires further testing.\textsuperscript{33}

As the emigration gathered pace, another element – the bonded labourer – became an increasing figure in the movement, though for quite different reasons than the main group of migrants. The Hoftaglöhner, though economically secure, were socially the most anachronistic element of society. They were a remaining relic of the feudal age and, of course, an unpopular source of labour for landlords, carrying high year-round cost (as much as 200 Thaler in Mecklenburg) and taking up space on demesne land.\textsuperscript{34} The emigration of these individuals to America was less about the immediate pressures which led the Knechte, Mägde and regular labourers to spearhead the movement, and more about the almost binary inversion of personal position offered by migration to America. For Hoftaglöhner, American life represented the polar opposite of their position at home, where they could never hope to be landowners, and their personal freedom was limited by the demands of the estate.

The Hoftaglöhner was in the unique position of being able to easily transfer his servile and economically immobile position on the estate into a socially and economically free – possibly even landowning – position in the New World. Despite having virtually no real wages or any land, the estate of the bonded labourer was remarkably similar to the full peasant in other ways. He was often still responsible for general maintenance on the estate, and had his own small share of cattle and other livestock, as well as ploughs and tools. It became increasingly common for bonded labourers to sell off all of their livestock at auction, and then to sell off their tools and other possessions in a complete

\textsuperscript{32} Only 3 of the 43 cases of emigration from Domanial Amt Sternberg were state subsidized, all of them Knechte MLHAS 2.22-10/30 Bd1: pp.68-70.
\textsuperscript{33} Complete records for the privately owned Ritterschaft areas are not available, only records for the state-run Domanial districts exist in the Mecklenburg archives. However, the source indexes with the highest number of emigration entries in the Schwerin state archive belong to the Domanial districts which were bordered by Ritterschaft districts of the same name.
\textsuperscript{34} Lubinski, ‘Overseas Emigration’ p. 74.
liquidation of their assets. If they had good livestock, and a ‘competent housewife’ who had saved earnestly from maid service – *Hofiglöhner* of course, had no real financial outgoings – it was not out of the question for them to generate 500 to 600 Thaler in this process.\(^{35}\) The sums available to these individuals for emigration were princely compared to the servants and day labourers who often had to save for two years and receive subsidies from family or the state to pay for their passage. The desire of *Hofiglöhner* to leave also accorded perfectly with the new priorities of the landlords, who were keen to let them go. Although they never challenged the dominant majority of the *Knechte, Mägde* and regular labourer in the emigration, the contracted labourer nevertheless became a consistent element of it.

Rather than reverting to official statistics, the best indication of the impact of emigration in Mecklenburg is seen in population figures. Between 1819 and 1840, population grew very healthily, from 460,653 to 588,896, or by 22%.\(^{36}\) A huge amount of this growth, however, was superfluous in the new requirements of the agricultural system, and simply provided the region’s migrant pool. Between 1840 and 1854, population growth had already dropped to just 7.7%, from 588,896 to 638,605, as the emigration of the early 1850s set in.\(^{37}\) Then between 1854 and 1871, growth was just 1.7%, moving from 638,605 to just 650,000.\(^{38}\) This small amount of growth was driven solely by the *Bauerndörfer*, where peasants could still accommodate their offspring; in this period the *Ritterschaft* regions contracted by an average of 10-15%, collectively declining in population by 25,000, with losses driven by the shrinking *Gutsdörfer*.\(^{39}\) Of the 133 emigration files in the state-wide sample for 1863, 78 related to individuals who had been born in the period of strong population growth between 1819 and 1840; 17 more

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\(^{37}\) Ibid.

\(^{38}\) Ibid, p. 76.

\(^{39}\) Klaus Baudis, ‘Jeder dritte Mecklenburger lebte außerhalb der Heimat’ *Mecklenburg Magazin* 13/7/90, 9, pp. 1-2; Reno Stutz, ‘Neue Fakten zum Thema Auswanderung’ *Mecklenburg Magazin* 7/8/90, 11, p. 5.
were born in the 1840s.\textsuperscript{40} The socio-economic container had shrunk, and the landless of these generations now flowed over the top.

In total, Mecklenburg’s recorded American emigration amounted to some 170,000 in the second half of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{41} For a region with just 650,000 inhabitants, this contribution to the German-American movement was massively out of kilter to the size of population, the growth of which essentially stalled until the turn of the twentieth century. Not only was it the most intense migration of any German region, after 1850, Mecklenburg had the most intense emigration of any European territory outside of Ireland and Polish Galicia.\textsuperscript{42} Only the comparatively less severe effects of mid-century subsistence crisis prevented the population from going into absolute reverse, as happened in Ireland. Instead, population crawled forward at a glacial pace, despite very high birth rates, with the majority of births from the 1830s onwards being drawn off by emigration once the individuals reached maturity. One need not look for long in the local histories to find the oft-printed statement that by the turn of the twentieth century, every third Mecklenburger lived outside of the country.

The primacy of structure is quite clear in the case of the Mecklenburg emigration. Its legal system and the harsh approach of its noble landowners aggravated the basic structural problems caused by agrarian reforms, and the region produced an even heavier emigration than in neighbouring Brandenburg, where long-distance migration was a far more entrenched local tradition. The agrarian reforms quite clearly revised downward the capacity of society to hold population, and the uniformity of the migration, dominated as it was by the young and the wage labouring classes, shows clearly the victims of those reforms. ‘Victim’ may be an unpopular word in modern migration historiography, but the reform period and clear evidence of who applied to emigrate make it abundantly clear that this sudden movement was produced by socio-economic factors disproportionately affecting certain groups.

The extent to which the emigration was caused primarily by structural problems is also demonstrated by the fact that proportionally, the largest

\textsuperscript{40} These individuals thus represented 71.4% of the total. Wiegand, ‘Die Auswanderung’ pp. 281-288.
\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Historischer und geographicisher Atlas} p. 76. Between 1820-1890 total out-migration, including urban migration to Berlin and Hamburg, was 261,000.
\textsuperscript{42} Baudis, ‘Jeder dritte Mecklenburger’ p. 1.
emigration took place in the early 1850s. That means the emigration behaved in the reverse fashion to usual expectations, wherein self-generating propensities deliver it to its peak; rather, it began with a bang, and then settled into a lower, but constant and heavy resting level, instead of building up as local communications with the New World increased. There is no doubt even in these early stages that once American migration touched a community, others would be encouraged to follow, but it would be incorrect to view the primary cause of the movement as anything other than the consequence of a structural overflow. That overflow manifested itself into American emigration because just as it was becoming critical, national attention on American settlement was reaching a crest, and the local North German transport networks and agents were perfectly placed to convey the labourers and servants of the region quickly and cheaply.

The agents of the northern ports were a recurring figure in the rural villages of the North East. In the Mecklenburg Domanial Amt Boizenburg, lying just off the eastern bank of the Elbe, the Hamburg agent Phillip Lazarus, having contracted 100 people to leave the district in 1854, returned just three years later looking for repeat custom.\(^43\) He managed to gain a further 39 signatures before moving on to his next stop, in a year when business was once again brisk.\(^44\) Despite a dip in custom during the previous two years thanks to events in the U.S., by the end of 1857 Mecklenburg emigration had recovered to more than three quarters of its 1854 level.\(^45\) Eyeing its return, the ducal authorities became troubled by the de-populatory effects that had been produced by the prior wave of emigration to 1854, and began working to prevent further movement. In so doing, they displayed a clear understanding of the factors which maintained migration. In 1857, the agricultural office in Schwerin published a report on the state of the industry, which included advice and policy attempts aimed at stemming the emigration from the estates.

Firstly, the ducal authorities were concerned about the loss of capital and manpower the emigration caused. This was a typical state concern, grounded in politics and traditional notions of wealth and strength that were somewhat

\(^{43}\) MLHAS 2.22-10.1, Nr 9d, 20.
\(^{44}\) MLHAS 2.22-10.1, Nr 9d, 33-43.
\(^{45}\) Again, these figures are based on official statistics, which as a volume comparison are nevertheless a suitable indication. Lindig, ‘Auswanderungswesens in Mecklenburg’
detached from the priorities of estate life. The degree to which the emigration was viewed in political terms was clear from the praise the report heaped on the ‘wise individuals’ who had assisted the emigration of those ‘dissatisfied with their lot’ around the time of the 1848 upheavals.\textsuperscript{46} It was hoped that the level of dissatisfaction was merely a symptom of the ‘excitement of that year’, but to believe as much showed great ignorance of the underlying factors which caused that excitement – the same underemployment and poverty that caused the migration. Clearly concerned at the potential for increased loss of national strength, and aware that it was being drained most heavily from the \textit{Ritterschaft} areas, the report suggested that the \textit{Ritterschaft} should try and obtain the return of ‘good and needed labourers’.\textsuperscript{47}

A scheme was announced which would work in partnership with the Mecklenburg consulate in North America to return dissatisfied emigrants to their former plots on the \textit{Ritterschaft} estates. Any policy of return migration showed a complete ideological disconnect with the reality of labour dynamics on demesne land. On the other hand, the policy showed a shrewd appreciation of the dynamics of the emigration itself. The state was aware that those seeking out the consulate in the hope of securing a return were doing so because their emigration had ended in failure.\textsuperscript{48} The report noted that ‘it is already often the case that bad letters from emigrated friends reverse the plans of those with the desire to emigrate. But still more would be dissuaded if such irrational families returned home again.’\textsuperscript{49} The state may not have been able to control the priorities of the landlords, but if it secured just some of this hoped-for return migration, it realised it might alter the priorities of the migrants themselves. In an attempt to stem the flow of its loss of subjects, the policy was an astute attempt to break the chains of migration.

The authorities in Mecklenburg understood – as did authorities across all the affected German regions – that fundamental element of emigration that so fascinated migration historians toward the end of the twentieth century; that

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
migrant communications were a crucial mechanism in maintaining and guiding emigration. Controlling those communications appeared a better solution than trying to control the forces that motivated people to act upon them. It was an impracticable approach, but one based on a fundamental truism; wherever conditions might be difficult, potential migrants were likely to become actual migrants when they had information and precedent to follow. In the German South West, where information and precedent were ubiquitous, the number of potential migrants was expanding prolifically at mid-century.

In December 1848, Gottlieb Lang, a villager in Neipperg, received a letter from his brother-in-law, Johannes Kuhnle, a clandestine emigrant and apparently indebted villager who had fled the community at some point in late 1845 or 1846, and ended up in the American Midwest. Kuhnle was one of Neipperg’s two clandestine migrants in the first half of the nineteenth century, the other was Johann Beck, who had ‘disappeared to an unknown destination in 1817’ but whose death had been recorded in New Orleans in 1826. In his letter to Lang, Kuhnle stated that he was living in Montgomery County, Ohio. This was no coincidence; the only legally recorded case of American emigration from Neipperg prior to 1849 was than of Johann Georg Knapp, a cooper who went to Montgomery County, Ohio, in 1845.

In their prior correspondence, Lang had informed Kuhnle of the troubles in Germany in the earlier part of the year (the March revolutions of 1848.) Kuhnle remarked that hopefully it would soon all be over, and that the country would someday have the same freedoms as America. He also hoped that someday soon one might be able to earn a good living again in Germany; unfortunately he himself had met with ill health on arrival in America, and had also suffered poor earnings. Fortunately, he was now earning a wage as a farm labourer in the summer and working in a brewery in the winter (likely work that the cooper Johann Knapp had found him.) Kuhnle noted however, that ‘if I had remained healthy, I would have

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52 Ibid, p. 64.
been able to earn more in a year than in Germany, and would have learned much more too.\textsuperscript{53} It was a typical letter, not one inviting or encouraging Lang to follow the same path, but one that painted a realistic picture of the healthy employment opportunities in America, and one which lamented the state of affairs in Germany.

In 1849, the brothers Jakob and Phillip Beck, nephews of the ‘disappeared’ Johann, left Neipperg for America. At least one of them headed to New Orleans.\textsuperscript{54} The very next person to leave Neipperg was Johannes Lang, a labourer, and cousin of Gottlieb Lang – the recipient of Kuhnle’s letters. In 18 months the emigration of the previous 48 years was matched, and clearly directed by the minimal movements which had preceded it. By the end of 1851, 10 more people had left; by 1854, 59 had gone.\textsuperscript{55} After half a century of virtually non-existent emigration other than the odd chancer or fortune seeker, the chains of migration suddenly began to pull on Neipperg, dragging the village into the great mid-century South Western movement. The agrarian crisis of mid-century proved to be specifically acute in the South West, and because of the density with which American migratory chains were laid across the region, the resulting movement was huge.

The food crisis was a trigger to emigration everywhere, including, as we have seen, in the North East, and it also coincided with the greatest depression in the international linen trade experienced during the nineteenth century, helping to deliver North West German emigration to its high-point.\textsuperscript{56} But the initial harvest failures of potatoes in 1845, then again in 1846, compounded by grain failures the same year, were only the beginning of a prolonged agricultural disaster for the South, and merely marked the beginning of a prolonged and heavy emigration peak.

When the staple crops failed, communities which had balanced their agriculture over the previous half century were no longer immune to the pull of emigration. At least 10 people left Neckarhausen in 1846, a village which had sent no migrants to America since the Rotterdam-Pennsylvania era.\textsuperscript{57} In Pfaffenhofen,
exposed as it was to crisis in the cereal harvest, 25 people left the village in 1847, among them were 2 weavers, a bricklayer, a winegrower, 2 widows, and the village butcher, who had lost 2 young children during the food shortage of the previous year.\textsuperscript{58} It has been suggested that the effects of food crisis in the region were stemmed by a bountiful wine harvest in 1846.\textsuperscript{59} This is certainly not borne out by the local records, all of which, whether for Baden or Württemberg, show 1846 to be the year that the emigration expanded precipitously into previously unaffected communities.\textsuperscript{60} Between 1846 and 1849 nearly 30,000 people left Württemberg alone, almost twice as many as the previous three year high of 16,331, reached between 1840 and 1843.\textsuperscript{61} The confusion comes from the even more dramatic upshift seen in the early 1850s, when it certainly is accurate to draw attention to the wine harvest, because it failed, repeatedly.

In 1850, 1851, and again in 1854, the vintage was ruined. The effect this had on emigration makes the prior strong upswing appear insignificant in comparison. The sequential failure of the potato crop, grain harvest and grape harvest completely collapsed the fragile rural economy. In villages where American emigration was already deeply entrenched and close connections with the New World numerous, the period between 1846 and 1854 saw unprecedented departures. Between these dates, the village of Ölbronn lost 14\% of its population to America, (113 emigrants,) in Diefenbach the number was even higher, with a contraction of 15.5\%, (106 emigrants) whilst Lomersheim and Massenbach both lost 7\% of their population (52 and 72 individuals respectively).\textsuperscript{62} The mid-century emigration then reached its high point when the wine-growing communities suffered the second successive collapse of their cash crop.

With a string of terrible luck, the monocultures of communities like Neipperg became their undoing. Whilst emigration began to pull on these communities as a result of the crop failures of the late forties, during 1852, the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{58}] LKA KB nr. 1034/II bd.13.
\item[\textsuperscript{59}] See Kamphoefner, Helbich and Sommer, \textit{News from the Land of Freedom} p. 3, also Kamphoefner ‘Crossroads’ pp. 183-188.
\item[\textsuperscript{60}] See chapter 2, p. 62.
\item[\textsuperscript{61}] Hippel, \textit{Auswanderung aus Südwestdeutschland} p. 139.
\end{itemize}
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trickle of emigrants became a flood. The village of Sternenfels, a community of viticulture and an immediate neighbour of Diefenbach - today they are administratively the same community - is a striking example of the misery caused by the wine failure. Sternenfels, unlike its neighbour, had sent only 10 emigrants to America in the first half of the nineteenth century, but between 1852 and 1854, more than 120 people left the village; American flight was an obvious course of action in parishes where previously less fortunate neighbours had created such an established precedent.\(^{63}\) By the time the agricultural crisis of the South entered its peak, poverty had spread to virtually every community, and emigration with it. By 1852, the rural situation in Württemberg was desperate; during the ‘winter of hunger’ that year, almost one quarter of the population had to be supported by the government.\(^{64}\) In the winegrowing regions of the Palatinate and Baden, the situation was not much better. The spiralling public cost of supporting impoverished communities, as well as the rising flood tide of emigration gave rise to an obvious union. Local councils and even the state now began to support and fund the removal of the poor to America.

Subsidised removal of the poor was a logical solution to the rising strain on the community poor box. In 1851, the Lomersheim community council decided that 25 year old Christian Boger, who had fallen foul of the law and was unemployed, was a public charge the village should no longer carry. He was costing the community 12 Kreuzer a day, which equated to almost 150 Gulden annually.\(^{65}\) Far cheaper to give him 70 Gulden outright on the condition that he leave for America as soon as possible.\(^{66}\) Evidently young Christian was of prestigious stock, as the following year his entire family campaigned the council for funds to reach America, which were given, to the sum of 316 Gulden.\(^{67}\) Such requests from the poorer villagers were commonplace in the early 1850s, although local authorities were not always able to meet their subjects’ demands.

In Sternenfels, 36 families and single adults, totalling 150 people, petitioned the district government in 1853 for funds to cross the Atlantic. Their petition

\(^{63}\) Drechsler, ‘Diefenbacher und Sternenfelser verlassen ihre Heimat’ pp. 243-249.
\(^{64}\) Kamphoefner, Helbich and Sommer, News from the Land of Freedom p. 533.
\(^{65}\) Dussel and Adam, Lomersheim pp. 218-219.
\(^{66}\) Ibid.
\(^{67}\) Ibid.
stated that ‘since we will soon now all be standing on the edge of despair... we have determined to emigrate to America as soon as possible, to save our lives, whilst there is still time. But our plan is missing the means, namely the money, to pay the cost of travel.’\textsuperscript{68} Although the local council – unsurprisingly – supported this petition, the district government calculated that the total cost involved, for a group that eventually numbered 187, was just too much. Their transport costs alone would amount to 12,000 Gulden.\textsuperscript{69} The petition never generated the funds, and eventually the local community council scraped together the very modest sum of 400 Gulden to subsidize the emigration costs of 10 villagers already living from the poor box.\textsuperscript{70}

Subsidized emigration reached its greatest extent in Baden, where it evolved from a popular strategy of relieving local welfare costs to an attempted strategy of social management. Given the particularly virulent nature of the uprising in Baden in 1848, indeed, the Grand Duchy might arguably be regarded as the core of events, state authorities were favourable to the idea of thinning the population to take pressure off the land, and to ensure lasting social and economic peace. In 1850 54,090 Gulden was spent in Baden to help subsidize emigration. By 1854 the amount had risen to to 516,688 Gulden, although only a tenth of that came directly from the government, its contributions having crested and fallen in just a five-year window.\textsuperscript{71} By this time the interior ministry had decided that such a strategy was merely ‘subsidizing laziness and immorality’ and was in no way a practical or sustainable social policy.\textsuperscript{72} At its mid-century peak, subsidies may have supported around 20% of the emigration from Baden, and at the local level, community subsidies in Württemberg supported between 5 and 15% of the mid-century migration from each village examined in this study. Even though the totals were never prodigious, the mid-century policy of relieving the community of its worst burdens nonetheless allowed the very poorest in society the chance to

\textsuperscript{68}Drechslar, ‘Diefenbacher und Sternenfelser’ p. 227
\textsuperscript{69}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{70}Ibid, p.229.
\textsuperscript{72}Walker, \textit{Germany and the Emigration} p. 146.
emigrate, further widening the ample American migratory channels serving the South West.

Between 1849 and 1854 emigration from Württemberg, Baden, the Bavarian Palatinate and Main regions, and from the Grand Duchy of Hesse totalled nearly 350,000 individuals, around 60% of the entire German total. Württemberg led with over 140,000 migrants, the Palatinate and Franconian Main regions sent 80,000, Baden over 62,000, and the Grand Duchy of Hesse over 50,000.\textsuperscript{73} Emigration from the South West had evolved from a movement generated by anti-competitive measures in the wage economy, to a larger movement that had come to affect entire communities unable to support themselves on small-scale agriculture, to a mass phenomenon which affected the entire region with great force in the face of widespread economic collapse.

During the process of this regional evolution, the movement across Germany had built in a similarly expansive fashion, along the same chronological lines. At the middle stage of South Western developments, the German North West had begun to send emigrants to America when the precarious position of one social stratum was critically compromised by outside events. By the time agricultural crisis began to deliver South Western emigration to its peak, it had also triggered an outflow of the young and wage earning classes of the North East who had become superfluous elements in large scale commercial agriculture. The difficulties of each region were unique to local situations, but by the early 1850s, they had gathered into an emigration which had become a national phenomenon, bound by the transport lines and businesses that thrived on its presence. Although in smaller number than the South West, North West and North Eastern hubs, by 1854 every German region was sending emigrants; it was now not uncommon for individuals from Schleswig or Saxony to seek out transport from the Hanseatic ports. On the second of March, 1854, the Allgemeine Auswanderung-Zeitung reported that now 'like so many other parts of Germany, so too many thousands

\textsuperscript{73} Hippel Auswanderung aus Südwestdeutschland p.139; Dr. Georg Krieg ‘Entwicklung und gegenwärtiger Zustand des Auswanderungswesens in Königreich Bayern’ in Phillipovich Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik pp. 1-96, p.90; Eugen von Phillipovich ‘Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik im Großherzogtum Baden’ in ibid, pp. 97-166, p.109; Moirer ‘On the he Land Tenure in the Grand Duchy of Hesse’ where emigration was not enumerated until 1861, gives the figure 58,698 for 1849-55, by calculating what the population should be as a result of births over deaths, and what it actually was, with American emigration cited as the principal reason for the deficit, p.49.
move in Thuringia.'  Whatever the conditions may have been in Thuringia, (the report only actually listed 123 port arrivals the previous Saturday) many individuals now clearly deemed conditions in America preferable to those at home. Even if the figures began to retreat in 1855, the downturn was symptomatic of a mere temporary problem, a glitch on the American side, which, for the rest of the century, would be the only factor able to interfere with mass-scale migration.

In that year, emigrant numbers dropped back significantly from the ¼ million mark achieved in 1854. This was no doubt partly from the relief provided to many communities by the massive cumulative outpouring of the previous five years, but also because of a change in tone in the information being received from America. In the spring of 1855, Christian Frik, a widower in Ölbronn, received a letter from his son, Andreas, who had emigrated the previous autumn, not long after the death of his mother. Andreas had moved to Ohio, and was living with his sister and brother in law. He was bitterly disappointed at what he found in America. He wrote to his father that he now knew ‘what kinds of lies are written to Germany... they write of good, fertile lands, and of good food and high wages. In all of my travels in America, I’ve seen little good land, and here in Cincinnati, everything is so uneven and stony from one hill to another, that one is not in a position to just farm the land (for a living.)' Aside from the fact that all the good land was taken, Andreas also lamented that the wages had mostly been lied about too, and that at the moment times were very hard. The previous summer was dry, and the factories and trades were quiet, with unemployment rife. To top it all off, America was a godless place, where the Germans abandoned their faith once they stepped off the boat.

Whatever the recipients of his letter (it was also addressed to his siblings) thought of American faithlessness, Andreas’ complaints on the American economy were likely not the first that had been heard in Ölbronn. The downturn of 1854/5 was a common theme of letters home that year, but a single year of tempered, and

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74 AAZ 2/3/54.
75 I am grateful to Johanna Kirsch of the Kreisarchiv Enzkreis for providing me with a transcript of this letter, which the archive received as a donation from the private family records of Dr Otto Wilhelm. (No cataloguing data)
76 'Bis jetzt weiß ich so zimmlich[sic] was fiele[sic] für Lügen nach Deutschland schreiben... sie schreiben von schönen fruchtbaren Ländern, von guter Kost und großem Lohn. Ich habe auf meiner ganzen Reise in Amerika wenig schönes Land gesehen, auch hier bei Sensenati ist alles so uneben steinig und ein Hügel an dem andern, so dass man bereits nicht im Standte[sic] ist nur das Land zu bauen.'
even negative reflection, could not undo the position America had attained in Ölbronn, nor could it dislodge the position America had now achieved throughout the German lands. The emigration had reached a turning point, a critical mass, and a significant point in its evolution. Within three years the movement regained considerable strength, and it would go on to achieve its highest ever numbers during the second half of the nineteenth century.

In the words of the popular migration historian Maldwyn Jones, once emigration had become a truly national habit, it no longer needed any special stimulus to keep it going. With millions of letters arriving every year, modernised transportation networks conveying people cheaply across the Atlantic in days, and with every German region and locality knowing friends, neighbours and relatives who had set the precedent, the decision to migrate in the second half of the century was not what it had been in the first. Having established how the emigration began in its core provider regions, including re-assessing the South West and addressing the oft-untouched topic of the North East, the cumulative nature of the movement to the 1850s marks the point at which localised structures recede from discussion. In the interplay between structure and agency, agency now began to achieve a greater primacy. The urgency to emigrate was increasingly driven less by need – serious economic and subsistence crises were largely absent for the rest of the century – and more by accessibility, affordability, and the familiarity of migration as a social and economic choice. The large scale emigration of the second half of the century, determined more by pathways than push factors, is nowhere better illustrated than in the North East, where the fears of the Mecklenburg authorities ultimately proved to be well founded.

Within ten years of the emigration establishing itself in Mecklenburg, Brandenburg and Pomerania, it had moved further east, to even more sparsely populated West Prussia, eventually even reaching the far flung outpost of East Prussia. Yet by the 1880s, a decade in which nearly one and a half millions left Germany, the drain on population from the East Elbian estates had proved so great,

77 Maldwyn A. Jones Destination America p. 70.
that they were now under-populated. The once occasional use of cheap seasonal Polish workers had now become a necessity due to the shortage of native labour. Right until the end of the century single young men left in droves. Moving to America was far from a necessity, but it was an easily achieved and preferable option to a life of limited horizons on the large commercial farms, and those horizons were clearly laid before the young workers by decades of tradition and family ties in the New World.

By the very end of the nineteenth century, the North East in fact provided the majority of emigrants, taking the lead which the South West had established in the first half of the period. Even if it rescinded its pole position however, the emigration nevertheless continued to draw individuals from communities in the South West, as well as the North West, decade after decade, even after these regions had passed through the worst of their material crises. Indeed, it remained a feature of all regions, regularly drawing large numbers. The last remaining structural question, and one of overarching importance, must ask why this habit persisted for so long, and significantly, what broke it? The answer to which reveals a great deal about the collection of emigrations which accumulated into the mass German phenomenon.
Through the second half of the nineteenth century, there was very little stress in the German states that could compare to the experience of the late 1840s and early 1850s, yet the emigration continued in huge volumes. From the 1850s through to the 1880s, it drew off between 700,000 and 1.4 million each decade, with precipitating factors controlling the rhythm of its chronological peaks and troughs. After the enormous surge in the early 1850s, natural relief saw the figures recede somewhat, and they were thereafter hindered during the early 1860s by the American Civil War. This event dropped migration totals back to the levels seen around 1840, when emigration had been highly localised in Western communities. After the war, a prolonged period of high emigration followed, a combined result of previous restrictions on the movement, and anxieties over the

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German Wars of Unification. Depression on both sides of the Atlantic in the mid to late 1870s dropped levels back again, as letters harking back to those of young Andreas Frick once again began to circulate. However, when economic prospects picked up in the early 1880s, so too did emigration. During that decade, the movement achieved its numerical peak, although a great deal of the volume was in fact confined to its early years. It looked like the emigration might deliver another sustained peak again in the 1890s, as word of the closing of the American frontier encouraged another short burst, but it failed to return to the levels seen a decade before, and was now in a state of irreversible decline.

In the second half of the century, the movement was therefore not one of crisis, but one of pathways, achieving its greatest volumes when they were subject to the least impediment. It was through such a prolonged engagement with those pathways that the German movement achieved its overall lead in the European movements west. By the 1850s, the German migrant had overtaken the Irish as the most numerous among the foreign born in America, and was still consolidating this lead with impressive late century figures when Italian and Southern European immigrants began to arrive. As longevity was the key to the ultimate size of the German migration, it is both necessary and instructive to ask why the pathways established prior to the mid-nineteenth century were engaged with for such an unprecedented amount of time, and what eventually led to their abandonment. In order to do so, broader considerations of the German national context are required.

The last 20 years of the nineteenth century were a time of crucial developmental shifts in German migration. As much as 40% of American emigration in the 1880s was achieved in the years 1880 – 1882. In fact, 1881 marked the last high point of the American movement. Thereafter, migration was increasingly directed inwards, producing the terminal decline of the American movement. From the 1880s onwards, the Ruhr region and Berlin became the principal hubs of German in-migration, as a rapidly advancing economy produced a suddenly massive demand for labour. Figure 2 shows the volume of commercial (i.e. non-agricultural) business in Württemberg, Bavaria (incl. Palatinate) and the German states collectively, 1832 – 1925:

\[ \text{Kamphoefner, Helbich and Sommer, News from the Land of Freedom p. 17.} \]
The end of the American emigration set in when Germany’s rapid industrial expansion began. Industrial capacity was of course always a foil to emigration; whether for an isolated community on the Swabian Alb, or for entire regions such as the Prussian Rhinelands or much of Saxony, it provided the employment necessary for surplus rural population. If industrialisation was the elixir to end emigration, the factors limiting its development, both locally and chronologically, and which eventually caused its explosion, are intricately linked to understanding the movement. To gain a full account of the structural causes of German emigration, it is necessary to know not only the specific agricultural insufficiencies that led certain regions to build migratory pathways, but why those particular regions remained dependent on agricultural economies so far past their carrying capacities. As the migratory networks were then maintained by a lack of internal alternatives, it is also necessary to understand why the industrial alternative failed to arise for such a long time.

All of these factors – local dependence on agriculture, a drawn out lack of industrial take-off, and in the final event, take-off itself - are intimately linked to the political particularism that characterised Germany for much of the nineteenth

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century. By extension, that political separatism is a key consideration in understanding the migratory movement. This chapter examines the critical role of political separation in the German industrial timeline, and by extension its role in producing and sustaining a uniquely German emigration.

The particularism and separation that defined German politics and economy in the nineteenth century was a product of a reactionary period, and ensured that many populations would have to live within local structures and a superstructure unable to accommodate their material needs. For the victorious European powers of 1815, and particularly the German states, lasting victory over Napoleon went beyond the battlefield, and meant a return to the monarchical order. Although Bonaparte had either swept away or amalgamated several hundred small German states, for the 39 that were maintained, revived or reformed by the 1815 Vienna settlement, law and order at home and balance in Europe was envisaged through the divine right of monarchical sovereigns to rule their subjects. All parties, German states and European powers, were interested in a settlement that legitimised the surviving German monarchies and gave them sovereign rights; this would serve the dual purpose of confirming the monarchical principle, and would prevent the creation of a large unified German power, which neither the petty German monarchs, Austria, Russia, Prussia nor Great Britain were interested in seeing. As a result, the German Confederation (Bund) was created.

As the entity which replaced the Holy Roman Empire, the Confederation pointedly acknowledged the independent sovereignty of the various German kingdoms, duchies and principalities, as well as the four free cities – Hamburg, Bremen, Lübeck and Frankfurt. It was designed to be a community of independent states, entirely responsible for their own domestic affairs, with military defence their only shared obligation.\(^4\) In a nod to its historical position within German

Europe, Austria was given a nominal role in overseeing the new Confederation, of which it was a member state. In the eyes of the ultra-conservative Austrian first minister, Metternich, that meant applying diplomatic pressures when and where necessary to make sure the *Bund* persisted as a political entity. In attempting to maintain the monarchical principle over the republican nationalist ideas of the enlightenment, no other great power had as great an interest in the survival of the *Bund* than the Habsburgs. The functional dynamic of the newly created entity was of critical importance to continental Europe’s greatest imperial monarchy. Investing each of the German monarchs with individual sovereignty and legitimising their right to rule would lead them to naturally defend their privileged position against any compromising forces, including republicanism or any attempt to unify the German states. In turn this would prevent a large German nation state from appearing on Austria’s doorstep, compromising both its power and its royal legitimacy even more fatally than the French Revolution, in turn sending ideas of national unity into the South Eastern ethnic provinces of its empire. The strategy was highly successful, as the individual monarchs resisted integration by any means possible for decades thereafter.

Metternich allowed the maintenance of the *Bund* a dominant role in his affairs. In 1819, when a reactionary conservative publisher was murdered by a student with ideas for German-wide national unity, the Austrian chancellor initiated the oppressive Karlsbad decrees. These measures were put before, and passed by the representatives of the various German states in their nominal assembly at Frankfurt. The repressive measures included the monitoring of universities, banning of student associations, and censorship of the press, taking their aim at any arena in which discussions of nationalist ideals might take place. Significantly, the decrees also gave the Confederation, although it lacked any form of government, the right to intervene in the individual states in order to suppress any dissent against the ruling order. They were added to 13 years later when the right to public assembly was banned, and a secret police force formed.5 So within short order of its creation, the *Bund* received powers to intervene in the domestic affairs of the member states, but only to prevent them from being compromised as separate, independent entities. The major historical debate over the *Bund*,

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5 Ibid, p. 42.
particularly the years 1815-1848, concerns whether the institution and the era were characterised by restoration or reform. In truth, the single overriding characteristic was the reactionary maintenance of the individual interests of the particular states; whether those states pursued internal policies of restoration or reform came down to the course of action specific rulers believed best for maintaining their independent status. Separation and individual interest carried every decision, whether it was in decrees against unifying activity, or economic policies which rulers believed would sustain their position.

Economically, the Bund was characterised by a backwardness that was produced by its structural character. The defence of particular interests ensured a distinct and debilitating lack of integration, which insulated outmoded economic models, restricted trade, and ensured that the overall economic capacity of the Confederation was low. Moreover the states often pursued priorities that were injurious to one another, sometimes intentionally so, especially when it came to transportation and transit through German territory. In the eighteenth century, Voltaire had declared that fragmentation and separation ‘condemned Germany to poverty.’ 6 The Bund ensured that the condemnation continued. It enormously hindered economic development, and was especially injurious to the subjects of territories whose leaders sought a return not only to eighteenth century principles of monarchy, but to eighteenth century principles of economy, despite the rapidly changing needs of society.

Not all states embarked on a return to the economic status quo, even if they embraced a return to conservative political apparatus. For some, an embrace of economic innovation seemed the best way to legitimise regimes. Frederick Wilhelm III, King of Prussia, was far more interested in maintaining law and order in Germany through co-operation with the conservative Metternich than attempting to challenge Austria for German supremacy, as Frederick the Great had done. 7 Yet he was very agreeable to the use of the most modern economic approaches in order to bolster the condition of his own Kingdom. The consequences of this approach would be eminently significant to those more in the

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7 Ibid, p. 4.
vein of his great uncle, but in the immediate term, Frederick Wilhelm III was concerned with repairing the damage to his Kingdom inflicted by France, and allowing it to compete with the most modern economies of the West. He thus allowed a modernising ministry to carve out a new Prussian system in the years immediately preceding and following the 1815 settlement. Although in generations to come Pomeranian and West and East Prussian peasants would fall victim to the agrarian agenda of Prussian reform, in the newly acquired Western districts of Prussia, centred on the Rhinelands, industrial legislation showed what could be done to anchor populations to German soil.

A fixation of structural causes in the German migration is that German producers were subject to foreign competition with which they could not compete. However, why British manufacturing, which was global in its output, should have been so particularly damaging to German producers is not usually addressed, despite the fact it is a far more instructive question. To take the line of enquiry to an even finer degree of detail, it is worth recognising that all German regions were subject to this competition, yet only some were negatively affected. The difference lay in the solutions sought by German rulers to the challenges of the nineteenth century economy; among conservatives, defence and protectionism was pursued, among modernisers, the creation of conditions that would allow equal competition were sought. The Prussian industrial agenda in the early nineteenth century was determined entirely by the latter, and was effective in fostering industrial take-off.

The same Prussian ministers that worked to revoke the feudal system of the Kingdom's Eastern provinces, Baron Karl von Stein (chief minister until 1808) and his successor, Karl August von Hardenberg, also sought to overhaul conditions of manufacture and production. They wished to rid Prussia of the eighteenth century systems – associated with Frederick the Great, but typified throughout Germany – based on state subsidies, monopolistic chartered companies, and prohibitive tariff protection; the end goal was a liberal economy based on comprehensive freedom of enterprise. To that end, legislative measures and a raft of modernising commercial policies were pursued, so that the economy would develop 'rural

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manufacturing and the adoption of technology appropriate to Prussia." The first major step was to emasculate the guilds, which the reforming ministry cited as technologically restrictive. Despite immense opposition and the appeals of conservative leaders to the King, this was achieved on November 2nd, 1810, when the guilds were stripped of their coercive powers to control output and production methods, and to restrict income activity to a single occupation. The regulation of local economic affairs was handed over to the police, who were charged with maintaining good sense and order. A year later even this was dropped, in a second act of September 7th, 1811. Neither guild nor police authority now had any say in regulating economic affairs or production methods. Guild membership became entirely voluntary, and the right to practice a trade depended on the payment of a simple fee. The guilds became powerless institutions deprived of all significance.

The attack on uncompetitive corporate bodies also extended to the breaking of large state backed monopolies, including those enjoyed by the Prussian mining corps and the *Seehandlung* (merchant marine). In 1815, when the French menace was removed and order returned to Germany, the modernising process of the Prussian ministry might have been abandoned; there were calls for a return to guild privileges, and Frederick Wilhelm III began to voice certain reservations over the reform process. But whilst Prussia embraced the conservative political rationale of the moment, the liberalising economic agenda survived and in fact gathered pace. In 1815, the Prussian state also weakened patent laws; inventions were subject to far more rigorous testing of newness, and if granted, patent protection shortened to just a few years. Following the logic of removing guild regulation, the emphasis was on the rapid diffusion of new techniques into every corner of the country, rather than restrictive protectionism. This measure was given institutional support by 'The Association for the Promotion of Technological Activity in Prussia', founded in 1821, and the opening of the Technical Institute in Berlin that same year. In the interim, Prussia had dropped the tariffs and tolls that traversed its territory, and introduced pointedly low tariffs on international

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9 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
trade during 1818. The ministry had the utmost faith that its liberalising policies would allow Smith’s free hand to naturally elevate the economy. When Berlin cotton manufacturers pressed for higher tariffs due to distress in their industry, Hans von Bülow, Hardenberg’s successor, advised that they abandon a trade in which

England and France possess a natural preponderance... [and where the Berlin manufacturers] had shown little willingness to mechanize, whilst most owned marginal, unprofitable operations which presented threats to public safety and political order... high tariffs would defeat the larger purpose [of the reform movement] by removing any incentive for these persons to leave Berlin voluntarily and seek employment [elsewhere]\(^\text{14}\)

Bülow was convinced that ‘it was not tariffs, but rather their own (the Berliners) industriousness and attention to technological advance which would eliminate British competition.’\(^\text{15}\) There were some setbacks to the liberalising agenda, especially during a crescendo of complaints during 1818-1820. The king reneged on some of his ministry’s work, giving the mining corps and merchant marine their own ministries in this period, allowing them to protect their interests, but the core achievements – guild removal, low tariffs, weakened patent law and rapid technological transfer – remained in place. The result was a sustained upswing in treasury receipts within 5 years of the Vienna settlement. It could of course be argued that the Rhenish region, a key beneficiary of the reforms, possessed a natural predisposition for industrialisation, what with its dense population, mineral resources and natural riverways. Yet even here, physical improvement followed institutional reform as a key element of industrial expansion; between 1825 and 1830, the Prussian minister of finance, Friedrich von Motz, invested 15.2 million Thaler in 2,800 km of new roads, resulting in a coterminous 17% drop in coal transportation.\(^\text{16}\) Josua Hasenclever, a prosperous merchant-industrialist from Remscheid, exclaimed that ‘these cheaper prices arose only because of the roads’ and one had to live through it, he wrote, ‘to know how much we would have missed if the blessings of these connections had not been

\(^\text{14}\) Ibid, p. 42.
\(^\text{15}\) Ibid, p. 43
\(^\text{16}\) Ibid, p. 68.
bestowed upon us.' At each step, every effort of the reform period was focused on allowing development an unimpeded advance.

The reforms did not however, achieve blanket and unmitigated success. There were certain instances in which the Prussian approach abjectly failed. The reason was that the reforms required industrial investment to be present and available ‘on site'; the Prussian state had forbidden the formation of joint stock companies, and its programmes of state subsidies were geared more toward agriculture than commercial interest. Subsequently, whilst Friederich Wilhelm and his ministries had hoped that the commercial measures would induce a strong upswing in rural manufacturing – tax breaks were also offered for rural commercial business – capital was often lacking in rural regions. They therefore felt little advantage of commercial reform. In the East, where entrenched agrarianism had led to an almost non-existent urbanity, this would be an acute problem, especially in later decades when structural overpopulation was reached. Even in some areas of the West, this lack of investment and inability to pool funds was a problem, such as in the rural regions of Minden and Tecklenburg, where emigration subsequently set in. Ultimately, the Prussian measures were not able to conjure industrialism from the bare earth, but they showed what could be done if conditions favourable to industrialisation were fostered by institutional support. Saxony too followed very similar measures, emasculating its guilds in 1817, and cradling the nascent industry which had established itself since the turn of the century. Indeed, its greater head start in the textile industry offered even the shrunken Saxon Kingdom of the Vienna settlement a persistent lead over Rhenish output.

The point of highlighting these reforms and their effects, is that in many other regions, even where conditions were promising for industrialisation, they were specifically shunned, with enormous consequences for the building of migratory pathways to America. In states with dense volumes of population concentrated in particular regions, the prevention of commercial advance led many at the most acute ends of insufficient systems to make life changing migration decisions. However, by validating ancient regimes, the principles of

\[17\] Ibid.
\[18\] Clark, ‘Restoration or Pre-march’ p. 45.
1815 and of the *Bund* both legitimised debilitating economic approaches, and ensured that they could not be challenged, either from within or without.

For many leaders, the return to and defence of tradition was prioritised over the unpredictable and dangerous forces of innovation. And as the structure of the *Bund* was expressly designed to defend the priorities of individual rulers, unless they themselves courted innovation, it had no means of penetrating their economies. Where it was shunned in favour of static, inelastic concepts of society and economy, those concepts were immovable. In a climate of enforced stasis, any constructive response to inexorably changing conditions like population increase or foreign competition proved impossible. Internally, the populations of the individual territories had no political power to alter their conditions in response to social and economic challenges. On occasion constitutions based on an electoral franchise had been drawn up, but they were effectively powerless and given as an act of benevolence by divine rulers to show the legitimacy of 'modern' conservatism.19 Externally, conservative territories resisted economic integration with one another, lest it compromise political independence. Instead they erected defensive stances toward small-scale trade and production methods, fearful of the consequences that more progressive trade and production arrangements would have on their political position and the social order. This produced a fateful limitation on the transfer of ideas and systems, and a decisive hindrance to the creation of larger economies, able to support growing populations.

Of the territories that upheld static concepts of society and economy behind the ramparts of isolationism and the *Bund*, the pioneer migration regions of the North and South West were exemplary models. Their conservative principles were coupled with conservative institutions and the prevention of industrial take-off, even where conditions seemed otherwise favourable to its advance.

Upon the resumption of peace and the creation of the *Bund*, the rulers of Hanover elected to re-institute the Kingdom’s guilds, after Napoleonic administration had removed them. Unlike in Württemberg, the guilds of Hanover followed the more traditional pattern of limiting commercial activity to towns, a

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right which was re-instated in 1817.\textsuperscript{20} The second largest city in the Kingdom, after the capital of Hanover itself, was Osnabrück. Under the weight of guild restriction, this city failed to grow when it was surrounded by the most overpopulated countryside in all of the North West. By returning the right to guild masters to sanction who could practice a trade, defensive principles immediately took charge; guilds simply refused to admit a growing rural labour force into the urban wage economy. As a result, urban growth was non-existent whilst all around the rural labouring classes continued to swell.

The return to traditional manufacturing principles also involved the return of the regulatory Osnabrück \textit{Legge} in 1816.\textsuperscript{21} This ensured that in textile production - the only significant form of manufacture available in the Kingdom - set prices, standards and yarn weights were achieved. But as the Hanoverian Business Association noted, the other side of the argument was that the \textit{Legge} restricted experimentation and improvement of the product, as much as it prevented any drop in quality.\textsuperscript{22} Price fixing was also declared disadvantageous. Although the new and revised guild regulation of 1817 allowed producers to sell to whichever merchant they chose, the fact that the \textit{Legge} dictated a set price for all material prevented any competition among merchants themselves.\textsuperscript{23} The better quality of Scottish and Irish linens, ‘imported freely’ by Bremen and Hamburg, was also duly noted.\textsuperscript{24} A familiar problem arose, in which even those with guild admission had to work within uncompetitive models. The Hanoverian legislation was, in every sense, an attempted return to manufacture organised around the idea of a static communal order and of equilibrium, designed to meet the needs of a stable population and to maintain an unchanging standard of living and production, when massive population growth and foreign competition had already made the rebalance impossible.\textsuperscript{25} The Kingdom attempted to bolster employment in the countryside in 1831 by extending guild rights to more far-flung rural districts, but the defensive

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Max Jaenecke \textit{Die Gewerbe-Politik des ehemaligen Königreich Hanover in ihren Wandlungen von 1815-1866 etc} Marburg, 1892. p. 5.
  \item \textsuperscript{21} Gewerbe-Vereins für das Königreich Hanover \textit{Mittheilungen des Gewerbe-Vereins für das Königreich Hanover, 6,1834} Hanover, Kommission der Hahn’schen Hof-Buchhandlung, 1834. pp. 45-6.
  \item \textsuperscript{22} Ibid, p. 49.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Hamerow, \textit{Restoration} p.21
\end{itemize}
strategies of the guilds and Legge were natural inhibitors to strong levels of commercial development. As well as institutional inhibitors to development, the Kingdom was also in a poor physical condition from the point of view of trade and the transportation of fuels required for modern industry. It was traversed south-north by the Weser, but the river ended in Bremen territory, Hanover having sold the plot on which the eventually booming Bremerhaven would be built, and the road network, according to an English traveller in 1826 was ‘incomparably awful.’26 The lack of commercial and industrial progress in Hanover during the 1830s was striking; as of 1835, in a Kingdom of some 1.7 million inhabitants, there were only 376 registered (i.e. guilded) manufactories, 133 of which were situated in the city of Hanover itself.27 Almost one third of the total were textile manufactories, largely employing outmoded methods.28 So whilst the Kingdom had some of the densest pockets of rural population in Germany, placed around an urban centre no less, instead of heading toward it, the surplus rural population from the district of Osnabrück went elsewhere, following Duden’s report.29 Their agricultural economy had collapsed, and their government ensured at a legislative level that no alternative could arise at home.

The volume of manufacturing, for virtually all the same reasons, sat at an almost identical level in Württemberg during the same period. In 1835, there were 330 manufactories, in a population of more than 1.5 million.30 As with Hanover, most of these were also of a traditional type; small workshops or ‘putting-out firms’ that provided materials like tobacco or yarn to home workers. There was a single modern textile mill among the total, along with 1 paper mill, 3 metal plants, 3 tobacco factories, and 2 chemical firms.31

The position in Württemberg was produced by a similarly defensive approach and failure to revoke outmoded systems. Alterations in Württemberg guild law in

28 5 weapons manufactories and a sugar refinery were the only firms of a ‘modern’ type. Ibid.
29 Emigration from the Osnabrück district made up 7% of the entire German total in the 1830s. Kamphoefner, The Westfalians p. 15.
30 Seybold, Württembergs Industrie pp. 32-33.
31 Ibid.
1828 as part of the ‘Great Industrial Ordnance’ made modern production possible in theory, but in failing to challenge or alter the position and power of traditional guilds, made its advance stunted and painstaking in practice. The Gewerbeordnung of 1828 slightly relaxed some guild regulation, including removing limits on the number of employees, removing ceilings on the output capacity of masters’ workshops, and removing prohibitions on marketing beyond the stated guild restrictions.\(^\text{32}\) This was an explicit opportunity for factory units to be established, which they were, immediately; Gottlieb Meebold’s Heidenheim cotton mill, established that very year, was the first in the Kingdom. However, the ordinance also explicitly confirmed exclusive guild privileges for at least 44 mainstream occupations, including most crafts.\(^\text{33}\) So whilst Meebold was able to open his mill, guild members refused to work in it, for doing so would have undermined their fraternity and their corporate interests. All of the early industrial investors in Württemberg who were willing to depart from the handicraft system came up against the same problems. Because they maintained their status, traditional guilds and their members could effectively boycott the developing competition. As skilled weavers refused to work his looms, Meebold had to open his factory using foreign labour, and train up his own apprentices.\(^\text{34}\) Caspar Bodnar, upon opening his glove factory in Esslingen in 1834, came across the same problem. Finding it difficult to recruit from the traditional craft and farming backgrounds, Bodnar was forced into training up a youthful workforce of his own.\(^\text{35}\)

Contemporaries often complained that Württemberg agriculture (the same complaint was made in Baden) was in itself an inhibitor to commercial progress. For, as one factory owner complained, ‘as long as he (the small farmer) kept ownership of his own means of production, capitalist accumulation and the capitalist system was impossible.’\(^\text{36}\) Friederich List likened the problem to a sailing vessel. Not everyone could be a ship’s captain, he said; some must be sailors and deckhands.\(^\text{37}\) Despite the charge that the smallholding peasant of the South West refused to be a deckhand, industrial investors nevertheless always found enough

\(^{32}\) Ogilvie, Küpker and Maegraith, Community Characteristics p. 74.
\(^{33}\) Ibid.
\(^{34}\) Seybold, Württembergs Industrie p. 28.
\(^{35}\) Ibid.
\(^{36}\) Ibid, p. 30.
\(^{37}\) Gehring, Friederich List und Deutschlands politisch-ökonomische Einheit p. 239.
hands to man their ships. Meebold and others were able to take their employees from among the Taglöhner and those without sufficient means to establish a household in their youth. So whilst early production units could not prize guilded workers and established Bauern from their plots, they employed precisely the individuals who in 10 to 15 years’ time would have been prime candidates for emigration, by giving them an alternative to scraping together an existence on an insufficient slice of land. Rather than selling that meagre slice when bankruptcy or extra mouths beckoned, and heading for America, they could become the early workforces of Stuttgart, Heidenheim or Esslingen. The central problem was that those in traditional positions of commercial influence, the guild masters, refused to endorse a system that debilitated them. Had their position been revoked, the powerful corporate interests of Württemberg would have been the Kingdom’s best source of commercial investment, forced to adopt and invest in new methods to stay afloat; instead they remained entrenched, undermining and obstructing the transition to a modern economy.

Ultimately, the Württemberg government was not willing to depart from the traditional and comfortable income streams generated by older corporate bodies, in favour of the abstract possibility of rising tax receipts from mass production. It thus made innovation figuratively possible, without giving it a chance to succeed. As with all regions that maintained guild powers, the social and political consequences of mass production were generally viewed in a highly sceptical light, drastically reducing the willingness of contemporary rulers to pursue a clean break from static concepts of economy. The modern factory system, its opponents claimed, was an exploitative source of squalor, which served the twin dangers of grouping the masses together and motivating them to action against their conditions. This was political folly. Far better the paternal monarch guiding his rural flock. Poverty in this instance could simply be seen as a lack of industriousness on the part of the rural population - and where it mounted, its disparate nature drastically reduced its political menace. Some enlightened individuals who had taken note of the emigration, the Hessian minister Hans von Gagern being the most prominent, had indeed suggested that sponsored emigration served as the best cure for rebalancing populations and meeting the challenge of modernity. Precisely this line of argument had of course also directed
the efforts of the Baden government to subsidise the movement in the late 1840s and early 1850s. The problems of economic inflexibility thus often led to a common cure in both the minds of those suffering it, and those attempting to maintain it.

Even in Prussia, there were nostalgic rejections of reform, notably in the alms houses set up to employ impoverished hand spinners from Silesia and Berlin, an economically pointless but morally motivated reaction against a mechanical ‘bee state, composed merely of workers and drones.’\textsuperscript{38} In the states that had pointedly returned to traditional economic management, such projects to relieve the victims of industrial take-off were of course unnecessary; the opportunity for a short sharp transition into industrial systems had been exchanged for a drawn out degeneration of lowering living standards and lack of alternatives beyond emigration.

In the states suffering these conditions, the obstacles to commercial advance were as all-encompassing as the measures to promote them in Prussia. Stagnation did not stop with the maintenance of guilds, valued as they were for balancing social order and giving predictable income streams. In Württemberg, as in Hanover, the road network was poorly maintained, there was a shortage of fuels for the few entrepreneurs who were swimming against the economic tide, and trade was conceived in isolationist terms, dictated by the maintenance of political autonomy.

A lack of energy was a particularly critical problem for the few Württemberg manufactories attempting to employ modern methods. To generate steam in his mill, Meebold bought English coal, which was brought down the Neckar by barge and then carted to the factory over land, at enormous cost. The principle source of fuel in the region was wood, but throughout the early nineteenth century it was in chronically short supply. The coal that could be extracted from the Swabian Alb was not economically viable, and shortages in charcoal even led to attempts at using turf to fire furnaces – the hammer mill in Itzelberg was one of the concerns that attempted to do so.\textsuperscript{39} The shortage in wood experienced throughout the Kingdom is surprising given that its western border is

\textsuperscript{38} Dorn Brose, \textit{The Politics of Technological Change} pp. 51-2.
made up of one of the largest forests on the European continent, but here too, governmental policy was a perfect example of economics conceived in traditional terms. Despite the acute internal shortage and massive demand, the state exported hundreds of thousands of Gulden worth of wood annually; between 1811 and 1821, the figure reached half a million.\textsuperscript{40}

Just like guild revenues, this traditional form of treasury receipt formed a physical barrier to commercial development, and was typical of a conservative approach which valued traditional income streams for their ability to consolidate the royal position. Consolidating and legitimising that position also entirely dictated the wider principles of trade pursued by each state in the Bund. As with internal systems, each state and ruler pursued the agenda which they believed best for maintaining their independence. First and foremost, this meant maintaining control of one’s own trade agenda, for losing that was viewed by all as the first step in the loss of political autonomy.

Throughout the 1810s, 20s and 30s, the states grappled with one another in order to decide trading arrangements that bolstered their individual positions. Much of it was a reaction to the Prussian tariff policy of 1818. Once the Prussians abolished all internal tariffs and tolls, making a common market of their Eastern and Western territories, the other states began to respond. Hanover, controlling as it did the bulk of the territory separating the Prussian East from its Rhenish provinces, refused to adopt Prussia’s low foreign tariff system, or enter into the wider Prussian customs union itself. The Hanoverian treasury could then raise revenues on Prussian produce passing through its territory, and on foreign wares entering Bremen and Hamburg, which had to cross the Kingdom in order to reach the German interior. As it controlled its own considerable strip of North Sea coast, the Kingdom also attempted, quite unsuccessfully, to build up its own maritime concerns. Its every step exemplified the isolationist small German economy, attempting to go it alone as a legitimate independent entity, using its own particular circumstances to its advantage wherever possible.

In the South, Prussian steps to form a large North German common market were met with faltering attempts to create a southern bloc. Baden, Württemberg and Bavaria entered into talks to form their own customs union, free of internal

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
tariffs. The attempt met with little success. Despite drawn out talks between 1820 and 1823, the three southern states could not agree on a common market because of their different trading priorities. Both Bavaria and Württemberg wanted to erect a high southern tariff belt that would insulate their economies, keep out foreign goods, and allow traditional producers to maintain their position. Baden on the other hand strongly favoured low tariffs; not to encourage competition, but so that it could act as a way-station, using its favourable position between France, Switzerland and the German interior to levy moneys on foreign goods. It was another simplistic policy, symptomatic of the states whose economies were guided by any chance to line government pockets with low hanging fruit. Bavaria eventually pulled out of the talks when its foreign minister declared the scheme would in any event ‘endanger Bavaria’s political independence.’ Baden went its own way, whilst five years later Württemberg and Bavaria gave in to their common ground, forming a protective union in 1828.

The inability of the German states to collect into the obvious common market to which they belonged infuriated the Württemberg economist List. Since 1819, List had been clamouring to form something of a coherent German economy, based fundamentally on the principle of protectionism, the merits of which were spelled out at length in his National System of Political Economy (1841). The guiding principle of List’s economic theory was that if Germany could wall itself off from the outside world, which in List’s case, meant England, a large and free flowing internal market would allow the Germans the chance to elevate themselves to the position of global industrial leaders. His National System spat a great deal of vitriol at ‘Smiths Disciples’, claiming that they (the English) were happy to follow the principles of free trade where it suited them – in exports – but denied them where it did not - i.e. the Corn Laws. The fundamental shortcoming of List’s extensively argued theory, however, was that he assumed growth and technological advance would be a natural result of protection.

List perfectly understood the advantages and necessity of modern technology in production, and as a child had asked why his father’s tanning work

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41 Henderson, The Zollverein p. 60.
could not be done by a machine.\textsuperscript{43} The rest of his life and his economic philosophies were largely determined by his failure to grasp the answer to his childhood question. He believed that the spread of industry could be achieved simply by ending the South Western tradition of dwarf farming, which reduced purchasing power and encouraged self-sufficiency. List argued that land-splitting was ‘the reason why factories do not thrive among us, and business is not forthcoming to us.’\textsuperscript{44} Ridding his homeland of small scale farming in favour of a wage earning class – List’s deckhands – and insulating it from the outside world was thus his given solution to poverty and backwardness. The process could be constructively begun, List argued, by removing some surplus farmers to the Habsburg South East, and generally consolidating farmland at home, relieving enough individuals from the system to provide a wage-labour class.\textsuperscript{45} Where his emancipated farmers were supposed to find work remains a mystery; the capacities of the wage economy were still entirely dictated by men such as List’s father, and the institutions that protected him. The political and social nuances that upheld the handicraft system of production seemed to escape List junior, who failed to realise that even if a system of complete protection were achieved, the problems of obsolete economies and poverty would not be solved.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Württemberg population grew by around 100,000 inhabitants per decade, until the emigrations of the 1850s sent the figures into reverse.\textsuperscript{46} The decade between 1840 and 1850 was typical, at 103,000.\textsuperscript{47} In 1840, there were 11,498 pieces cloth sold at Stuttgart cloth fair; in 1850, there were 11,582 pieces of cloth sold at Stuttgart cloth fair.\textsuperscript{48} The population was growing, its output and consumption was not. No amount of insulation from foreign produce would overcome the fact that the wage economy

\textsuperscript{43} Margaret E. Hirst \textit{The Life of Friedrich List and Selections from his Writings} London, Smith, Elder & Co., 1909. p. 3.
\textsuperscript{44} Seybold, \textit{Württemberg’s Industrie} p. 29
\textsuperscript{45} List claimed that Germany possessed a natural hinterland for continental migration ‘as good as the Americans; the countries on the lower Danube and the Black Sea’ this region could provide raw materials such as wood and hides to stimulate the manufacturing of the mother country. See Gehring \textit{List und Deutschlands politisch-ökonomische Einheit} p. 240.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
was inelastic and determined by artificial limits based on defensive protection. Rather than fostering advance, had List’s protectionism been achieved, it would have been the single greatest disincentive to change imaginable. He was, in the final event, a product of his Swabian roots, a guild master with global ambitions. Despite his best intentions, List was ultimately seeking to defend an economy that had been outgrown by society in the middle of the eighteenth century. As circumstances at the time had it, America had arisen as a viable solution in List’s South Western homeland, and it continued to be one in the 1830s and ‘40s not just for the wage earning classes but for everyone, because the whole of society was now bulging out of the constrictions tied around its evolution.

Although he attacked Smith’s disciples in England, List had ready examples in Germany of those who had adopted free trade, but their experience was perhaps not convenient to his argument. Partible inheritance was also the system of land holding in the steadily growing Rhenish regions, yet here, factories and businesses certainly were forthcoming, and industrialism was undergoing a discernible advance. It was also being achieved as a direct result of Prussia’s low tariff principles. By the 1840s, the combination of free trade, freedom of occupation and rapid technological transfer pursued by the Prussian policy makers was beginning to produce very significant results in the Ruhr. In 1844, the iron producers of the region, who had traditionally imported large amounts of British pig iron in order to finish it into bar iron and rails, had seen enough of the British product to begin duplicating the process of its production, thereafter embarking on a successful campaign of import substitution that copied British puddling methods. A low tariff was then erected against British goods, but the legislators made sure that Belgian pig iron remained in cheap supply, ensuring that no shortfall would occur whilst the Rhenish producers were expanding their operations. In an example more appropriate to the German North and South West, British cotton yarns were another half-finished material which proved to be a boon for Prussian producers. Whilst Prussia lacked the fleet and trading connections to collect significant amounts of raw cotton material, the cheapness of British yarns ensured that Prussian mill owners could still pursue a highly profitable finishing process.

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on the institutional settings, precisely the same import could contribute to one region’s riches and another region’s misery.

In 1834, the path toward change and unity finally seemed to get its foundation step with the formation of the German *Zollverein*, or customs union, which achieved the common market List and others had campaigned for. In 1828, Prussia had succeeded in bringing Hesse-Darmstadt into its customs union, and as the union expanded, it became only a matter of time before free access to Prussian markets became a logical course of action for the smaller states. By the end of 1833, a large majority of the German kingdoms and duchies had joined the Prussian customs union to create a sizeable tariff-free zone for internal trade. In economic terms, however, the customs union which came into official existence on the 1st of January 1834 did little to achieve the great things List had envisaged. For a start it was incomplete. The states with access to the North Sea – Bremen, Hamburg, Hanover and Mecklenburg – failed to join the union, and foreign goods continued to pour in through the hanseatic towns. As such there was no hope for any kind of German-wide protectionism, and as the free-trade favouring Prussia had spear-headed the movement, import tariffs from dock towns into the union were never going to be high or defensive. Moreover, despite technically achieving a larger, cheaper-to-access market for the member states, the precise problem List had overlooked was clearly pronounced; market access did not logically preclude a change in how goods were made, and no such change occurred. In fact, the customs union worked against, rather than for the departure from existing systems.

Despite ostensibly being a unifying act, the creation of the *Zollverein* did more to entrench particularist regimes and their institutions than it did to challenge them. The customs union carried with it no common economic policy or legislative power, and insulated rather than challenged existing governments. The single greatest beneficiaries of the customs union were the state governments themselves; they accrued impressive direct revenues from their share of the union’s customs duties, which although set at low levels, achieved sizeable aggregates. Collective *Zollverein* revenues were divided among member states by head of population, which ensured a large share for the South Western states. Tariff revenues as a percentage of state income almost doubled in Baden between
1830 and 1840, from 8.4% to 16.1%, and in Württemberg the story was the same, with an increase from 7.4% to 14.6%. State governments thus collected large profits from membership, whilst a citizenry of outmoded producers gained very little, having to compete for internal trade with far more developed states. In both Baden and Württemberg, actual increases in trade as a result of Zollverein membership were paltry, at just 1%. Rather than challenging ineffective approaches, the Zollverein proved to be another satisfyingly low hanging fruit, generating revenue gains that could be used to bolster the positions of the ruling conservative elites. In one fell swoop, it made life more difficult for producers whilst making their reactionary leaders even harder to dislodge.

In the final event the Zollverein did little to integrate or elevate the German economy beyond its small constituent parts. It helped to maintain backward looking governments in the South West, whilst failing to include at all the stagnant North West. Despite economic ‘unification’ and the availability of capital, labour and technology, artificially inert economies, low levels of industrialism and a terminal decline in material conditions remained difficult facts of life in many German regions. In the areas where rural population was most dense, and local circumstance the least flexible, emigration became an extreme but pragmatic choice in a landscape of severely limited solutions. In the Osnabrücker lands of the North West, and the valleys of Baden and Württemberg, the maintenance of static economic concepts in the face of growing population had forced many individuals into slim economic survival mechanisms, constructed around what was locally available. Whether a combination of the commons, cottage industry and migratory labour in the North, or a strategy of familial inter-marriage and resource sharing in the Reahteilung South, the challenge of population growth in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century had to be met with piecemeal, sideways tactics, for a lack of constructive, sustainable alternatives.

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51 Herbert Kiesewetter, ‘Economic pre-conditions for Germany’s Nation Building in the 19th century’ in Hagen Schulze, ed., Nation Building in Central Europe Leamington Spa, Berg, 1987, pp. 81-106. p. 96. Export revenue growth given as 1.06%.
In certain situations those piecemeal tactics inevitably proved unsustainable. A lack of fertile soils would make even complex resource sharing a finite strategy for certain farming communities in the South; a change in Dutch migratory opportunities, the cotton trade or loss of the commons could spell disaster in the North. The conservative principles and institutions of these regions had caused populations to expand laterally on the slimmest of knife edges, and neither artificial economic ‘unification’ nor political riot in 1848, caused by many of the discontents behind emigration, proved capable of toppling the particularism which upheld their stagnating domestic situations. By the late 1840s, the German lands remained a patchwork of disparate entities at various stages of industrial development. At the macro-level, this state of affairs lay behind the amalgamating, regionalised nature of the migration. By the mid-nineteenth century, even though industrialism was making gains in regions where it had been fostered, there was no impetus that was either great enough to force others to follow the example, or to spread the benefits of industry where it had arisen. The emigration had in large part been caused by the maintenance of privileged, conservative institutions, themselves upheld by monarchical privilege, institutionally defended by the Bund. Politically sanctioned separation and particularism then helped to maintain overflows of population, by preventing the creation of a larger economic unit capable of absorbing the rising German population. Until this situation was overcome, American emigration continued to build as more German regions contributed their surplus.

Whilst the North East is not comparable to the North or South West in terms of initial cause, the specific response of American migration to the challenges of commercial farming were nonetheless intricately linked to the pathways set out by the Western pioneers, and the lack of internal German alternatives. Events at the end of the nineteenth century showed that East Elbian labour was as willing to move to the factories of Berlin and mills of the Rhineland as it was to the United States, given the opportunity. However, when the emigration from that region began in the 1850s, the Prussian Rhinelands were still only able to absorb their own rising populations; the modernising industrial agenda of the West was unable to soak up the surplus created by the modernising agrarian reforms of the East. The developments that would eventually allow the
West to do so, and which finally allowed the static containers of other Western kingdoms and duchies to expand in step with their own populations, were also closely bound at the macro-level. The turning point in the emigration was intricately linked to the major turning points of Germany's nineteenth century evolution; the diffusion of the rail network, and the achievement of national unity. The rail network broke down isolationism, created physical connections that overcame politically enforced separation, and forced the diffusion of innovation. As a consequence, commercial take-off finally began outside of the Prussian and Saxon heartlands. National unification then provided an enormous catalyst to the early steps of industrialisation. As these developments progressed, and isolation gave way to connectivity, so migration evolved, from outward looking horizons across the Atlantic, to inward trajectories and solutions found at home. It is now time to turn to the events and phenomena that took place after mid-century, which overcame the particularism and separation of the German lands, producing profound structural change, altering the pathways of German migration.

The first German railway was built in Bavaria in 1836, a short stretch of track of just a few kilometres, from Nuremberg to Fürth. In 1839, the first major line was laid in Saxony, and in the 1840s, the first major arterial routes began to appear. The railways would eventually force integration upon the German states, fundamentally altering the ways in which they conceived both their economies and their population, but in its initial stages, even this revolutionary technology was subject to the restrictions of particularist interests. As with any other issue of state-wide significance, the early diffusion of the railways reflected the priorities of specific sovereigns and their territories.

The more developed states had obvious and logical starting points for their rail networks. Saxony was the earliest state to engage with large scale building, its 1839 route between Leipzig and Dresden ran to 70km and made an obvious and necessary connection between the Kingdom’s two principal urban centres. Prussia too had obvious and necessary linkage points, most broadly between East

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53 Mitchell, *The Great Train Race* p. 44.
and West, and specifically between key districts like Berlin and Cologne, and the Rhinelands and German ports. For many other states however, priorities were somewhat less clear, beyond using rail as another way to manipulate their strategic positions.

In the 1840s Prussian officials were forced to negotiate with Hanover when attempting to connect the Prussian Rhinelands to Bremen, because Hanoverian territory made up the bulk of the ground between the two points on the line. The result was a long and inconvenient route being built through Minden, at Hanover's insistence, in order to maximise the amount of track running through its territory.54 This may have been a godsend for the emigrants of the North West, but it meant Hanover was bypassed in the laying of the next major Prussian line. In 1853, a new east-west route connecting the Prussian territories was devised by the Prussian post master Nagler, and it avoided Hanover completely by employing a longer route through Erfurt and Kassel.55 The miscalculations of the Hanoverian government did not stop at hard bargaining. The height of its short-sighted, particularist planning was the blocking of an international Paris-Hamburg railway across its territory. The logic of this stance was to promote the tiny rail-linked Hanoverian port of Geerstemünde over Bremen and Hamburg. This hugely unpopular measure resulted in a slew of opposition propaganda being thrown at the state by its opponents in the public and press, and near uprising in Osnabrück, a proposed stopping point on the Paris-Hamburg line.56

Rather than internal connections - however necessary or unnecessary - the benefits of rail in the German South were seen in terms of through-traffic, and the ability to provide passage for Europe's North-South trade. Links between Central and Southern Europe were competed for between Baden, Bavaria and Württemberg. Baden possessed a natural advantage, being able to provide a straight route along the right bank of the Rhine toward Switzerland, which was completed by 1845. It was several years however before Baden built onward linkages into Switzerland or over the Rhine into France, its single Rhine basin rail

54 Roy E.H Mellor, German Railways: A Study in the Historical Geography of Transport Aberdeen, University of Aberdeen, 1979. p. 15
55 Ibid.
56 Green Fatherlands p. 265.
route being kept as a simple shuttle-line service for expedited transit. Bavaria teamed up with Saxony to form a continuous line from the Saxon interior to Lindau, the Bavarian port on Lake Constance, from whence goods could be forwarded on to Switzerland and Austria, into Italy and the Mediterranean. The line was completed in 1853. Württemberg had created its own line to the great lake in 1850, running from Heilbronn via Stuttgart and Ulm, ending at the port of Friedrichshafen. However, it remained an isolated line, as Baden refused Württemberg a connection into the Rhinelands and the German interior via Mannheim, the desired onward connection north of Heilbronn. When talk of a Stuttgart-Munich line began, offering the former links to the German Centre and industrial North East, the eventual course of track was diverted at great expense to protect Bavarian interests. Rather than running directly through Ulm on the Bavarian border, it was directed north, via Nördlingen, so as not to divert Bavaria’s north-south trade onto the shorter, more convenient Württemberg line to Friedrichshafen.

Thus in the early years, even the most connective of technologies struggled to make connections. German territories sought to bypass one another as much as possible and obstruct branch lines in order to bolster their own advantages. Contemporary spectators and commentators were fully aware of the absurdity of this state of affairs, and the insurmountable role of particularism in maintaining it. In 1845, the Dusseldorf News lamented that

In these 38 states prevails as many separate interests which injure and destroy each other down to the last detail of daily intercourse. No post can be hurried, no mailing charge reduced without special connections, no railway can be planned without each seeking to keep it in his own state as long as possible.

In 1859, at the height of Southern exertions to maintain local advantages in the rail net, the Stuttgart Swabian Mercury noted with honest accuracy that it was quite unreasonable that

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57 Baden also installed a broad gauge track on this initial line which had to be torn up and replaced in 1853, when it became clear that narrower gauge was being installed everywhere else in Germany. Mitchell, *The Great Train Race* p. 48.
58 Ibid, p. 43.
Württemberg be expected to make any unilateral concessions for the greater German good in matters of railway policy. [Some people, noted the Mercury] will be inclined to call this narrow-mindedness and petty politics; our answer to them is that prioritising particular interests will remain necessary as long as the behaviour of some states in Germany demonstrates so clearly that they maintain the same priorities.60

Yet connections were inevitable. Despite wrangling and difficult birth pains, the rail network continued to grow. It often followed illogical and expensive routes, in order to avoid scraps of neighbouring territory, and was carried away from direct inter-state routes by the demands of internal governments, as with the Stuttgart-Munich line.61 But as each state came to realise the value of rail – or more precisely, the disaster which would arise from not having it – the growth of internal networks and external connections became unavoidable. Within a decade of the rail network’s first major expansions in the late 1840s and ‘50s, there was a common realisation among all states that isolation was now a very bad thing. The world and its wares would literally pass you by if attempts were not made to keep up with this new phenomenon, leaving states potentially cut off as redundant, insignificant backwaters. In an attempt to keep pace, state finance, joint stock firms or a combination of both led to more and more branch lines appearing in each territory, allowing the corners of each region access to the main arterial routes, themselves growing as each government realised the value of increased traffic through its country.

The need of state governments to embrace the new technology became not only a necessity of trade but in turn one of politics. Monarchs not only feared the loss of trade without adequate rail lines, but the loss of subjects to neighbouring state lines, who might line the pockets of foreign railways if convenient and necessary routes were not built at home. Governments therefore sought not only to maintain control of trade routes, but the movement of their own people. The state imperative to lay more lines then furnished the twin benefits of competitiveness and political popularity. As railways outside of Prussia and

60 16/1/59 cited Green, Fatherlands p. 249.
61 A classic example of continuing particularism is the Baden Black Forest Railway. The Offenburg-Donaueschingen Schwarzwaldbahn was built in 1869 to give a shorter approach from the Rhine to Lake Constance without crossing Swiss territory near Basel and Schaffhausen; but in so doing, at Schramberg near Triberg, it avoided running over a fragment of Württemberg’s territory by carrying the railway 100 metres higher than was otherwise necessary. Mellor, German Railways pp. 15-16.
Saxony were overwhelmingly financed through the state, populations associated rail with their government, which gave leaders the image of bringers of prosperity.

Railways brought trade and business; livestock could be moved to urban centres and markets more easily; shops and businesses clustered around the stations and stops, giving prosperity to towns, their tradesmen and merchants; celebrations of royal benevolence ensued. In 1862, the laying of the Heilbronn-Hall railway in Württemberg resulted in multiple celebrations as the subjects along its line wished to commemorate ‘the important and beneficial event of their entry into the Fatherland’s railway network.’

State dignitaries who attended the celebrations remarked that subjects ‘high and low made haste to express their gratitude to His Majesty the King.’ Not only did railways bring about a stubborn and begrudging abandonment of autonomy and isolation, for the first time in many conservative states, technological innovation and competitiveness now became a strong and central element in legitimising regimes.

With the royal endorsement of this heavy industry came a change in local economies. Traditional institutions found it increasingly difficult to maintain their position as modern industry gained the economic and political advantage. The availability of fuel from the Ruhr increased the viability of modern industrial concerns and made the foundation of others more feasible. The cheap and rapid transit of goods made raw materials easier to import and export, bringing new life to both industrial and agricultural producers. The small concessions and gaps that had been made in guild privileges in Baden in 1808, Hanover in 1817, and Württemberg in 1828 finally began to be exploited more fully by investors. The Hanoverian towns became an engine of economic change in their Kingdom.

By the late 1840s and 1850s the towns of Hanover were pursuing a concerted advance of commercialism and modern industry in order to bolster their position and increase their power against one of the most conservative and restorative monarchies in the Bund. Some progress began to be made in modern manufacturing and employment. In 1843, 21 of the newly founded or expanding manufactories in Hanover employed steam power; in just 8 years the figure moved

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62 Green, Fatherlands p. 259
63 Ibid.
to 41, and the first heavy manufacturing plants emerged in the Kingdom. By 1851, the total number of manufactories in the Kingdom had increased to 2,211, up from the mere 376 fifteen years earlier.

By 1849, Baden, with its easy access to the Ruhr coal fields, had become the leading cotton mill state in the South, producing an impressive 6 million Gulden worth of cotton textiles that year. A small sum compared to the Rhinelands and Saxony, but an enormous sum for a state with only 1 cotton mill at the end of the Napoleonic era. In Württemberg too, by the early 1850s a steady increase in more modern manufacturing had begun. After decades of poor capitalisation, the years 1850-59 saw more than 800,000 Gulden invested in mechanical spindles and looms in the Kingdom, a near tenfold increase on the previous decade, and 8 times the total investment of the previous two decades combined. The increased availability of fuels for steam and better transit opportunities for raw materials and finished goods were having a fundamental effect on the viability of more modern methods over traditional, institutionally defended systems. Tellingly, half as much money, nearly 400,000 Gulden, was invested in hand-powered tools during the same period. Traditional production methods were still widely practiced, although they were now subject to more serious challenge.

The baby steps of modern industry in steam investment and production methods sparked a renewed uproar from beleaguered guild members during the 1850s. Across all the German regions, the encroachment of the factory system sparked the same debate which had been heard in Prussia 40 years before, and again at the parliamentary sessions during the uprisings of 1848. Guild masters complained bitterly of the factory system and industrialism destroying their ancient crafts and producing a blight on society. The discontent of the artisanal classes and their role in the 1848 uprisings had in fact succeeded in strengthening

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66 Griesmeier, Entwicklung der Wirtschaft p. 127.
67 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
certain guild concessions during 1849 and 1850, as governments looked to foster the conservative elements in their population over dangerous liberal ideas. Bismarck himself had championed the return of certain guild limits even in Prussia, the pioneer of freedom of enterprise, stating that whilst industrial freedom ‘produces inexpensive goods, to this inexpensiveness the misery and sorrow of the artisan are poisonously bound.’\(^{70}\)

Yet barely a decade later, opposing arguments began to drown out the traditional view. According to their industrial and political detractors, the guilds had led protected sectors to ‘rack and ruin through isolation’ and attempted to ‘deflect the introduction of technologies in order to maintain the socially defined defensive mechanism that was their basis.’\(^{71}\) The guilds had little to do with social order, it was claimed, and merely brought social misery, as their defensive strategies continually diminished employment opportunity. They represented nothing but ‘privilege, protection of privilege, [and the] warding off of the non-privileged and their wares.’\(^{72}\) Getting rid of them would ‘help solve the great social problem of getting the great mass of the people to participate more evenly and in greater number in the profits of production.’\(^{73}\)

At all previous points in the discussion, conservative regimes had sided with traditional producers and either re-confirmed guild rights or reached a compromise that allowed them to be maintained. The difference now was that unfettered growth suddenly suited the needs of local sovereigns. The need to remain viable and competitive in an age of increasingly complete physical connectivity with the other states strengthened the political influence of industry fatefuly against that of the handicrafts. One by one institutional controls were swept aside across the German states, complete freedom of occupation and industry was established, and the ending of guild power finally declared. In 1857 guild regulation fell in Oldenburg, in 1860 in Hesse-Nassau, in 1861 Prussia again relaxed regulation, Württemberg removed its guilds in February of 1862, Baden in

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\(^{70}\) Hamerow, *Restoration* p. 229.


\(^{72}\) Ibid, p. 5

\(^{73}\) Ibid, p. 7
September of 1862, Bavaria followed suit in 1866.\textsuperscript{74} All across the confederation, the old institutions fell like dominoes.

The combined diffusion of the rail net and declaration of freedom of occupation finally produced an explosion of business activity. In 1863 the Württemberg chamber of trade and industry remarked that freedom of occupation had inspired new degrees of competitiveness between businesses and merchants, and elevated the use of machine technology and international trade like never before. The freedom of occupation edict in 1862 had brought a great crush of industry – not all of it good, as many speculative firms had to be given up after a short time for lack of capital – but nonetheless commercial development seemed on an unstoppable upward trajectory.\textsuperscript{75} The chamber remarked that in spite of various interruptions and some unfavourable conditions for trade, (including the American Civil War) the economy showed no signs of a backward step; instead what could be observed was the advance of every branch of industry, which along with the spirit of enterprise grew to ever greater dimensions.\textsuperscript{76} A revolution in economy, production and employment was occurring. Between 1852 and 1861 the population of Württemberg decreased by 12,000, as emigration continued to drain the considerable excess of births over deaths, and more still. Yet in the same period, the number of individuals employed in trade and industry rose by 40,000.\textsuperscript{77}

Those in industry were also finding a different kind of employment. In 1852, of the 227,774 Württemberger who declared themselves employed in trades or industry, only 32,333 were employed in large manufactories; just 14.2\% of the industrial total, and only 1.87\% of the total population.\textsuperscript{78} In 1861, the number employed in large factories increased slightly to 39,775, or 14.8\% of the industrial total, and 2.3\% of the total population; yet by 1875, the number had increased to 70,629; 24.5\% of the trade total, and 3.75\% of the total population.\textsuperscript{79} Alongside this steady increase in big industry was a profusion of small, modern industrial firms. In fact by 1875, Württemberg had the largest number of small

\textsuperscript{74} As early as 1851 Bismarck had reversed his position and began to speak of simply demonstrating ‘good will’ toward guild regulation and playing it up ‘for the sake of the trades.’ Hamerow, Restoration p. 255.
\textsuperscript{75} Griesmeier, Entwicklung der Wirtschaft p. 138
\textsuperscript{76} ibid, p. 139
\textsuperscript{77} Megerle, Württemberg im Industrialisierungsprozess p. 107
\textsuperscript{78} ibid, p. 110.
\textsuperscript{79} ibid, p. 112.
businesses in any German state, and their production and wares reflected an evolving economy. Between 1852 and 1875, the number employed in textile manufacture as a percentage of all industrial employment dipped from 57.4% to 22.9%. Traditional industrial concerns such as flour milling, brickworks and breweries were also in decline; metalworking, machine tool and instrument building, and finished clothing came to replace them in prominence. As early as 1855, the Kessler locomotive works in Stuttgart was responsible for a significant share of German rolling stock. In 1861, the overall number employed in all types of manufacturing in Baden and Württemberg, both old and new methods, was around 5% of the population; by 1875, it was over 15% in both states. By 1865, the populations of both had also recovered to pre-1850 levels, and resumed a rate of expansion of nearly 100,000 additional inhabitants per decade. The heartlands of German emigration were transitioning from underdeveloped out-migration zones to industrialising regions.

Between 1846 and 1861, the number of steam engines in both Baden and Württemberg increased ten-fold; in Hanover, the figure was more than twenty-fold. Lacking the rolling ground and extensive river valleys that continued to make water power a viable choice in the South, the number of steam engines in the northern Kingdom, which had increased from 21 to 41 between 1843 and 1851, mushroomed to 498 by 1861. By the early 1860s the march of industrialism in the North West was well underway. Just as in the South, older forms of production like textile manufacture were in decline as modern industries began their ascent. The number employed in textile manufacture in Hanover decreased from 45% of the industrial total in 1851 to 14.8% of the total in 1861. In its place the chemical and metal working industries were on the rise. In the same period, total industrial

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80 Ibid, pp. 118-119.
81 In 1855 Kessler had produced 165 of Germany’s rolling stock of over 2000 locomotives, comparing favourably to Maffei in Munich, but far behind Borsig of Berlin (630). Mitchell, *The Great Train Race* p. 56.
82 Baden’s population in 1860 was 1,352,500, manufacturing employment in 1861 was 64,862; in 1875, population was 1,502,900, manufacturing employment 238,409. In Württemberg population in 1860 was 1,708,000, manufacturing employment in 1861 88,911; in 1875 the figures were 1,873,600 and 287,985. Griesmeier, *Entwicklung der Wirtschaft* p. 135, p. 140, p. 142.
83 Ibid, p. 124, p. 142.
84 Peters, *Eisenbahnen* p. 57. The number of steam engines increased in from 24 in 1846 to 226 in 1861 in Baden, and from 25 to 253 over the same period in Württemberg; Megerle, *Württemberg im Industrialisierungsprozess* p. 115
employment rose from 15,623 to 41,849.\(^{86}\) The district of Osnabrück, which thirty years prior had less than 100 manufactories, now had over 1,000.\(^{87}\) From 1859-1864, that district, the most intense emigration region of the North West, posted its first 5 years of consecutive population growth since the 1820s, before the American movement had begun.\(^{88}\)

The switch to modern industries and industrial advance in Hanover had been achieved even without the complete abolition of guilds. Modern investors had driven commercial advance from the very seat of traditional guild strongholds – the towns and cities – but the state had sought to alienate neither traditional trades nor newly profitable industry, especially given that a great deal of investment was taking place in heavy industries outside of the traditional handicrafts. Complete guild abolition was finally achieved in 1867, not as a result of internal legislation, but at the hands of the Prussian King, upon the annexation of Hanover to his territory.

Of all the regions that benefitted most from the advance of the railways, Prussia was undisputed champion. In the twenty years from 1850 to 1870, its Western districts went from industrial leader to industrial giant. The railroad famously produced 'backward linkages' and 'forward linkages' in economic production and output, and the greatest beneficiary was the Prussian Rhineland, specifically the Ruhr basin. Locomotives and rail of course both required iron and steel; iron and steel required coal, and so right back to the pit head, demand for heavy industry soared. Having mastered coke blast furnaces for the production of pig-iron in the 1840s, pig iron production in Prussia rose from 148,000 tons in 1850, to 395,000 tons in 1860, to 804,000 tons in 1866, in order to accommodate the massive demand for rail finishing.\(^{89}\) The stimulation that the coking process

\(^{86}\) Ibid.
\(^{87}\) Ibid.
\(^{88}\) The increase from 145,993 in 1858 to 151,007 in 1864 marked the largest advance since the 12 year bracket of 1821-1833, when the population had grown from 137,534 to 155,886. Heike Büch, Markus A Denzel, Karly H. Kaufhold, eds., Historischer Statistik des Kurfürstentums/Königreich Hannover St. Katharinen, Scripta Mercaturae, 1998. p. 46.
\(^{89}\) Rainer Fremdling, 'Railroads and Economic Growth: A Leading Sector Analysis with a Comparison to the United States and Britain' The Journal of Economic History 37, no.3, 1977, pp. 583-604. p. 591. Fremdling’s analysis reconfirmed the role of railways as the principal driver of the German industrialisation process, after challenges by Robert Fogel and Albert Fishlow. The leading sector analysis has since been accepted and confirmed on multiple occasions, including by Kiesewetter, ‘Economic pre-conditions’, Hans Ulrich Wehler, Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte, Vol III: Von der
afforded coal mining saw extraction rise from 5 million tons for all of Germany in 1850, to 36 million tons in 1873, almost half of which came from the Ruhr basin alone.\textsuperscript{90} The production of steel, used for an increasingly German-built rolling stock of locomotives, increased from 196,950 tons in 1850, to 707,930 tons in 1865, to 1,044,700 tons in 1870.\textsuperscript{91} With these massive increases in output came huge increases in employment. In 1850 mining employed 34,000 people, in 1873, 179,000; by the same year, the massive Krupp steelworks in Essen had 16,000 employees.\textsuperscript{92}

The forward linkages were of course the ensuing economic stimuli from the railroad, which made expansion and investment possible. We have already seen the benefit that fuels and transit brought to the early industrial investment of non-Prussian regions, but the same benefits were also brought to some of that Kingdom’s own less-connected outposts. Despite most of Westphalia belonging to the Ruhr basin, northern extremities like Ravensberg were long excluded from the main developments in the industrial economy, leaving their dense rural population to join neighbouring Osnabrückers in the trek to America. But by the late 1850s and ‘60s, even these outposts finally began to feel the benefits of rail and industrial expansion. In 1857, Ravensberg received its first installations of power looms, bringing modern production to one of the heartlands of Northern cottage industry.\textsuperscript{93} During the 1860s and ‘70s, the \textit{Heuerlinge} from Ravensburg, Tecklenburg and the Münsterland were also increasingly employed as labourers in railway building, as were those of the Osnabrück region. In all but the agrarian farmlands of East Elbia, the ability to absorb population locally was becoming increasingly possible, and growth sustainable. The capacity of urban and Western districts to soak up even the structural surplus of the East was also at a critical juncture.


\textsuperscript{90} Lenger, \‘Economy and Society\’ p. 108.
\textsuperscript{91} Wehler, \textit{Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte} p. 75.
\textsuperscript{92} Lenger, \‘Economy and Society\’ p. 108.
\textsuperscript{93} Schmitz, \textit{Leinengewerbe} pp. 97-98.
The coterminous development to industrial take-off was of course Prussia's rise within the German Confederation. By the mid-1860s, the North German Kingdom had reached a key stage in its industrial, diplomatic and military position toward Austria, the nominal leader of the Bund. Given events in Northern Italy and the stance of the Prussian leader Bismarck, the ejection of Austria from the German Confederation, and the ascendancy of Prussia to national dominance, was imminent. In 1866 military victory over Austria established Prussia as the dominant force among the German states, and put Bismarck on the path to national unification. First came the formation of the North German Confederation, in which Hanover was annexed into the Prussian bloc, then came victory in the Franco-Prussian conflict of 1870-1 and the annexation of Alsace, after which all the remaining non-Austrian territories joined Prussia in a kleindeutsch solution to German nationality.

In the previous decade, all of the German states had been brought inextricably closer by rail links, and now the same logic that saw them join Prussia's Zollverein 35 years earlier prevailed at the diplomatic and political level. The South German States had already allied themselves with Prussia during the French conflict, and it was clear to all that being part of Prussia's new Germany was far better than being out of it; choosing to go it alone in isolation from either Prussia or Austria would have left them enfeebled diplomatically on the international stage. Prussian ascendancy had been firmly stamped, and the economies of the smaller states were also now inseparably linked to the northern Kingdom, which soaked up their exports in agricultural and finished wares, and provided invaluable imports of raw materials and other goods. The achievement of a German nation-state along modern lines, with a single border, single government, single currency and true single market, not to mention the euphoria of war success and an apparent march to European dominance, brought even greater investment and speculation in an already booming economy.

Unfortunately, the degree of speculation immediately following national unification produced the first major global collapse in financial markets, the crash coming as soon as 1873. Ironically, the crisis was great enough to induce decline in the American economy, by exposing its international investors to the German bubble, and as such the usual German relief valve to economic hard times was
plugged by events in Germany itself. The collapse would not last long however; by the late 1870s and early 1880s, both the American and German economies were again in the ascendancy, and in the same moment, the pivotal transition in German migratory patterns got underway. The juncture of the last great movements to America, and the first great movements to German industry, had begun.

Writing in the United States, the ageing German immigrant Friedrich Münch provided an interesting commentary on the last swathe of German arrivals. His remarks, documented in Faust’s *German Element*, are worth quoting at length. Münch noted that the German immigration had undergone 3 periods:

Immigration No.1, attracted by such books as Duden’s, turned to Missouri and other Western states, and devoted themselves to agriculture. Labourers and peasants, without any high standard of life and accustomed to hard work, found the situation to their satisfaction and gradually but steadily became prosperous... The immigration No.2 (post 1848) was heartily welcomed by the first immigration, but the former were not well satisfied with their counrymen in America. They did not like the backwoods condition of the earlier immigration... Most of them went into the cities as merchants, manufacturers or brain-workers of various kinds. A very frequent occupation for them was journalism, and in their newspapers they declared that we older men had not remained German enough, nor had we asserted our influence sufficiently. A war of words frequently occurred between the representatives of the two immigrations, the older receiving the nickname 'die Grauen' (the Greys) and the younger 'die Grünen' (the Greens.) The Greys had passed through an experience of 20 years toil under primitive American frontier conditions, and had lost much of their youthful ardour for impractical ideas...A better understanding came about when the new Republican Party arose and the Lincoln campaign began. Then the Germans united against slavery as one man, and the old wounds which the Greys and Greens had inflicted in their newspaper campaigns were entirely forgotten... The third immigration came after the period of 1866. They were mostly of the working class, with far better schooling than the same class of thirty years before. In comparison with the earlier immigrants they were overbearing, dissatisfied with conditions as they found them in their new country, and too well impressed with those they left at home... Even these (however) as a rule prosper well. Conditions are so much better here than they were thirty or forty years ago, and though the immigrants come in hundreds of thousands, they will find a place after paying for their necessary experience.94

By the early 1880s, German arrivals were indeed piling up by the hundreds of thousands. But as Münch was keen to point out, they had little or nothing in

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94 Quoted in Faust, *The German Element* pp. 588-589. For a recent study of the ‘Lincoln effect’ and the emigration society figures Münch comments on here, see Baron, ‘Abraham Lincoln and the German Immigrants’. 
common with their predecessors around mid-century, let alone the ‘Greys’ in its first half. The emigration had evolved from one made up of families to one made up of migratory labourers, moving to work, and able to find cheap and fast transit on giant modern steamers, which conveyed them to the industrial economy of America. In its final decades the character of the movement had therefore shifted fundamentally. Although families from the South West continued to move during the high points of emigration, when advertising and attention on migration swelled, from around 1870 the North East took the predominant share of the movement, with single young men and women making up the majority of the number.95 The men in this group often found factory or labouring work, whilst maid service in the larger American cities became an increasingly predominant feature of women’s migration.96 Even in the South and West, young individuals in search of the same employment became the major element of local emigrations from as early as the mid-1860s. As individuals in search of work, rather than land or the defence of a rural lifestyle, those using American transit routes for their convenience and promise of employment would inevitably be distracted by even easier transit and good prospects at home.

As early as the 1870s, workers from East Elbian estates had increased their rate of migration to Berlin, and also begun to head for Leipzig and Dresden. Then in the 1880s and 1890s, special train fares were established as a part of industrial recruiting campaigns to bring Eastern labourers to the Ruhr region.97 After the growing pains of the 1870s, the 1880s had marked a new stage in industrial expansion, moving to explosion in the 1890s as the last vestiges of the ‘Great Depression’ were shaken off. National unity had brought economic benefits beyond common currencies and borders; capital investment, when properly

95 Between 1871 and 1895, emigration from East & West Prussia, Pomerania, Posen, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg made up 37% of the German total, as compared to 25.8% from Baden, Württemberg, the Palatinate, Hesse and Hohnzollern, and 23.9% from Hanover, Oldenburg, Westphalia, The Rhineland and Lippe. The combination of all other states made up the remaining 13.3%. See Kollman & Marschalck, ‘German Emigration’ p. 535.
96 On the increasingly common feature of young women seeking service work, see Kamphoefner, Helbich and Sommer, News From the Land of Freedom pp. 523-604, particularly pp. 523-525, pp. 595-593. German-born women were proportionally overrepresented in service occupations compared to their total number, and in northern cities during the second half of the century were second only to Irish servant girls in absolute volume.
approached, flowed more freely between regions; the banking sector grew rapidly, with Germany becoming the world’s third largest creditor nation by the turn of the century.\textsuperscript{98} In the 1880s the two Hanseatic giants Bremen and Hamburg were finally fully integrated into the empire, and their shipping spearheaded a vast German merchant marine. Hapag and North German Lloyd, by now the main passenger service operators in continental Europe, were the principle beneficiaries. They were both given state subsidies to extend their activities beyond the Atlantic and across the world. Industrial output began to rise astronomically. Coal output tripled between 1880 and the Great War, by which point Germany was raising a quarter of the world’s supply; in 1880, Britain produced twice as much steel as Germany; by 1913 the position was reversed.\textsuperscript{99} The move toward modern manufacturing also continued, headed by electrical and machine-building giants like Bosch and Siemens.

The huge demand for industrial labour not only pulled East German migrants toward the Rhine and major cities, but Polish, Italian and Russian labour as well. German cities began to soak up an increasingly vast number of servant girls. Urban populations exploded. In 1875, Berlin had a population of under a million; by 1907, it was over 2 million, with 60\% of the population in-migrants.\textsuperscript{100} Between 1871 and 1910, the population of Essen increased six-fold; Düsseldorf five-fold; Cologne four-fold.\textsuperscript{101} Hamburg went from 290,000 inhabitants to 931,000 in the same period; in 1871 there were some 13,839 Mecklenburgers living in the port city, by 1890 the figure was more than 44,000, by 1900 over 52,000.\textsuperscript{102} In a fitting twist, by the end of the nineteenth century, Westphalian peasants were hiring Dutch migrants to make good the shortfall in local agricultural labourers.

When the end of the continuous American frontier was declared in 1890, a short spike in emigration prompted Bismarck’s successor, von Caprivi, to state that ‘we must export. Either we export people, or we export goods. If the population grows without an equal growth in industry, we shall not be able to make a

\textsuperscript{98} Blackbourn, \textit{The Long Nineteenth Century} p. 251
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid, p. 265.
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid, p. 152
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid; Axel Lubinski ‘Junge Leute verlassen das Dorf’ \textit{Mecklenburg Magazin} 25/11/94, 24, p. 6.
living.' How insightful such a comment would have been in Württemberg some 50 or 60 years prior. As it was, von Caprivi hit the crucial point about German emigration at the very moment in which it was ending. Within 3 years of his statement, Germany had become a net immigration country. The pull of the immense chains between America and Germany had given out. In the 1870s, as many as 2 million letters arrived in Germany from America; in the 1880s and 1890s it was 4 million, and by the first decade of the twentieth century, had reached 7 million. Yet at this point the relationship between information and migratory reaction diverged sharply. By 1899, emigration had dropped to 22,000 individuals per year; by the eve of the First World War, it was just 11,800. At the turn of the twentieth century, Germany had the second highest levels of immigration anywhere in the world, behind only the United States.

This change in migratory patterns is well known, and it is nothing new to note the transition of German migration flows from external American goals to internal towns and cities. Yet prior explanations of the German-American emigration have focused on narrow principles of economic determinism, purely localised structures, or migratory dynamics, without accounting for the specifically German nature of the wider mass movement. The political structure of nineteenth century Germany was inseparable from the mass migratory movement produced by that region. Whilst modern migration historiography expresses distaste for the regard of migrants as ‘surplus population’, the reality of the German situation was that agricultural limits were reached in many Western regions by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Many contemporaries were acutely aware of that fact, and spoke specifically of the problem of dealing with overpopulation. However, within the dominant social and political narrative of the era, which safeguarded the priorities of conservative sovereigns, solutions to overpopulation were not available through constructive social, political or economic measures. Emigration was one of the very few viable solutions available.

103 Bade, ‘Labour Migration and the State’ p. 63.
104 Kamphoefner, Helbich and Sommer, News from the Land of Freedom p. 27.
105 Marschalck, Deutsche Übersee wanderungen pp. 37.
In an environment that fostered disconnection and supported economic stagnation for a great part of the nineteenth century, the demographic gap between the insufficiencies of agriculture and the development of modern industry was destined to be especially protracted, and the resultant emigration especially long-lived. Consequently, German emigration achieved the greatest totals of any European region.

By the time the effects of rationalisation in the German East were being felt, internal capacities to absorb population remained chronically low. Only rail, with its physical connectivity and impetus toward modernised investment and economy, was able to break a politically enforced deadlock of isolation and low economic capacities, both within the individual kingdoms and duchies and the German states as a whole. This revolutionary technology helped to lay industrial foundations throughout the German lands, and the achievement of national unity in 1871 provided further impetus to an already booming industrial revolution, even if it was tripped up by its own over-excitement in 1873.

The localised structures and migratory dynamics of the German American movement were therefore intricately linked to the wider condition of nineteenth century German Europe. The German-American emigration was a mass-movement because it was a cumulative movement, and its cumulative nature resulted from the fact that emigration could develop and spill more easily from many small containers that one large one. The defining dynamic was that the small containers themselves militated for so long against the creation of a larger vessel which would be able to accommodate the German people. Only when this obstacle was overcome, first through technology, then the political solution to the national question, did the divergent trends seen in our opening graphics finally begin to emerge.
'Draught of a track of Land on Hudsons River containing 6,000 acres. Bought of Mr Livingston by Col. Hunter for the Settlement of the Palatines’ In the top left of the map is a faint ring of trees; ‘The Pine Woods’ from which the 1709 settlers were to pay their way. Most did not, instead making their own way, many to Penn’s colony further south. Source: NA/CO700/NewYork16
Home of Gottlieb Beuttner, guild master of the Brackenheim cobblers guild, built 1772. Cobbler were among the poorest tradesmen in contemporary South West German society. A far cry from the cramped workers cottages and rural homes of his guild members, Beuttner’s home was 5 storeys high, and featured an integrated barn. The restrictions maintained on artisanal and trade economies, and the elite position this afforded guild masters such as Beuttner would be a key theme in the initial migrations that followed the Palatines, and a great deal more of the emigration that subsequently developed in the nineteenth century.

Source: Authors photograph, Brackenheim, March 2012.
A familiar sight of shipping yards, railway lines and highways the world over: the two firms founded to carry the emigrants of Germany’s mid-nineteenth century emigration surge put aside more than a century of rivalry in 1970, and now form one of the largest shipping conglomerates in the world. *Source:* www.hapag-lloyd.com/en/press_and_media/photos_liner_shipping
Conclusion –

This study was written in order to produce a focused and detailed investigative account of the structural causes of German emigration to the United States during the nineteenth century, something hitherto missing from the historiography of the German-American mass movement. It has addressed the emigration without the restrictions of narrow economic determinism, a genealogical interest in ‘transplanted communities’, or dependence on the universal appeal of network approaches. It has shown that structural cause does not lie in deterministic theory, and that structural considerations and network dynamics are inseparable parts of a complete migration story. It demonstrates that a correct understanding of the German-American movement relies not only on structural considerations made at the local level, but significantly, their relationship to broader German circumstances.

The mass migration from the German lands to the United States was a drawn out, developmental process, the impressive longevity of which was intricately linked with the regionalised, disparate nature of German Europe, highly variegated localised German conditions, and slow realisation of the German nation state. German migrants were the only individuals outside of the British Isles that were heavily represented in American migration from colonial times to the close of the nineteenth century, and even at the earliest of stages, in the colonial era, the migration was defined by structural insufficiency in the affected German regions. Rather than being an incidental movement of the religiously persecuted, the early migrants were largely the product of worsening socio-economic conditions interacting with migratory heritage in the German South West. A ‘long eighteenth century’ of American emigration from 1683 to 1817 thus saw substantial links established between that region and the North Atlantic World.

In accounting for the onset of emigration in the 1830s and 40s, the rise and fall of proto-industry as a standard social inequality theory has endured because of changing research agendas in the field, rather than factual correctness. In the
nineteenth century, the effects of proto-industrial dependence or hardship were not required for an expanded South Western migration; increasingly insufficient agriculture in contemporary villages simply translated into further, expansive migration. In this period, local agricultural staples, rather than merely the tradition of partible inheritance, were of decisive importance. At the same moment, insufficiency in the North West German agricultural system also encouraged emigrants from that region to seek American asylum, when every prop in their precarious labouring economy collapsed, from migratory work to cottage industry and the loss of the commons.

Under close scrutiny, it becomes clear that whilst forms of social inequality theory should factor into structural causes, their specifics are quite unique to local circumstances. If the German North and South West had any shared characteristic, it was not a deterministically conceived problem of proto-industry. Rather, it was one of similarly restrictive governments, symptomatic of the age, which forced rural populations into unsustainable coping mechanisms, shaped by the context of local economies. In both North and South, the self-preserving monarchical defence of privilege during much of the nineteenth century helped to conserve privileged social and economic institutions, fatefully constraining the adaptability of micro-level conditions.¹

In each region, those living within inadaptable conditions forged an outlet through emigration to the New World. The combined emigrations of these regions in turn helped to give a ‘national’ dimension to the phenomenon, by generating transportation business and networks, and widely publicised debate, which spread awareness of the Auswanderung and access to America throughout the German lands. By the time of the subsistence crisis of the late 1840s, German-American interchange was well enough established for other regions to translate their own hardship into migration. In the South West, the specific circumstances of this hardship, which hit every major sector of agriculture, including the lifeline of viticulture, saw emigration reach truly mass proportions.

Joining this mid-century exodus was the labouring class of the North East. A period of acute structural change through the first half of the nineteenth century frequently made these individuals surplus to economic requirements, with only

¹ Ogilvie, *State Corporatism* p.i.
low wage sowing and harvest work available, and an increasing lack of housing producing a crisis for the young. In Mecklenburg, where being surplus to requirement in many circumstances equated to a public offence, heavy emigration among the most directly affected quickly developed into the largest movement seen anywhere east of the Elbe. With the addition of the North East at mid-century, the German-American emigration had become a self-supporting mass phenomenon. That phenomenon then sustained itself for years to come, because the German states, neither collectively nor individually, proved capable of fully anchoring population growth, not whilst American opportunities remained so readily available and attainable.

This issue stemmed from the same political roots that had stymied development in states such as Hanover and Württemberg since 1815. Politically sanctioned separation ensured the persistence of insulated, outmoded economies in many conservative states, and prevented the benefits of industry in modernised regions from spreading throughout the Confederation, leaving the American migratory tradition unchallenged in poorer regions for decades. Only with the diffusion of rail did cracks in isolationism and statically conceived economies begin to appear. When technological innovation, rather than conservative reaction, became an economic lifeline for incumbent leaders, the conditions that would end emigration were finally laid.

When technological and political revolution came together to form of an interconnected, modern nation-state, migration flows began to change. By the mid-1880s, the transition was well under way. It is from this perspective that the role of the nation-state has such a key role to play in understanding the German-American emigration. The lack of a large, absorbent economy, principally held back by regional particularism, had a very significant role to play in the fostering of emigration. In the final event, it was the creation of that whole unit, the achievement of the German nation, that proved capable of ending the movement. To a very significant degree, the emigration phenomenon was thus tied to the ‘German Question’; in the years when this question found no answer, migrants spilled from the German regions, their local circumstances intricately tied to the restrictive and often anachronistic structure of the German whole. When the German Question found an answer, so too did the emigration. After the shock of
depression in 1873, the emigration to America would experience one last boom, made up of the labour migrants so candidly described by Friedrich Münch, before German migration turned permanently inward in its trajectory.

In the German case, the national perspective thus proves especially pertinent to our understanding of mass migration. To borrow Thistlethwaite’s terminology, the German emigration was not only produced by a honeycomb of innumerable cells, districts and villages, but because the German lands in particular were such a honeycomb of innumerable parts. Understanding the German emigration to America in the nineteenth century does not require the employment of universal stage theories of growth, nor of universal migration dynamics; it requires an understanding of particular conditions at the local level, and how these conditions related to a wider German context.

This thesis has sought to do just that; closely examine micro-level conditions, and place those conditions into a wider context. It cannot claim to be completely comprehensive; no work can hope to cover every community affected by emigration, and exceptions are always the rule. Yet it has selected communities and regions indicative of wider areas and their conditions, and given new, falsifiable conclusions regarding the structural causes of German-American emigration. For the first time, it has related those local level conditions to the structural conditions of the German whole. For reasons discussed at the outset of the thesis, principally of subsequent historical events, the nineteenth century German emigration to America is rarely discussed as a major factor in standard analyses of the era. It should be. It was shaped by the specific conditions and major developments of the nineteenth century German lands, not just the universal dynamics of migration chains and networks, which played out their functional role within a distinctly German context. The emigration was, in the final event, a product of uniquely German circumstances, and in turn produced its own unique result; a mass movement responsible for the largest ethnic group in the modern day United States.
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