

Review Essay Series

GERMANS IN KANSAS

Eleanor L. Turk

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Our original vision for this essay series included widening our knowledge of well-known historical topics and how historians have treated them, drawing our attention to new topics, new methods, and new interpretations. We hoped the essays would reflect historians' ongoing search for a more complete and insightful understanding of our past and suggest new research directions. Dr. Eleanor Turk's essay meets these expectations admirably.

Turk discusses older works that share many characteristics. In particular they focus almost exclusively on migration and settlement. We learn why European Germans and Russian Germans came to this country and where they settled in Kansas. These studies emphasize the Russian Germans to a much greater extent, noting their intentions to cluster, their difficulties in doing so, and the reception the immigrants received from other Kansans.

Historians before the 1960s also emphasized the degree to which Germans assimilated into the mainstream of Kansas and American life. Underlying these studies is the assumption that abandoning older beliefs, practices, and values and taking on American culture was most desirable. Turk concludes that pre-1968 histories of Kansas acknowl-

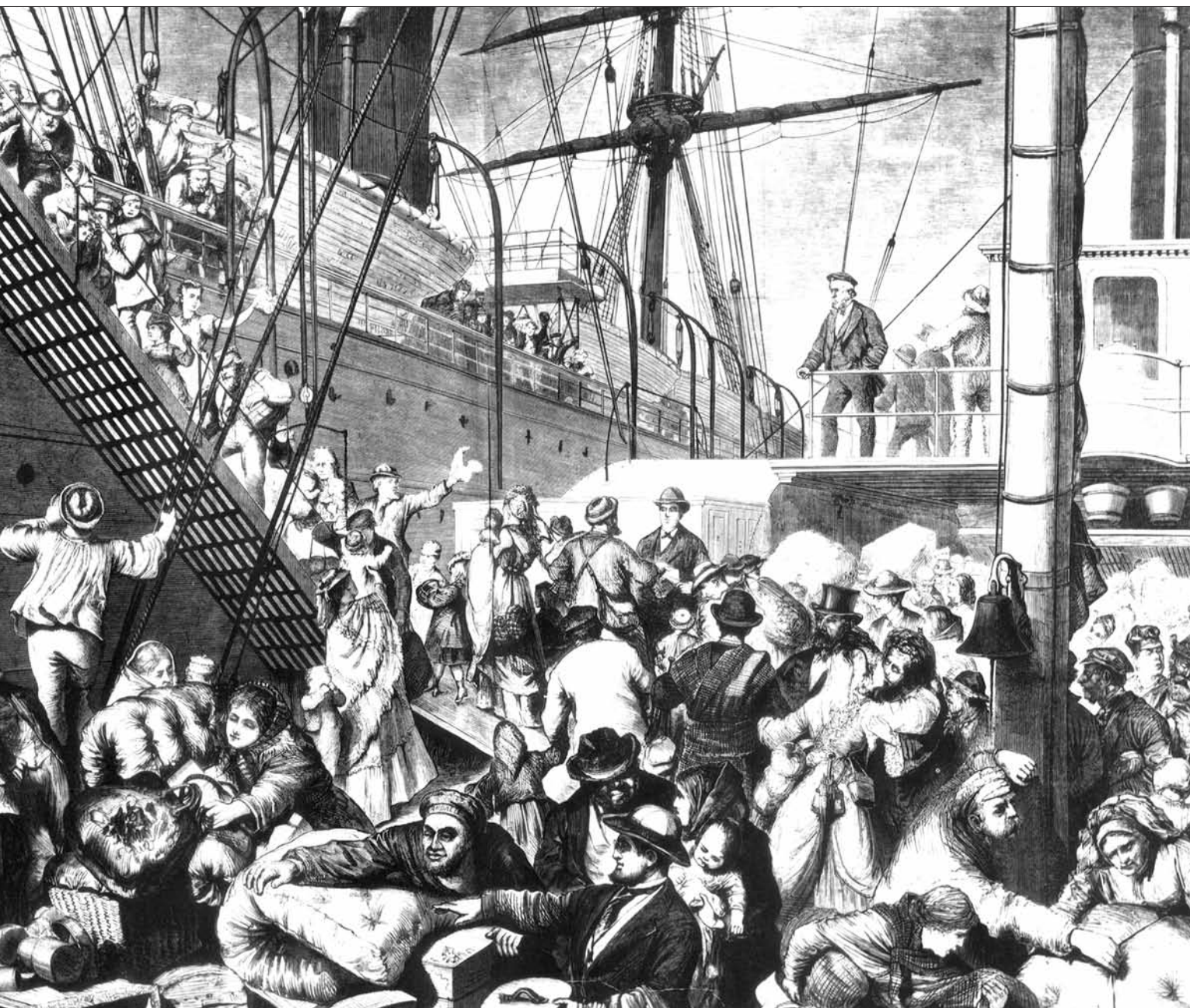
The history of Kansas presents a colorful mosaic of peoples and events and can be studied from many perspectives. Perhaps the richest of these is the history of the peoples who have resided in the state and built it: the Native Americans who have lived here through the ages; the migrants from the eastern and southern states, driven by their concept of "manifest destiny" to incorporate Kansas Territory into their new nation; the Border Ruffians and Jayhawkers who fought to define its political and social character; the Exodusters from the South who hoped to find a peaceful haven for African Americans in "free" Kansas after the Civil War; and the thousands upon thousands of Europeans, lured by the prospects of land and independence, who chose to leave their ancient homelands for the challenges of the American frontier. Indeed, because non-Indian settlers were excluded from Kansas until 1854, viewing state history through the prism of immigration adds significant dimension and opens up exciting new avenues for exploration.

Eleanor L. Turk, a retired professor of history at Indiana University East, earned her Ph.D. in Central European (German) history from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She has researched and written on both German history and German emigration in the nineteenth century and has focused on the history of the German people in Kansas.

The author thanks Rita G. Napier and Virgil W. Dean for offering this daunting challenge and opportunity. She has learned a great deal from the process.

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From the Old to the New World is the title of this sketch of German emigrants boarding a steamer in Hamburg, Germany, to relocate in America. The illustration was published in Harper's Weekly, November 7, 1874.

Kansas owes its history to its immigrants, American and European alike, and they are well-documented. The state census reports, compiled every ten years beginning in 1865, record data about the immigrants' places of birth and prior residences. They complement the data from the United States Census and have formed the basis for informative population studies. The early analysis of Carroll D.

Clark and Roy L. Roberts, *People of Kansas: A Demographic and Sociological Study*, gives a statistical overview of immigration by the origins of the migrants. J. Neale Carman's superb *Foreign-Language Units of Kansas, I. Historical Atlas and Statistics* provides the best introduction to foreign settlement, with immigration statistics and detailed county maps identifying where foreign migrants have clustered.

edge the German presence but give us “no idea of the actual German dimension in Kansas history.”

Since the 1960s European Germans have received more attention, according to Turk, but studies of Germans from Russia still predominate. While assimilation continues to be of major concern, scholars no longer begin with the assumption that becoming Americanized is the goal. James Juhnke, for example, described the movement of Germans from Russia into Kansas political life but also examined the persistence of more traditional values and behaviors. Turk’s own work emphasizes the lives of Germans in Europe, how they transplanted their culture, and the central concern with building community. Recent historians, while stressing processes of change and continuity, have analyzed the direction and rate of change, the persistence of culture and society, and even the unintended consequences of accommodating to the larger culture.

Finally Dr. Turk details possibilities for future research. She suggests that historians need to examine the persistence of ethnicity in rural areas. Historians might examine how some unique communities combined European and American cultures. In particular she urges exploring similarities in the different Russian German religious groups that made their adaptation similarly successful. On the other hand, for European Germans, who remain “essentially invisible,” we need to examine their lives before migration and the process of immigration, as well as their land use patterns, political life, education, family histories, and generational differences in experience. Urban and rural comparisons also would be welcomed. Overall the studies need to distinguish between patterns of assimilation, resistance and persistence, and accommodation.

Rita G. Napier

University of Kansas

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James R. Shortridge, in *Peopling the Plains: Who Settled Where in Frontier Kansas*, uses both graphs and maps to explain how the Kansas population had its origins in the existing states and how those settlers tended to cluster, by county.¹ He parallels this with the smaller, albeit significant, influx of foreign nationals. These sources allow us to understand how community building took place among both American and foreign-born settlers.

My purpose in this essay is to consider how historians and other scholars have identified and analyzed the role of ethnic Germans in the history of Kansas. My basic sources are some excellent bibliographies, which I recommend to others interested in this subject. But we have to begin with the German immigrants themselves. The geographers and statisticians help us tally and locate the Germans among the other settlers of Kansas. These statistics are important for understanding the populations we are discussing. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, about one-fourth of current Kansas citizens claim German heritage. To help make their ancestors more visible, I focus here on the data for the most active period of German immigration, the decades preceding the Great Depression.

MIGRATION AT THE NATIONAL AND STATE LEVELS, 1820–1930²

<u>Decade</u>	<u>Total for U.S.</u>	<u>Total Germans</u>	<u>Percent German</u>	<u>Total Kansas</u>	<u>Total Kansas Germans</u>
1820–1829	128,502	5,753	4.5		
1830–1839	538,381	124,726	23.2		
1840–1849	1,427,337	385,434	27.0		
1850–1859	2,814,554	976,072	34.7		
1860–1869	2,081,261	723,734	34.8	135,792*	5,142*
1870–1879	2,742,137	751,769	27.4	343,866#	14,551#
1880–1889	5,248,568	1,445,181	27.5	934,300	38,566
1890–1899	3,694,294	579,072	15.7	1,413,999	62,992
1900–1909	8,202,388	328,722	4.0	1,470,494	58,204
1910–1919	6,347,380	174,227	2.7	1,635,328	65,842
1920–1929	4,295,510	386,634	9.0	1,759,257	43,473

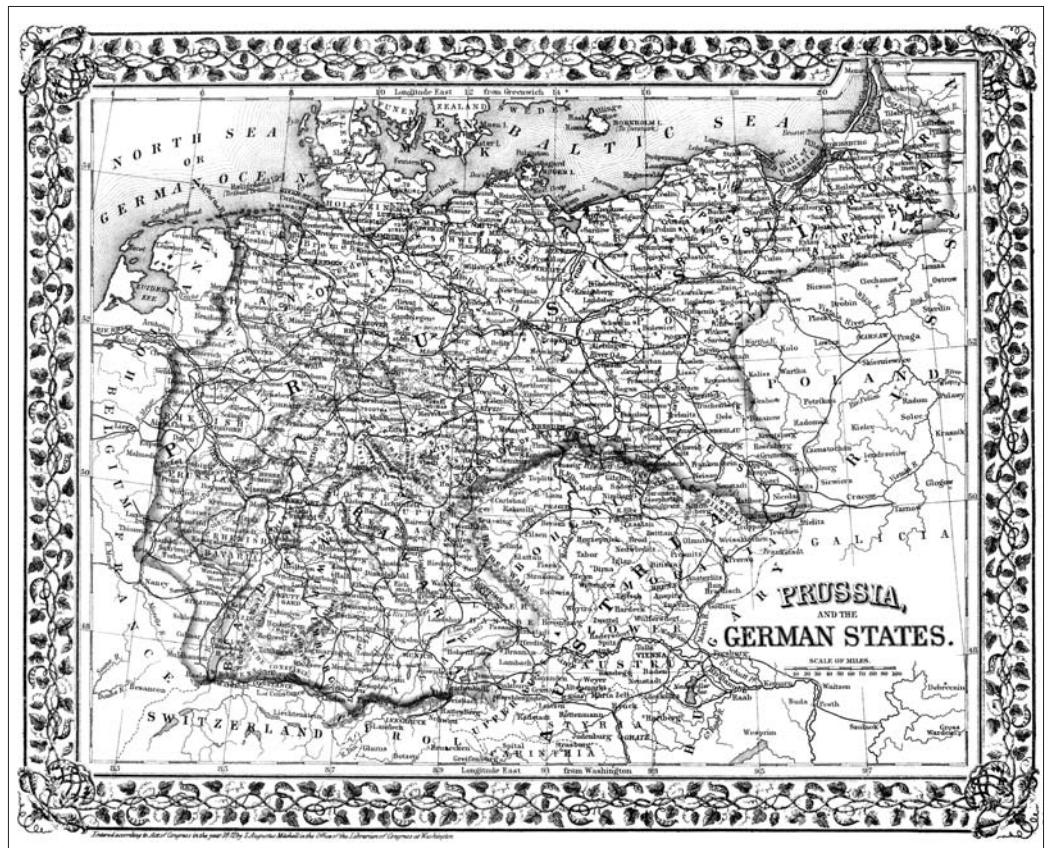
1. The Kansas State Census is available on microfilm from the Kansas State Historical Society, and copies are in libraries across the state. The federal census data on migration of the settlement period is accessible in U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*, Bicentennial ed. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975). Carroll D. Clark and Roy L. Roberts, *People of Kansas: A Demographic and Sociological Study* (Topeka: Kansas State Planning Board, 1936); J. Neale Carman, *Foreign-Language Units of Kansas I. Historical Atlas and Statistics* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1962); James R. Shortridge, *Peopling the Plains: Who Settled Where in Frontier Kansas* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995). Wallace Elden Miller, *The Peopling of Kansas* (Columbus, Ohio: Press of Fred J. Heer, 1906), was the earliest study, but it focuses on “native white Americans” and makes only passing reference to foreign immigrants.

2. Four sources were used to compile the migration data. Sources for the data for national immigration, total German immigration, and percentage are acceptable to both Germans and Americans. They are based on the *Historical Statistics of the United States* cited in the German government publication Willi Paul Adams, *Deutsche im Schmelztiegel der USA: Erfahrungen im größten Einwanderungsland der Europäer* (Berlin: Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales—Ausländerbeauftragte, 1990), 8. These data exclude Germans from Russia. Kansas data (*) are from Shortridge, *Peopling the Plains*, 11–12, and are based on the Kansas State Census, 1865; subsequent Kansas data (#) are from Carman, *Foreign-Language Units of Kansas*, 9, and are based on the United States Census, 1880.

WHO WERE THESE GERMANS?

This question has long vexed historians and even the Germans themselves. While the French and English developed nation states from the speakers of their language by the seventeenth century, the Germans remained fragmented and without a unified nation state throughout most of their history. As late as 1800, for example, there were more than three hundred separate large and small German-speaking states in Central Europe, most with hereditary rulers. They were aligned loosely in the Holy Roman Empire headed by the Habsburg dynasty. When French Emperor Napoleon I directed his conquering armies eastward into the empire, he forced the German states to consolidate, drastically changing their borders and reducing the number of states. After his defeat in 1815, the victorious British, French, Russians, Austrians, and Prussians made no attempt to return Central Europe to its earlier geographic and political chaos, preferring to retain much of Napoleon's more rational geography. The Congress of Vienna created the Germanic Confederation, a coalition of thirty-nine states, still with their hereditary rulers, again presided over by the Austrian emperor. This was the complex that held the core of the German-speaking population up until the wars of unification (1864–1871) established the German Empire in 1871. Because of these tumultuous changes in the borders of the German states during the nineteenth century, many Germans had problems defining their "national" origins. Their sense of identity was colored by significant religious and regional differences, and by rivalries among the states in the Germanic Confederation.³

But in addition to the Germanic Confederation/Empire, the long history of European wars and migration had established German-speaking minorities in



Printed in an 1873 atlas, this map illustrates the German states that held the core of the German-speaking population and which two years prior (1871) were unified to form the German Empire.

3. The German wars for unification excluded Austria and its German population in 1866. For a discussion of the identity issue from the perspective of the changing German states, see Abigail Green, *Fatherlands: State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth Century Germany* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

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France, Denmark, Italy, sections of the Austrian Empire, and Switzerland. Germans also established settlements in the Crimean and Volga regions of Russia, invited there by Catherine the Great in the eighteenth century to help boost the Russian economy through their farming and artisan skills. She granted them the right to retain their language, schools, and religions, and to have local autonomy. They became distinct enclaves within the Russian empire, including the Mennonite communities of the Crimea, and both Lutheran and Catholic settlements along the Volga River. Thus, because of this dispersion of Germans throughout the Old World, “German” was historically more a linguistic and cultural concept than a political one.⁴ When the first modern German state, the German Empire, was founded in 1871, many German speakers remained outside its borders.

The process of trans-Atlantic migration, therefore, changed Prussians, Hessians, Bavarians, and Palatines from Central Europe into “Germans” as well as “Americans.” For Americans this identity change occurred early in our history and was the product of the migrants’ interaction with the British they encountered along the way. The British, and later the Americans, clearly could understand the distinctions among English, Welsh, Irish, and Scots, but they could not distinguish among the many states of German Central Europe. Therefore language became the Germans’ primary marker, and the immigrants had to accept this new identity. Philip Otterness explains this well in *Becoming German*, his important analysis of eighteenth-century German migration to the British North American colonies.

People construct identities out of their interactions with others, and migration and the fight for survival forced many German-speaking emigrants . . . to define themselves as one people. . . .

But when people create for themselves a shared past, whether that past is real or fabricated, they enhance their sense of a common identity. Gradually the German immigrants began to adopt that new identity—an identity that would one day become as meaningful as the identities based on religion, language, and birthplace that they had brought with them.⁵

Thus it is necessary to identify and define “Germans” in Kansas, especially in the years before German unification in 1871. Since, in 1865 (the base year for state census data used) there was no nation known as Germany, we have to use a definition of German that overlooks national boundaries in Europe. For Kansas, the best definition probably is Carman’s, based on those who spoke the German language. They would have been perceived as German by their neighbors. Carman, a linguist, included the Swiss and immigrants born in Russia, Hungary, Bohemia, and Austria because they spoke German. This particularly inflates his totals for 1920, however, after the breakup of the Austrian Empire.⁶ Shortridge, however,

4. English, Norse, Swedish, and Dutch are also Germanic languages. This essay, however, refers to those speaking the modern High German and Low German variations of the core population of Central Europe. In addition to those in the United States, important German settlements were founded in Latin America, Africa, and Australia.

5. Philip Otterness, *Becoming German: the 1709 Palatine Migration to New York* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004), 66, writes of a large number of poor Germans who flocked to England in 1709 believing that Queen Anne would give them farmland in North America. They eventually settled in the Mohawk Valley of New York.

6. Carman, *Foreign-Language Units of Kansas*, 8.

separately lists figures for Austria (which had German, Hungarian, and Slavic populations), Switzerland (which had German, French, Italian, and Romanche-speaking populations), other countries having German-speaking minorities, and the German states. In the long run, Carman's definition probably comes closer to how Kansas Germans perceived themselves.

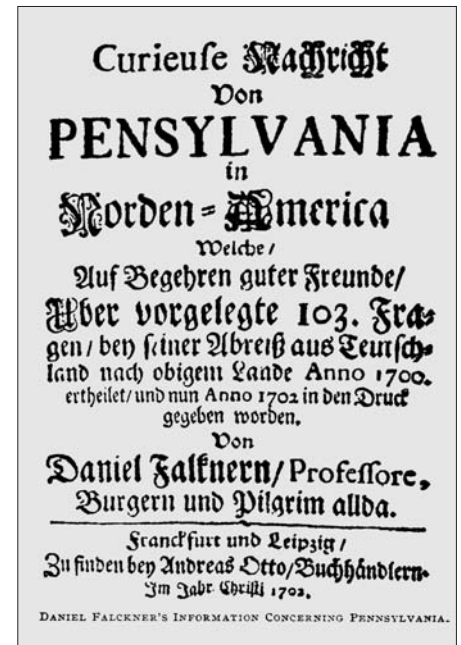
As they emigrated to America and on to Kansas in the mid-nineteenth century and after, Germans claimed many countries of origin even though they spoke the same language. But their American neighbors regarded them as alike. German immigrants often had to overcome historical regional rivalries among the members of their transplanted churches and social organizations. Migration thus, for Germans, entailed a two-stage process of community building, first among themselves, and then together with their American neighbors. These initial accommodations with each other probably aided their subsequent adaptation to American community life. The concept of "German American" reflects, therefore, the considerable adaptability of these European-born immigrants. It contrasts markedly with the enduring distinctiveness of the German immigrants from Russia, who over several generations in their protected enclaves had learned how to retain their "German-ness" within the dominant Russian society.

WHY DID GERMANS EMIGRATE?

The reasons for their emigration were as varied as their backgrounds. Before the American War of Independence most came for religious reasons. For example, the German Quakers who founded Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1683 were considered an outlaw sect in most German states after the Treaties of Westphalia (1648) determined that only Lutherans, Evangelicals (Calvinists), and Catholics were permitted within the Holy Roman Empire.⁷ The "Pennsylvania Dutch" spread across the eastern counties of Pennsylvania, usually retaining their distinctive religious culture along with their language. Some later migrated to the Midwest, including Kansas. Other Germans came as indentured servants hoping to better their lot in America once their contract had been fulfilled.

This pre-Revolutionary War migration was relatively small: between 65,000 and 100,000 came to America during the colonial period, establishing a German American population, including the descendants of the immigrants, estimated at around 250,000 by 1776. Germans were scattered among the coastal states from New York to Georgia but mainly in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.⁸ These were the "Carolina Mecklenburgers" and the "Pennsylvania Dutch," still distinguished by language from their Anglo American fellow colonists.

After the Napoleonic Wars (1798–1815) new waves of migrants left Europe for America. From Central Europe the first migrations were mainly economic. Napoleon had conscripted many Germans into his armies, which lived off the land and drained it as they pushed eastward toward Russia. Post-war recovery was slow and further complicated by archaic inheritance laws. In southwestern



Before the American Revolutionary War, most Germans emigrated for religious reasons. During the latter 1600s and through the 1700s German immigrants scattered along America's coastal states but primarily settled in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The above page is from a 1702 publication that provides information to Germans seeking a new life in Pennsylvania.

7. See Stephanie Grauman Wolf, *Urban Village: Population, Community, and Family Structure in Germantown, Pennsylvania, 1683–1800* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976).

8. Gunter Moltmann, ed., *Germans to America: 300 Years of Immigration 1683 to 1983* (Stuttgart: Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations, 1982), 9; James Stuart Olson, *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, combined ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 25.



Between 1820 and 1930 more than 5.8 million Germans left their homes to settle in the United States. This illustration from the May 29, 1880, issue of Harper's Weekly depicts immigrants arriving in Castle Garden, New York, one of America's major points of entry.

Germany the property of the deceased had to be divided equally among all the heirs; this often created the so-called "dwarf economy (*Zwergökonomie*)" of holdings too small to support families. In the northwest the deceased's estate went to the youngest son, converting the older brothers into hired hands. For some from these groups, the opportunities for land and work in America seemed very attractive.

The next significant migrations mainly were political. In 1848 a wave of local revolutions struck the Germanic Confederation. The demand was for a German national state unified by a constitutional monarchy. As the local rulers cowered and surrendered to the mobs, an *ad hoc* constitutional convention was held in Frankfurt to write a constitution. It deliberated for a year, writing a strikingly modern document. The movement faltered on the key issue of whether to restrict the nation to the German-speaking core (Small Germany or *Kleindeutschland*), or whether to include all of the Austrian Empire with its pluralities of Hungarians and Slavs (Greater Germany or

Grossdeutschland). As this debate split the assembly, the monarchs recovered their courage and sent armies to Frankfurt to end the revolution and arrest its leaders. Warned in advance, many escaped and eventually emigrated to America. These "Forty-Eighters" comprised a small group, perhaps about four thousand, who actually participated in the events. They were predominantly lawyers, journalists, and academics, prominent for their education and achievements. They settled mainly in the cities of the East and Midwest, often resuming their activities as journalists or professional men. They became proud and vocal spokesmen for German Americans and often recruited for additional emigrants. Their letters and writings (especially their "America" handbooks) helped establish the "chain migration" of Germans who came to America to join relatives and friends.

As a political reaction became repression in the German states during the 1850s, more Germans began to emigrate. The first "peak" year of German immigration was 1854, when more than 250,000 set out for America. (Most probably did not know, however, that Kansas was declared open to general settlement that same year.) The majority of these immigrants settled in the Midwest, where almost half of the nation's German American population lived within the triangle of Milwaukee, Cincinnati, and St. Louis. Altogether, between 1820, when the United States began collecting immigration data, and 1930, when the Great Depression essentially shut down international migration, more than 5.8 million Germans left their homes to settle in the United States. They and their descendants are the German Americans we study.

GERMANS IN AMERICA

We Americans have long regarded European immigration as a reflection of our national greatness as a democracy. In this nativist way, we celebrated foreign immigration with the dedication of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor in 1886. (Yet, how many of our ancestors resented being identified as “the wretched refuse of [Europe’s] teeming shores” in the poem on its base?) We started debating the immigrants’ impact when Frederick Jackson Turner proclaimed, in 1890, that the frontier was the great “melting pot” that blended Americans and foreign immigrants into citizens of a dynamic new type of nationality. With the advent of discriminatory national quotas early in the twentieth century, however, the discussion of immigration shifted, and we began to think of migrants as alien intruders rather than future citizens. World War I only intensified those suspicions, especially toward Germans. The discussion was intensely political and a hierarchy of stereotypes emerged.⁹

After Marcus Lee Hansen published his seminal article “The History of American Immigration as a Field for Research” in the journal of the American Historical Association in 1927, immigration became a focus of scholarly research. Two especially important major themes that emerged were, first, the “pull” of American opportunity versus the “push” of European oppression, and later, the problems of “assimilation” (read “Americanization”) of immigrants in our society. Eventually, they turned their scrutiny to the behavior of various immigrant groups, examining their roles in religion, politics, the economy, and in cities and their culture.¹⁰ Many of these analyses continued to reflect our nativist views as outsiders to the communities studied.

With the Cold War rehabilitation of West Germany after World War II and the approaching tricentennial of the founding of Germantown (1983), however, interest in America’s German heritage began to intensify. Scholars and genealogists contributed to the growing body of literature and to the founding of organizations such as the Society for German–American Studies in 1968. Some American universities established Max Kade Centers for research on German Americans. Kansas has long had a significant role in promoting this German American history: the *Yearbook of German-American Studies*, sponsored by the Society for German–American Studies, is edited and published annually at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, and its Max Kade Center also was founded in 1968 (and now

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9. Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” in American Historical Association, *1893 Annual Report* (1893): 199–227. See Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004).

10. Marcus Lee Hansen, “The History of American Immigration as a Field for Research,” *American Historical Review* 32 (April 1927): 500–18. Due to the magnitude of this research only some of the milestone works are cited here, and it is recommended that readers consult the authors’ bibliographies for additional sources. For overviews, and how interpretations changed over the years, see George M. Stephenson, *A History of American Immigration, 1820–1924* (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1926); Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1939); Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration, 1607–1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940); Hansen, *The Immigrant in American History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1940); Edward N. Saveth, *American Historians and European Immigrants, 1875–1925* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948); Oscar Handlin, ed., *Immigration as a Factor in American History* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959); Maldwyn A. Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); Philip Taylor, *The Distant Magnet* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1971); Leonard Dinnerstein and David M. Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration and Assimilation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982); Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2d ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 2002).

GERMAN-AMERICAN STUDIES



Dr. h. e. Max Kade

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No. 1

The study of Germans in America has been aided by the founding of organizations such as Max Kade Centers, established at some American universities, including the University of Kansas in 1968.

even has its own house for staging events and housing visiting scholars). The *Yearbook* now includes a valuable bibliography of new articles on German Americans in each issue—a major research resource.

German scholars are active in German American history as well. Early works, such as Eugen von Philippovich's *Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik in Deutschland* [*Emigration and Emigration Policy in Germany*], Georg von Bosse's *Das deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten* [*The German Element in the United States*], and Wilhelm Mönckmeier's *Die deutsche überseeische Auswanderung* [*German Emigration Overseas*] reflect their activity.¹¹ Understandably, the two world wars interrupted this scholarship, although the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen [Institute for Overseas Cultural Connections] headquartered in Stuttgart worked to maintain links with Germans settled all over the world throughout the century. Thanks to funding from the Volkswagen Foundation, German universities also began to introduce "American Studies" and their publications to the discussion during the 1970s.¹²

Because the purpose of this essay is to review how historians have handled Germans of Kansas, it is helpful to set some benchmarks. One is the founding of the Max Kade Center at the University of Kansas in 1968.¹³ Significantly, the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, a national organization dedicated to Russian German Mennonites and Volga Germans, was founded the same year. It publishes a journal and *Work Paper* prepared by members and nonmember scholars.¹⁴ This suggests that 1968 was a pivotal year for German American history for the state, and that important changes in approaches to studying it would take place during the following decades. It is therefore instructive to compare how the history of Kansas German Americans has been written before and after 1968.

11. Eugen von Philippovich, ed., *Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik in Deutschland: Berichte über die Entwicklung und den gegenwärtigen Zustand des Auswanderungswesens in den Einzelstaaten und im Reich* [*Emigration and Emigration Policy in Germany: Reports on the Development and Current Status of Emigration in the Individual States and in the Empire*] (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1892); Georg von Bosse, *Das deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten* (Stuttgart: Chr. Belsler Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1908); Wilhelm Mönckmeier, *Die deutsche überseeische Auswanderung* (Jena, Germany: Fischer, 1912).

12. The following sources are only representative of the larger body of writings: Albert B. Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1909); Walter Allen Knittle, *Early Eighteenth Century Palatine Emigration* (Philadelphia: Dorrance, 1937); John Arkan Hawgood, *The Tragedy of German-Americans: The Germans in the United States of America during the Nineteenth Century—and After* (New York: Putnam, 1940); Adolf E. Zucker, ed., *The Forty-eighters: Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950); Mack Walker, *Germany and the Emigration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964); Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans during World War I* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974); Sander A. Diamond, *The Nazi Movement in the United States, 1924–1941* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974); Klaus J. Bade, "Deutsche Überseeauswanderung und einwanderung im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 26 (1986): 480–87, is a review of German studies of emigration since the 1970s; Willi Paul Adams, *The German-Americans: An Ethnic Experience*, trans. and adapted by LaVern J. Rippley and Everhard Reischmann (Indianapolis: Max Kade German-American Center, Indiana University–Purdue University at Indianapolis, 1993); Don Heinrich Tolzmann, *The German-American Experience* (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 2000); Otterness, *Becoming American*.

13. The core of the Max Kade Center is a research collection. See Max Kade German-American Document and Research Center, *Catalogue* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, October 1976.)

14. The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR) is headquartered in Lincoln, Nebraska, and will lend materials through interlibrary loan to interested researchers.

GERMANS IN KANSAS HISTORY BEFORE 1968

Germans have lived in Kansas from its very beginnings. The Kansas territorial census of 1855 recorded 115 residents who had been born in Germany. Most had stopped and lived in other states along the way, and fifty-five of them already were naturalized American citizens. The ninety-four men and twenty-one women included eighteen families, almost all of whom settled around the well-established army post at Fort Leavenworth. Although one historian has written that “the German was not a pioneer except in isolated cases or in exceptional circumstances,” by the end of the territorial period twenty-six German settlements had formed within the newly opened lands of the Kansas frontier. In the 1870s the Crimean and Volga Germans began arriving in Kansas. In the second half of the nineteenth century, as Kansas grew, Germans made up about 30 percent of all foreign immigrants. They were well regarded, in general, until the world wars of the twentieth century made them suspect. Carman’s linguistic atlas *Foreign Language Units of Kansas* and Shortridge’s *Peopling the Plains* both demonstrate where German immigrants settled in Kansas and how they followed its frontier to the west, north, and south.¹⁵

Yet, despite clear demographic evidence of the German-born presence in the state’s population, the state’s historians have yet to deal fully with them. It would seem natural to find them noted in the various state histories, with discussion of their communities and contributions. Harley Stucky’s essay “The German Element in Kansas,” in *Kansas: The First Century*, offers a good five-paragraph introduction to the European Germans’ immigration. Stucky, then head of the history faculty at the Mennonite Bethel College in North Newton, devoted the majority of his long article to the Mennonites and other Germans from Russia. Checking the indices of four other recent works is disappointing. William Zornow’s *Kansas, A History of the Jayhawk State* (1957) lumps all immigrants together and refers to each on only about three pages; Kenneth Davis’s *Kansas: A History* (1984) refers to Germans on three pages; Robert Richmond’s *Kansas, A Land of Contrasts* (1989, 3d ed.) mentions only Germans from Russia; Paul Stuewe’s *Kansas Revisited: Historical Images and Perspectives* (1990) includes an article on German Mennonites but none on any other foreign immigrants; Craig Miner’s new (2002) *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State, 1854–2000* also focuses on Russian Germans and the anti-German feelings generated by the world wars.¹⁶ But briefly acknowledging their existence gives us no idea of the actual German dimension in Kansas history. Indeed, these state histories make German-born immigrants almost invisible compared with Russian Germans.¹⁷

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15. Kansas Territorial Census, 1855; Hawgood, *The Tragedy of German America*, 26; Carman, *Foreign Language Units of Kansas*; Carman, “Continental Europeans in Rural Kansas, 1854–1861,” in *Territorial Kansas: Studies Commemorating the Centennial* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Publications, 1954), 164–96; Shortridge, *Peopling the Plains*.

16. Harley J. Stucky, “The German Element in Kansas,” in *Kansas: The First Century*, ed. John D. Bright, vol. 1 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1956), 329–54; William Frank Zornow, *Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957); Kenneth S. Davis, *Kansas: A History* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1984); Robert W. Richmond, *Kansas, A Land of Contrasts*, 3d ed. (Arlington Heights, Ill.: Forum Press, 1989); Paul K. Stuewe, ed., *Kansas Revisited: Historical Images and Perspectives*, 2d ed. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, Division of Continuing Studies, 1990); Craig Miner, *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State, 1854–2000* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

17. Kathleen Neils Conzen, *The People of Minnesota: Germans of Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2003), makes virtually the same observation in her study of Germans in Minnesota: “Germans, Minnesota’s largest immigrant group throughout the 19th century and still the state’s largest ancestry group, are also one of its most invisible.”



Despite the varied sects of German immigrants in Kansas, historians have focused on Russian Germans, who began arriving in the state in large numbers in the 1870s. This illustration from the March 20, 1875, issue of Leslie's depicts temporary quarters for Volga Germans in central Kansas.

Fortunately, Kansans have another magnificent resource for researching state history: Homer Socolofsky and Virgil Dean's *Kansas History: An Annotated Bibliography*.¹⁸ As an academic trained in German rather than American history, I have found it very helpful in my research into the Kansas Germans even though it is now more than twelve years old; but it too reveals some problems in the existing literature. It identifies 4,565 published works on Kansas history. A review of its subject index suggests the dimensions of the problem. Of the 142 works listed about foreign settlers, only 13 focus on German-born settlers, the largest segment of the state's foreign immigrant population. By contrast, it notes twenty-four articles about Swedish settlers, twenty-five articles about English settlers, and twenty-seven separate articles about Russian German settlers, giving the impression that these were the greater populations of immigrants.¹⁹ Since the data indicate that Russian Germans always were the smaller portion of the two German-speaking populations, we clearly need to understand why this imbalance exists.²⁰

One significant clue is that neither the five state histories just cited nor the *Annotated Bibliography* list any sources in the German language. Yet my own research on the German-language press held in the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka indicated that twenty-one German newspaper companies were founded in Kansas during the last half of the nineteenth century; that more than 120 German-language newspapers and periodicals were published at some time in the state; and that between 1885 and 1910 more than fifteen regularly circulated throughout the state.²¹ These papers are a treasure trove of information, but only to those who can handle the language. Clearly the lack of German language proficiency cuts Kansas's historians off from primary sources about the German-born immigrants who migrated and merged into the larger population. Instead, those immigrants who tended to cluster in relatively isolated and distinctive culture groups—the Mennonites, Volga Germans, Swedes, and Bohemians—were much easier to identify, observe, and discuss. Thus, the very language that distinguishes the other Germans isolates them from the typical state historian.

18. Homer E. Socolofsky and Virgil W. Dean, comps., *Kansas History: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992).

19. Note that the distinction in ethnicities appears to be based on birthplace, not language. *Ibid.*, 559–87. Other articles mentioned Bohemians (1), Croatians (2), Danes (2), French-Canadian (3), French (11), Indochinese (1), Irish (2), Jewish (6), Mexican-Americans (17), Norwegians (1), Pennsylvania Germans (1), Swiss (4), and Welsh (1).

Census Year	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940
German-born Kansans	12,775	27,889	46,294	39,501	34,506	23,380	17,367	10,870
Russian-born Kansans		8,032	9,792	11,019	15,311	12,050	8,779	6,401

Carman, *Foreign Language Units of Kansas*, 10.

21. Eleanor L. Turk, "The German Newspapers of Kansas," *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 6 (Spring 1983): 46–54. As a German historian, I began this project after I learned that the Kansas State Historical Society held many German-language newspapers that "nobody could read."

This is revealed clearly if we review the *Annotated Bibliography* by historical period. Before 1968 very few works are listed that discuss German settlers in the territorial period (1854–1861) when only the German-born had entered the state. This first generation of immigrants spoke, read, and wrote German fluently in their communication with one another, but we have no apparent access to their letters, diaries, and other works.²² First-person statements by these German settlers also are scarce. Charles Raber, a Swiss German writing an account in English about his freighting firm’s operations, noted how his German-speaking employee was teased by the Americans. Firsthand observations of German settlers are equally rare. Stephen Spear, who moved from Iowa to Wabaunsee County in 1857, refers to Alma, the county seat, but not to the Germans who founded it.²³ One very interesting approach is Judge J. C. Ruppenthal’s “Pennsylvania-Germans in Central Kansas,” published (in Pennsylvania) in September 1914 just after the beginning of World War I. Ruppenthal was part of that migration. He used the article to associate Kansas Germans with the true spirit of democracy, carefully listing their Pennsylvania origins, if known, and their Kansas destinations. He followed that up with “The German Element in Central Kansas.” Published in 1915, this article may have been an effort to shield local Germans from the growing tensions of the European War. This article, an excellent introduction to the Germans in Kansas, provides comprehensive detail on the background of the emigration, the diverse regional origins of the migrants and the resulting issues, their churches and social customs, and even some German-language newspapers.²⁴

Clara Shields’s description of her family’s settlement in a German community on Lyon Creek is the only other significant firsthand observation of German American settlement during the territorial period. The introduction to the article explains:

This colony was for the most part made up of Germans who had settled in and around Watertown, Wis. The long, hard winters and the excessive snowfall had led them to think of homes in a milder climate. Through reports from more adventurous friends, they came to look with favor upon Kansas, and thither the first party came in 1857. Thus the Lyon creek community took form, and for over fifteen years thereafter many small companies came into the neighborhood from Wisconsin, or in some instances directly from Germany.²⁵

22. Even the collection of women’s letters analyzed by Joanna L. Stratton mentions only a few German correspondents, and Stratton’s index refers only to Germans from Russia. See Joanna L. Stratton, *Pioneer Women: Voices from the Kansas Frontier* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982).

23. Charles Raber, “Personal Recollections of Life on the Plains from 1860 to 1868,” *Kansas Historical Collections*, 1923–1925 16 (1925): 316–41; Stephen Jackson Spear, “Reminiscences of the Early Settlement of Dragoon Creek, Wabaunsee County,” *ibid.*, 1913–1914 13 (1915): 345–63. Since my research now focuses on Wabaunsee County, I found Spear’s oversight significant. Julie Spellman, “Capt. Claudius Kiefer,” *ibid.*, 1915–1916 14 (1918): 93–94, and S. L. Seabrook, “Expedition of Col. E. V. Sumner Against the Cheyenne Indians, 1857,” *ibid.*, 1923–1925 16 (1925): 306–15, identify German Americans but do not discuss their military activities in that context.

24. J. C. Ruppenthal, “Pennsylvania-Germans in Central Kansas,” *The Penn Germania: A Popular Journal of German History and Ideals in the United States* 3 (September 1914): 33–38; Ruppenthal, “The German Element in Central Kansas,” *Kansas Historical Collections*, 1913–1914 13 (1915): 513–34.

25. The Lyon Creek settlement that Shields described was in Geary, Marion, and Dickinson Counties. See Clara M. Fengel Shields, “The Lyon Creek Settlement,” *Kansas Historical Collections*, 1915–1918 14 (1918): 143–70.

*More than 120
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Between 1885 and
1910 more than
fifteen regularly
circulated through-
out the state.*



Charles and Friederika Staatz settled in the German community on Lyon Creek in Dickinson County in 1857. Pictured here is their home, some years later, owned at that time by the Staatz's oldest son, Fred, posing here with his family.

Shields blends her own recollections with the statements of other members of the community. This article makes an important contribution because it shows the origins and modes of indirect migration to the Kansas frontier, that is, migration by German-born migrants who had settled elsewhere first and then formed a town company to facilitate their move to Kansas. It also illustrates the two-stage process of community formation common to many foreign immigrants. They speak of being born in various parts of Germany, coming to America as individuals or small family groups, and meeting in Wisconsin, where their common heritage helped form them into a community. Out of that community they formulated the plan to move to Kansas. The statement of Friederika Oesterreich Staatz illustrates this process:

I was born in Prussia, September 30, 1838, at Greifenberg. When I was eight years old my father decided to emigrate to the United States. We were on the ocean six weeks and three days. Our family and the Latzke family came to the United States on the same ship. We came in the year 1847. We went to Watertown, Wis., to live, and there I married Charlie Staatz, September 12, 1856. . . . As soon as Charlie and I were married we began to make arrangements to move to Kansas. . . . On account of the troubles in Kansas we stopped in Nebraska, where we put up a cabin and waited through the winter until things were more settled in the territory. We left Nebraska on March 1, 1857. . . . We came by way of Manhattan, Ogden and Fort Riley. . . . Members of our party came up the creek and selected their claims as they came along. We settled near where Cary creek now flows into Lyon Creek.²⁶

It is noteworthy that these settlers came as a group but established individual claims for their homes and farms. To the extent that they understood the system for claiming land on the frontier, these Germans already were somewhat "Americanized."

With statehood and the end of the Civil War, Kansas attracted increasing numbers of immigrants. The passage in Congress of the Pacific Railroad Act and the Homestead Act in 1862 opened the door to them. The Railroad Act provided for chartering railroad companies and supporting them with grants of federal lands to sell in order to finance building railroads to reach the Pacific Coast. The second permitted individual settlers to claim and develop 160 acres of surveyed federal lands for five years, after which they would "proof" their claim and take full title to it (and, of course, paying taxes on it thereafter). Much of Kansas fell into this

26. *Ibid.*, 148–49.

category. This American legislation occurred just as the German harbor cities of Bremen and Hamburg began to develop and regulate steamship passenger lines and facilities to handle the growing emigration of Europeans. This became a lucrative business for these German ports. Previously, most Germans had to travel to Holland, France, or England to emigrate and often encountered dreadful conditions there.²⁷

The histories of Germans in Kansas, written before World War I, often highlighted the arrival of the exotic Germans from Russia, who began migrating to Kansas in the mid-1870s. Not only were these immigrants distinctive in their own right, but their migration also affected the development of Kansas railroads. C. B. Schmidt, Santa Fe railroad commissioner for immigration, wrote about the railroad's efforts to bring Germans to Kansas.

The company recognized the advantages of inviting German settlers, and consequently appointed a German General Agent to be in charge of the German Department of the Land Office in Topeka. Thus nearly 300,000 acres of land were sold to German settlers coming from various parts of America as well as from Europe. The interest of European Germans made it necessary to establish a general agency of the Land Office in Hamburg with branch agencies in a number of other large cities in Germany and Austria. . . .

When the German immigrants from Russia came to this place four years ago they said, "It is good to linger here. Let us build homes." And they began during the same year to establish a number of blooming Mennonite settlements . . . [including] Gnadenau consisting of about 40 families who have come from the Crimea in South Russia. This group arrived here under the leadership of Elder Jakob Wiebe in 1874. . . . The settlers were determined to retain the village tradition and pattern of land distribution they had had in Russia. This resulted in a deviation from the American practice that the farmer lives on the land he farms. All the Gnadenau farmers live adjacent to each other on a village street and have to go to their distant fields which are parceled out to them around the village.²⁸

Schmidt published his "Reminiscences" in 1906, recollecting his efforts to meet with Russian German community leaders and persuade them to migrate to Kansas rather than to lands in other states. As a German American and a German speaker, Schmidt was uniquely qualified for his work. Another document, attributed to him, "German Settlements along the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway," probably dates to the same period and should be read together with the "Reminiscences." Written in German, this essay was not translated and published until 1962.²⁹

Several other pre-1968 studies are available. Laing's work on the Russian German Catholic settlements in Ellis County also shows their distinctive settlement in farm villages as well as the development of their cultural institutions. William H. Carruth, a professor of linguistics at the University of Kansas, gave a much

The German harbor cities of Bremen and Hamburg began to develop and regulate steamship passenger lines and facilities to handle the growing emigration of Europeans.

27. Eleanor L. Turk, "The Business of Emigration: The Role of the Hamburg Senate Commission on Emigration, 1850-1890," *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 24 (1989): 27-39.

28. C. B. Schmidt, "Kansas Mennonite Settlements, 1877," *Mennonite Life* 25 (April 1970): 51-58.

29. C. B. Schmidt, "Reminiscences of Foreign Immigration Work for Kansas," *Kansas Historical Collections, 1905-1906* 9 (1906): 485-97; J. Neale Carman, ed. and trans., "German Settlements Along the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 28 (Autumn 1962): 310-16.

During World War I, America became increasingly anti-German, and in Kansas this caused especial difficulty for the Mennonites who espoused pacifism.

broader overview of foreign immigration in his two-article study of foreign settlers across the state.³⁰

Lambert Eidson's unpublished thesis from 1911 reveals the images that Kansans had of their foreign neighbors. He described the German-born immigrants as "[i]ndustrious, thrifty and not speculative," noting their success in adapting to the physical environment. He remarked that, while they retained their native language and customs, "they are not averse to mingling freely with English speaking people." Of the Russian German Mennonites, he wrote:

Fleeing from military service in Russia, they bought large tracts of land from the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad and located in Marion, McPherson, Harvey and Reno County. These people have been very prosperous, but they have clung tenaciously to the conditions and arrangement of the fatherland.

Significantly, Eidson's work is descriptive rather than analytical; he based his conclusions on census data and observation of these communities. He grouped all foreign immigrants together on a few pages, citing no foreign-language sources.³¹

World War I was difficult for German Americans, enhancing their visibility in a negative light. Despite initial neutrality, America became increasingly anti-German, and in Kansas this caused especial difficulty for the Mennonites who espoused pacifism. Other Kansas Germans called for American neutrality and abstention from the conflict, but even this led to accusations and questions about their patriotism. In September 1914 the German-language *Wichita Herald*, cornerstone of a chain of eleven papers owned by John Hoenscheidt, pleaded the German Americans' case in a rare English-language editorial "Let's Have Fair Play:"

About one-fourth of the American people came from Germany or are of German descent. Most of those who came here years ago have since become American citizens, and according to the United States census, a greater percentage of Germans has acquired citizenship than any other foreign nationality.

Could anyone justly complain about their German fellow citizens of being peace disturbers? Can it be said that the Germans here, in celebrating their "Turnerfest" or "Saengerfest" indulge in fights or scrapping? And the German in this country, as a rule, are [*sic*] not different from the Germans living in Europe.³²

Hoenscheidt shut down his chain of German-language newspapers before the end of the war, and most other German-language papers in Kansas followed suit. The Mennonite press persisted, however, aided by its inherently religious

30. Francis S. Laing, "German-Russian Settlements in Ellis County, Kansas," *Kansas Historical Collections, 1909-1910* 11 (1910): 489-528; William H. Carruth, "Foreign Settlements in Kansas," *Kansas University Quarterly* 1 (October 1892): 71-84; *ibid.* 3 (October 1894): 159-63.

31. Lambert Eidson, "The Causes, Sources and General Characteristics of the Immigration to Kansas Prior to 1890" (master's thesis, University of Kansas, 1911), 49-53. Eidson also discussed other immigrant communities, including the Swiss and the Bohemians. He concluded that the immigrants, despite being "handicapped by their language and foreign customs" became "leading and public-spirited" citizens.

32. *Wichita Herald*, September 11, 1914. See Turk, "The German Newspapers of Kansas," 61.

content and sure audience. Much later Edgar Langsdorf pointed out the German American dilemma in his essay "The World War I Period":

No racial group in America had a more difficult time during the [First World] war than those of German ancestry. Even before the United States declared war the members of the Atchison Deutscherverein [German Association] had decided to disband until the international situation was clarified. At its annual convention in Kansas City . . . in September, the German-American Alliance of Kansas adopted resolutions affirming that despite the abuse and misunderstanding which they had endured, there were "above every other consideration true and loyal citizens of the United States."³³

One of the most important publications about the Kansas Germans to appear during the interwar period is John Ise's touching memoir *Sod and Stubble*. In moving and very readable prose, Ise writes about his parents, Henry Eisenmenger (note the subsequent Americanization of the family name), an immigrant from Württemberg, Germany, and his wife, Rosie, daughter of German immigrants who had migrated to Wisconsin before settling in eastern Kansas. Henry had claimed a homestead for his family in north-central Kansas along Dry Creek in Osborne County. North of them was a German settlement that Ise describes: "Germans from Iowa, Germans from Pennsylvania, Germans from Switzerland, Germans from Germany, "low Dutch," "high Dutch," —all kinds of Dutch, as the Germans were sometimes called."³⁴ This is essentially a frontier story, with all its hardships and heartaches, not a historical analysis of German immigrants. Yet in its pages the reader can perceive the process of community building among the Germans and the contrasts with some of their American neighbors. It is an excellent introduction to the migration of individual Germans to the Kansas frontier.

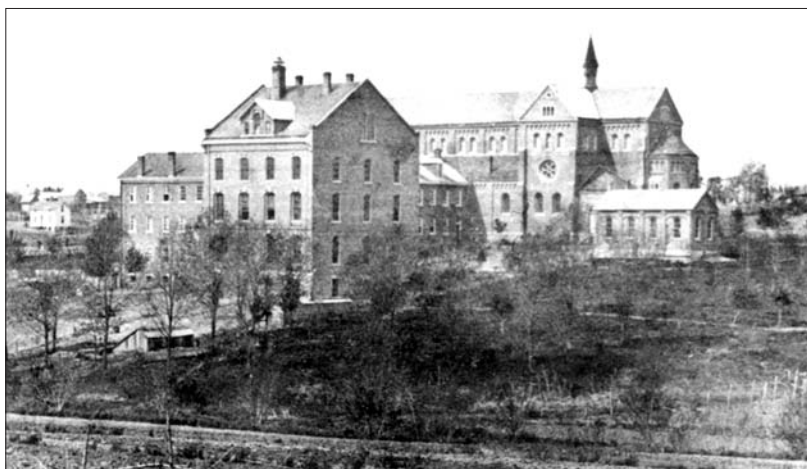
Similarly, the collection of letters by Howard Ruede and edited by John Ise, published as *Sod-House Days*, provides the experiences of a settler of Moravian background in a community of Germans on Kill Creek in Osborne County. Referring to the neighbors (the Schweitzers, Snyders, and Neuschwangers) who were helping him build his soddy, he wrote, "The folks here all talk German more than English, but they can all get along, even if they cannot use the latter tongue very



World War I was difficult for German Americans, enhancing their visibility in a negative light. In September 1914 the German-language Wichita Herold pleaded the German Americans' case in a rare English-language editorial "Let's Have Fair Play." In part it stated that "ignorance of the true facts rather than malice is at the root of most of this deplorable anti-German prejudice and abuse."

33. Edgar Langsdorf, "The World War I Period," in *Kansas: The First Century*, vol. 2, 49–70. His use of the term "racial group" underscores the sense of separation between German Americans and Americans brought about by the two world wars.

34. John Ise, *Sod and Stubble: The Story of a Kansas Homestead* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1936), 12.



Many works on Germans in Kansas focused on religion, especially Lutherans, Mennonites, and Catholics. Pictured here in 1879 is St. Benedict's Abbey church and college in Atchison, whose founding clergy were German.

fluently.”³⁵ Both Ise and Ruede offered important and seldom heard voices from *within* the German communities rather than those of outside observers. Each work suggests that the European Germans, who usually have settled elsewhere in the United States prior to moving to Kansas, had adapted well to each other and to the demands of the American frontier.

Other works on Germans in Kansas that appeared between the world wars tended to center on religion, certainly a safer subject than cultural differences. It is important to note the growing size of the Mennonite press during this period, which emphasized the integration of religion with the lifestyle of their communities. All together, these studies of religion in Kansas offer information on Catholics, Lutherans, and Mennonites. The distinctions are more than doctrinal. Catholics would find much that was familiar in moving from a parish in Germany to one in America. The church helped facilitate German accommodation to the American community.

A sizeable number of priests, monks, and clergy on the Kansas frontier were German. In Atchison, for example, many of the founding clergy of St. Benedict's Abbey church and college were German.³⁶

But for German Protestants it was a different story. One of the outcomes of the Reformation in Germany was that each secular ruler became the head of the Lutheran Church in his state. Lutheran ministers were, therefore, civil servants, and as Lutherans emigrated, many of their ministers remained at home. The Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church in America was specifically established to serve German immigrants, to train pastors, and to protect German Lutherans from variant forms of Lutheranism that had arisen in America and elsewhere. Heinrich Maurer's important article on the Lutheran community in America discusses the tensions between the synod and other forms of Protestantism in the migration.³⁷ In Kansas the many county histories of particular churches also may include information on German Americans in their congregations.

The Mennonite press, including both printing houses and newspapers, remained active in the interwar years. Henry C. Smith's book *Coming of the Russian Mennonites*, and two bilingual newspapers, the *Hillsboro Journal* and *Der Wahrheitsfreund*, spoke on behalf of these communities. The latter actually was founded in 1915, after the start of World War I, and continued to publish through World War II, until 1947.³⁸ Other local printers helped Elmer Craik provide a history of the

35. Howard Ruede, *Sod-House Days: Letters from a Kansas Homesteader 1877–78*, ed. John Ise (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), 31.

36. See, for example, John M. Moeder, *Early Catholicity in Kansas and History of the Diocese of Wichita* (Wichita, Kans.: Diocesan Chancery Office, 1937); see also Peter Beckman, *The Catholic Church on the Kansas Frontier 1850–1877* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1943).

37. Heinrich H. Maurer, "The Lutheran Community and American Society: A Study in Religion as a Condition of Social Accommodation," *American Journal of Sociology* 34 (September 1928): 282–95.

38. Henry C. Smith, *Coming of the Russian Mennonites: An Episode in the Settling of the Last Frontier, 1874–1884* (Bern, Ind.: Mennonite Book Concern, 1923); Turk, "The German Newspapers of Kansas," 59.

Church of the Brethren in Kansas and printed B. M. Dreiling's account of the celebrations that the Russian Germans held in Ellis and Rush Counties to mark their fiftieth anniversary of settling in Kansas. These and other Mennonite statements helped remind their neighbors that the deep convictions of their pacifist lifestyle held no disloyalty to the nation. Richard Sallet's 1931 dissertation gave this a broader view, considering the Russian German settlements in Nebraska and the Dakotas as well as in Kansas. Nonetheless, Mennonite pacifism remained an issue. An interesting sidelight on this discussion is an article by George Morehouse, then president of the Kansas State Historical Society, on pacifism and other attitudes during World War I.³⁹

Following World War II, in the 1940s and 1950s, new discussions of Germans in Kansas were slow to appear. Once again, religion and the Russian Germans led the way. Sister Mary Eloise Johannes produced a monograph on the Catholic Russian German Ellis County communities, and Peter Beckman published a study on the monks of St. Benedict's College (Benedictine College). Of particular interest is Alberta Pantle's exceptionally detailed, if narrowly focused, discussion of the Mennonite Brethren settlement of Gnadenau in Marion County. Well documented and illustrated, it describes the background of their emigration, their leaders, and how they obtained their land. Yet it contains a condescending tone, somewhat typical of the nativist American historians writing about ethnic groups from outside those communities. Quoting from an eyewitness account in a local newspaper, it depicts Gnadenau as an exotic curiosity:

Approaching from the east you ascend a . . . gentle slope . . . where this peculiar people have built their strange village. At a distance, to a casual observer, it has the appearance of a group of hay-ricks, but on drawing nearer you will perceive human beings passing in and out.

Pantle illustrates how the early vigor and isolation of this community gave way to the influence of nearby Hillsboro, which grew as a trading center thanks to its location on a Santa Fe branch line. This contrast in community dynamics over time gives insight to the immigrant experience and shows that these Mennonites could not entirely maintain their isolation in Kansas, although their distinctiveness continued. From within the community, Cornelius Krahn edited a basic volume on Mennonite migration, printed by Mennonite Press in Newton, Kansas.⁴⁰

In the 1960s interest in Kansas Germans resumed. Carman's 1961 *German-American Review* article "Germans in Kansas" presented some results of his study of immigrants and their language, a precursor to his excellent *Historical Atlas and Statistics*, which was published the following year.⁴¹ This is the indispensable start-

39. Richard Sallet, *Russian-German Settlements in the United States*, ed. and trans. LaVern J. Rippley and Armand Bauer (Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1974); George P. Morehouse, "Kansas as a State of Extremes, and Its Attitude During This World War," *Kansas Historical Collections*, 1919-1922 15 (1923): 15-28.

40. Mary Eloise Johannes, *A Study of Russian-German Settlement in Ellis County, Kansas* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1946); Peter Beckman, *Kansas Monks* (Atchison, Kans.: Abbey Press, 1957); Alberta Pantle, "Settlement of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren at Gnadenau, Marion County," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 13 (February 1945): 259-85; Cornelius Krahn, ed., *From the Steppes to the Prairies (1874-1949)* (Newton, Kans.: Mennonite Publication Office, 1949). See also J. Neale Carman, "Foreigners of 1857-1865 at Schippel's Ferry, Saline County," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 24 (Autumn 1958): 305-13.

41. J. Neale Carman, "Germans in Kansas," *The German-American Review* 27 (April-May 1961): 4-8.

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Americans seemed to presume that foreign immigrants naturally would lose their nationality characteristics and blend into the mainstream of American society.

ing place for the study of the state's ethnic groups. But the scholars' main focus remained on Russian Germans. David Wiebe's short book on Gnadenu is a rather typical history from inside the community, but other, more scholarly studies examined community behavior, such as dialects and voting patterns.⁴²

GERMANS IN KANSAS HISTORY AFTER 1968

I have noted previously how both the Max Kade Center of the University of Kansas and the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia were founded in 1968. Coincidentally, in 1968 Albert Petersen, a doctoral candidate at Louisiana State University, sounded a new research tone with his article in the *Rocky Mountain Social Science Journal* critically analysing the Catholic Russian Germans in Ellis County for their "rural ghetto mentality," their village settlement system, and the patriarchal controls in these communities, stating that:

Perhaps the strongest indictment of the village system came from one of the first German-Russians elected to the county government, B. M. Dreiling, who questioned as late as 1929 whether the village settlement was itself not responsible for the isolation of these people from the mainstream of American life.

Petersen theorized that the introduction of the automobile was the first element to erode that isolation, but he demonstrated the community's cultural persistence by contrasting its voting patterns with those of its non-Russian German neighbors. He found that in 1894, when the Russian German towns voted overwhelmingly against woman suffrage (77 to 1 in Catherine, 104 to 5 in Herzog, 51 to 3 in Victoria), their neighbors voted 2 to 1 for it. His tabulation of votes for presidential candidates from 1896 to 1928 reveals that the voters in the three towns were consistently Democratic in an otherwise Republican region, except in the 1924 election when a plurality gave their votes to the Progressive candidate, Robert LaFollette. Petersen ended his article with a notable conclusion:

The acculturation of the German-Russian into the great "melting pot" of American society has been taking place, but at a very slow pace. The rural ghetto mentality still dominates the people of Ellis County, and it is a major factor in moulding [*sic*] the behavior of both the German-Russian and non-German-Russian alike.

Petersen followed this analysis with his dissertation discussing Russian German colonies in western Kansas (1970) and an article on their Catholic social organizations (1973).⁴³

42. David V. Wiebe, *Grace Meadow: The Story of Gnadenu and Its First Elder, Marion County, Kansas* (Hillsboro, Kans.: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1967); Veronica Anne Bonebrake, "A Sociolinguistic and Phonological Survey of Low German Spoken in Kansas" (master's thesis, University of Texas, 1969); Mary E. Janzen and Loren Friesen, "A Kansas Community and the Election of 1932: A Study of Harvey County, Kansas," *Bethel College Studies in History and Social Sciences* 1 (North Newton, Kans.: Bethel College, 1967). See also Arlyn John Parish, "Kansas Mennonites During World War I," *Fort Hays Studies, History Series* 4 (May 1968): 1-62.

43. Albert J. Petersen Jr., "The German-Russian Settlement Pattern of Ellis County, Kansas," *Rocky Mountain Social Science Journal* 5 (April 1968): 52-62; Petersen, "German-Russian Catholic Colonization in Western Kansas: A Settlement Geography" (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University, 1970); Petersen, "German-Russian Catholic Social Organization," *Plains Anthropologist* 18 (1973): 27-32.

Petersen's change of inquiry was directly in line with how immigration history was being discussed at the national level. Milton Gordon's thoughtful and scholarly study of assimilation in America, published in 1964, helped move the focus of inquiry from description of settlement patterns and distinctive traits toward analysis of immigrants' adaptation to their new homeland. Heretofore, Americans seemed to presume that foreign immigrants naturally would lose their nationality characteristics and blend into the mainstream of American society. Gordon looked at specific characteristics of the immigrants—race, religion, and national origin—to assess the impact of the presumed American “melting pot.” He found instead a resistance on both the American and immigrant sides to the “melting.” He used the writings of America's founding fathers to demonstrate the “Anglo-conformity” of our society: the expectation—indeed, demand—that all foreign immigrants use the English language and accept our social customs. He then used examples to illustrate and explain how communities with the same ethnic background retained their cultural distinctiveness. They tended to continue to use their native language at home and in their houses of worship. They tended to marry within their own group, although they might cross nationality lines to marry someone of the same religion. He perceived this persistence in retaining their native language and social customs as resistance to Anglo-conformist assimilation. Petersen's discussion of the Russian German Catholics in Ellis County and Parish's discussion of Mennonite pacifism are consistent with Gordon's analyses. Gordon concluded that the United States actually was a multicultural society, one in which “melting” occurred at certain levels, such as the economy, but not at others.⁴⁴

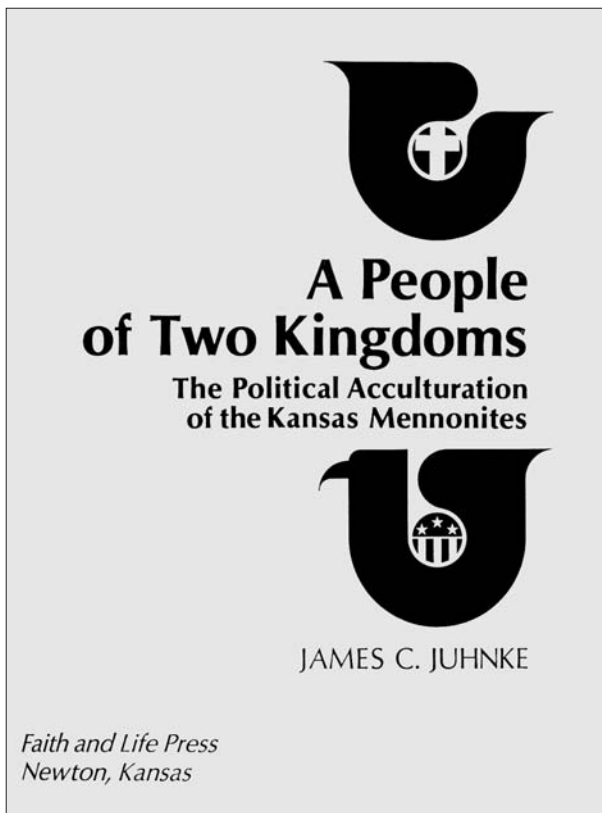
Across the nation in the 1960s other scholars also employed more analytical approaches to German American history, breaking down the immigrant experience into its component parts. Studies of their language, religion, and politics, and distinctions between their urban and rural experiences assessed the nature of their assimilation.⁴⁵ In most instances, scholars had the ability to research original documents in their foreign language, an important distinction from many of the earlier publications. Moreover, scholars began to incorporate ethnic studies into other fields of inquiry, including anthropology, folklore, sociology, political science, and frontier and Great Plains history.



Although German immigrants adapted to their new homeland, they retained much of their cultural distinctiveness, for example speaking their native language at home and marrying within their own nationality. Newlyweds Philip and Rose Hertel (above) were members of the Volga German community in Ellis County.

44. Milton M. Gordon, “Assimilation in America: Theory and Reality,” *Daedalus* 90 (Spring 1991): 263–85; Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

45. G. A. Dobbert, “German-Americans Between New and Old Fatherland, 1870–1914,” *American Quarterly* 19 (Winter 1967): 663–80; Joshua Fishman et al., *Language Loyalty in the United States: The Maintenance and Perpetuation of Non-English Mother Tongues by American Ethnic and Religious Groups* (The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton and Co., 1966); Frederick C. Luebke, “The Immigrant Condition as a Factor Contributing to the Conservatism of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod,” *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 38 (April 1965): 19–28; Luebke, *Immigrants and Politics: The Germans of Nebraska, 1880–1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969); Gerd Korman, *Industrialization, Immigrants and Americanizers: The View From Milwaukee, 1866–1921* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1967); Terry G. Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soul: Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966).



James Juhnke's groundbreaking work A People of Two Kingdoms details the Kansas Mennonites' struggle with and steps toward political acculturation. Juhnke's book was released in 1974 by a Mennonite publisher.

At the University of Nebraska, Frederick Luebke broke new ground with his quantitative analysis of the political activities of German voters in Nebraska between 1880 and 1900. He concluded that their ethnoreligious communities were the most important determinants of their political behavior, especially in a period in which issues such as the price of liquor licenses, woman suffrage, and German-language schools bonded them into an ethnic voting bloc. His classic *Bonds of Loyalty*, discussing the German American identity crisis caused by World War I, is a model for research. Luebke then brought together eleven scholars to examine the role of ethnic voters in the election of Abraham Lincoln, and next edited the essays of fourteen other scholars in *Ethnicity on the Great Plains*, published for the Center for Great Plains Studies in Lincoln, Nebraska.⁴⁶ The breadth and diversity of scholarship in these collections indicate that ethnic studies were being incorporated successfully into the various disciplines.

Increasingly, however, scholars suggested that ethnic groups were not being assimilated fully into American society. James Stuart Olsen makes this assumption explicit in the introduction to his 1978 study of ethnicity in American history:

First, I am convinced, as many others are today, that the "melting pot" has not overtaken us and will not create an ethnically homogeneous society for many centuries. The forces of assimilation, of course, are as powerful today as ever before, but shifting coalitions of racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural values continue to create a pluralistic society. Second, I believe that the main sources of ethnicity are internal. Although discrimination and hostility from other groups may stimulate a sense of unity, the most powerful feelings of fidelity and security spring from the values and symbolic associations of the groups themselves. Internal perspectives, not external pressures, explain the continuity of group life in the United States.⁴⁷

As before in Kansas, historians after 1968 focused on the Mennonites and Russian Germans. By this time the Mennonite and Russian German presses, both popular and scholarly, provided a wealth of publications upon which to draw. Many of these writings remained in a basically religious voice, but also some excellent historians from within these communities advanced the analytical discussion. James C. Juhnke's *A People of Two Kingdoms* offered a somewhat revisionist viewpoint. It analyzed the changes in the Kansas Mennonite communities' outlook toward political participation. In Russia, where they had been given autonomy, they had adhered to a belief in two worlds: that of the kingdom of Christ, and

46. Luebke, *Immigrants and Politics*; Luebke, ed., *Ethnic Voters and the Election of Lincoln* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971); Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German Americans and World War I* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1973); Luebke, ed., *Ethnicity on the Great Plains* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980). See also David Harry Miller and Jerome O. Steffen, eds., *The Frontier: Comparative Studies* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977).

47. James Stuart Olson, *The Ethnic Dimension in American History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), vii.

that of the state, which was in the evil world. In the Reformation era the state had persecuted them as an illegal sect. In Russia they could avoid state demands for holding government or military offices. Once they had come to Kansas, however, they learned that they no longer had autonomy. Considerations of citizenship, education, taxes, and even conscientious objection to military service all required political engagement. Juhnke demonstrated how World War I was a pivotal point for them:

The First World War shattered the easy course of Mennonite Americanism. As pacifists and as speakers of the German language, the Mennonites were not acceptable citizens. This message was driven home as patriotic groups intimidated Mennonites into buying war bonds, camp commanders winked while draftees were persecuted, and local editorials denounced the use of the German language. Because the Mennonites were unwilling and unable, at that point, to give up either the German language or their pacifism, they had to find substitute ways of asserting their civic dignity and of supporting their claim to American citizenship.

Their subsequent efforts to provide benevolent aid to war victims and their option for alternative service in World War II indicated how they were being drawn into the nexus of the worldly kingdom.⁴⁸ Juhnke's groundbreaking book details the Kansas Mennonites' issues and steps toward change. Using census and voting statistics, it analyzes the increasing political participation of these communities in state and national politics.

Another important study of the Mennonites was Harley J. Stucky's history of the century of Russian German Mennonite settlements in America. He used the European and Russian histories of the Mennonites as his context for comparing the change in attitude and influence of those settling in America. This interesting study looks at the Americans' increasing activities in service and missionary works, and the leadership these gave to the more static Mennonite communities remaining in Europe.⁴⁹

The Juhnke and Stucky books were both released by Mennonite publishers. Indeed, the Mennonite press and the American Society of Germans from Russia became very active in producing studies of Mennonites and other Germans from Russia in the 1970s and thereafter. The *Annotated Bibliography* lists twenty-four publications on German Americans, and sixteen of them focus on Russian Germans. Many of these were typical migration and settlement studies.⁵⁰

And, increasingly, publications on Russian Germans appeared in venues other than the Mennonite press, especially those of the Kansas State Historical Society. There Juhnke, Herbert Pankratz, and Gregory Stucky addressed the loyalty

*The Mennonite
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48. James C. Juhnke, *A People of Two Kingdoms: The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites* (Newton, Kans.: Faith and Life Press, 1974), 155.

49. Harley J. Stucky, *A Century of Russian Mennonite History in America: Centennial Edition, 1874–1974* (North Newton, Kans.: Mennonite Press, 1973).

50. See, for example, Adam Giesinger, *From Catherine to Khrushchev: The Story of Russia's Germans* (Battleford, Saskatchewan: Marion Press, 1974); Bess Riley Oldroyd, comp., *Between the Rivers*, vols. 2, 3 (North Newton, Kans.: Mennonite Press, 1975); Norbert R. Dreiling, *Official Centennial History of the Volga German Settlements in Ellis and Rush Counties in Kansas, 1976–1976* (Hays, Kans.: Volga-German Centennial Association, 1976); Norman Saul, "The Arrival of the Germans from Russia: A Centennial Perspective," *American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, Work Paper No. 21* (Fall 1976).

Kansas Zeitung.

Ein Organ für freies Wort, freien Boden und freie Männer.

Herausgeber und Redakteur: Dr. Karl Fr. Kob.

Atchison, K. T., den 15. Oktober 1857.

<p>G. V. Deutsch, Büchler, Briefkasten und Kister, No. 2 Kossuths Str. d. Wilmerskreuz, Wilsch.</p> <p>Augo Hartmann, No. 63 Doststraße, Philadelphia, Pa.</p> <p>Doniphan, K. T.</p> <p>J. H. Lane & D. Dodge, Aben eine Kutschkay in der Wilmerskreuz als Briefkasten postieren sich werden alle in den Jahr 1857er Posten postieren können. No. 2 Kossuth Str. d. Wilmerskreuz, Wilsch.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Freiwort.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Die Nacht auf dem Fluß.</p> <p>Von der Wiltung des Fluß die Freiwort gibt es keine aufmerke Rufe die von Wilmerskreuz des Flüßes 21. Dezember und Kossuth. Die Freiwort Freiwort jeder die die und Wilmerskreuz, wie der Staat Freiwort an einmalig weit die. Eine Wohnung an dem ganzen Welt, als die mit da eines Freiwort, im reputere Freiwort eines neuen, Wilmerskreuz weder die Wiltung Freiwort, um von Freiwort Gepfesselt und Wilmerskreuz zu Wilmerskreuz, ein Freiwort, den Zeit unter Wilmerskreuz, dann seine Wiltung verläßt, um eines Freiwort Freiwort Freiwort zu Wilmerskreuz.</p>	<p>ten Ten und so Wilmerskreuz, daß er drei Freiwort für sein Freiwort Freiwort und eines Freiwort einzig dazu Wilmerskreuz, seinem Freiwort Freiwort zu geben. Wie Wilmerskreuz ein Freiwort Freiwort auf seine Zimmern Freiwort. Freiwort Wilmerskreuz er das Freiwort, auf Freiwort Freiwort zu Wilmerskreuz, Wilmerskreuz Freiwort zu Wilmerskreuz, seine Freiwort Freiwort zu Wilmerskreuz und nach Wilmerskreuz mit Wilmerskreuz Wilmerskreuz Wilmerskreuz die Wilmerskreuz Wilmerskreuz Wilmerskreuz Freiwort zu Wilmerskreuz.</p> <p>Wilmerskreuz Wilmerskreuz er, eine Wilmerskreuz im Wilmerskreuz und auf den Wilmerskreuz Freiwort Freiwort, Wilmerskreuz ein Freiwort Freiwort, mit dem er sich Wilmerskreuz, Wilmerskreuz in die Wilmerskreuz gefahren, um in Wilmerskreuz die Wilmerskreuz zu Wilmerskreuz, die ihm Freiwort Freiwort bringen Wilmerskreuz, eben Wilmerskreuz die Wilmerskreuz eines Freiwort Freiwort noch mit Wilmerskreuz</p>
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While an increasing number of studies on Russian Germans appeared in the latter decades of the twentieth century, very few examined non-Russian Germans. For example, in the 1970s the *Kansas Zeitung* was the only resource focusing on the German Americans who settled in Atchison in the 1850s.

issues in World War I.⁵¹ Specialized studies, such as Petersen’s article on Russian German houses, and Mary Hess’s “anatomy” of the town of Hesston offered other examples. The Mennonites also began to study the history of their colleges in Kansas, and David Haury added another analysis of voting behavior among the Russian Germans of Ellis County.⁵²

The *Annotated Bibliography* shows that new analytical themes emerged during the 1980s. William Keel introduced a group of linguistic analyses of German dialects among the Volga Germans. A number of studies dealt with immigrants and their agricultural practices, capped by Norman Saul’s revisionist essay questioning the basis for the belief that the Mennonites were

the primary factor in the success of Turkey Red wheat in Kansas. “The story of Turkey Red wheat,” he wrote, “is perhaps second only to Dorothy and Toto in making Kansas famous in national as well as local lore.” Tradition has it that each emigrant brought a crock of the winter wheat to Kansas, forming the basis for the state’s agricultural prosperity. Saul looked beyond the legend and concluded:

Turkey Red may, in fact, have been planted in the Barkman backyard in Gnadenau in the fall of 1874, but it was certainly unrecognized and had little effect on the state’s agriculture for several more years. By 1880 . . . a hard red winter wheat of Russian origin . . . was becoming established in Kansas in Mennonite areas. It soon spread to other quarters but did not become dominant for many years because of milling, storage, and marketing problems. The success of Turkey Red and hard wheat was clearly dependent on milling technology and market expansion.⁵³

51. James C. Juhnke, “Mob Violence and Kansas Mennonites in 1918,” *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 43 (Autumn 1977): 334–50; Herbert L. Pankratz, “Loyalty–Disloyalty in Kansas During World War I” (master’s thesis, University of Kansas, 1970); Pankratz, “Suppression of Alleged Disloyalty in Kansas During World War I,” *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 42 (Autumn 1970): 277–307; Gregory J. Stucky, “Fighting Against War: The Mennonite *Vorwärts* from 1914 to 1918,” *ibid.* 38 (Summer 1972): 169–86.

52. Mary Hess, *Anatomy of a Town: Hesston, Kansas* (New York: Carlton Press, 1976); Albert Jepmond Petersen Jr., “The German–Russian House in Kansas: A Study in Persistence of Form,” *Pioneer America* 8 (January 1976): 19–27. For Mennonite institutional histories, see James C. Juhnke, “Except the Lord Build the House: Halstead Seminary Centennial,” *Mennonite Life* 38 (December 1983): 4–7; Paul Toews, “Henry W. Lohrenz and Tabor College,” *ibid.* 38 (September 1983): 11–19; Juhnke, *Dialogue With a Heritage: Cornelius H. Wedel and the Beginnings of Bethel College* (North Newton, Kans.: Bethel College, 1987). For Mennonite voting patterns, see David A. Haury, “German–Russian Immigrants to Kansas and American Politics,” *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 3 (Winter 1980): 226–37.

53. For analyses of the German language, see William D. Keel, “On the Heimatbestimmung of the Ellis County (Kansas) Volga–German Dialects,” *Yearbook of German American Studies* 17 (1982): 99–109; Robert H. Buchheit, “Language Maintenance and Shift Among Mennonites in South–Central Kansas,” *Yearbook of German American Studies* 17 (1982): 111–21. For land and farm practices, see

By contrast, non-Russian Germans were considerably less visible in the 1970s. To be sure, they might be found by digging into some of the emerging county histories, but when I began my examination of German American settlers in Atchison, the German-language *Kansas Zeitung* newspaper was the only real resource that focused on them.⁵⁴

But other European-born Germans were emerging from obscurity. During the 1980s a number of studies focused on German churches. Bryon Northwick's doctoral dissertation examined the efforts of the Missouri Synod to maintain Lutheran orthodoxy; Ferenc Szasz explored the role of the Protestant clergy in the Great Plains; and Dennis Jones examined a century of Catholic missionary work in the state. Carol Coburn published her important dissertation on the persistence of conservatism within the Lutheran population of Block, Kansas. It is an especially significant study because it considers the impact of generational change on the attitudes and behavior of the community. Curiously, Coburn required the service of a translator for the documents she used in the study of women's roles in the community. Linda Pickel's study of first-generation German women in Nebraska and Kansas added to this new feminist perspective. And the diversity within the European German community also emerged. The German Swiss began to appear in the histories of Dickinson County, as did the Germans from Bukovina who moved to Ellis County. Craig Miner included both European and Russian Germans in his highly readable history of settlement in western Kansas *West of Wichita*.⁵⁵ My own work on European-born Germans looked first to the resources I had found so helpful in my study of Atchison: the extensive German-language press, previously described. Still intrigued by the process of community building

The diversity within the European German community also emerges. The German Swiss began to appear in the histories of Dickinson County, as did the Germans from Bukovina who moved to Ellis County.

Bradley Howard Baltensperger, "Agricultural Change Among Great Plains Russian-Germans," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 73 (March 1983): 75–88; Carol Ann Jenkins, "Mennonite Values and Farming Practice: Proscription and Prescription in Disequilibrium" (Ph.D. diss., Kansas State University, 1986); Norman E. Saul, "Myth and History: Turkey Red Wheat and the 'Kansas Miracle,'" *Heritage of the Great Plains* 22 (Summer 1989): 1–13.

54. Roy D. Bird, *An Ethnic History of Shawnee County, Kansas* (Topeka: Topeka–Shawnee Metropolitan Planning Commission, 1974); Robert A. Swan Jr., *The Ethnic Heritage of Topeka, Kansas: Immigrant Beginnings* (N.p.: Institute of Comparative Ethnic Studies, 1974); *New Branches from Old Trees: A New History of Wabaunsee County* (N.p.: Wabaunsee County Historical Society, 1976); *Eudora Community Heritage of Our USA Bicentennial 1776–1976* (N.p.: Eudora Bicentennial Committee, 1977); Eleanor L. Turk, "The Germans of Atchison, 1854–1859: Development of an Ethnic Community," *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 2 (Autumn 1979): 146–56.

55. For studies on German religions, see Byron Northwick, "The Development of the Missouri Synod: The Role of Education in the Preservation and Promotion of Lutheran Orthodoxy, 1839–1872" (Ph.D. diss., Kansas State University, 1987); Ferenc Morton Szasz, *The Protestant Clergy in the Great Plains and Mountain West, 1865–1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988); Dennis A. Jones, "1987—One Hundredth Anniversary of a Diocese: The Result of Catholic Missionaries in Early Day Kansas," *Kansas Quarterly* 20 (Fall 1988): 69–80. Carol K. Coburn, "Religion, Gender and Education among the German–Lutherans of Block, Kansas, 1868–1945" (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 1988); Coburn, "Ethnicity, Religion and Gender: The Women of Block, Kansas, 1868–1940," *Great Plains Quarterly* 8 (Fall 1988): 222–32; Coburn, *Life at Four Corners: Religion, Gender, and Education in a German–Lutheran Community, 1868–1945* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992); Linda Schelbitski Pickle, "Rural German-Speaking Women in Early Nebraska and Kansas: Ethnicity as a Factor in Frontier Adaptation," *ibid.* 9 (Fall 1989): 239–51. For German Swiss, see Leo A. Schelbert, "The Making of New Basel, Dickinson County, Kansas: Selected Documents," *Swiss–American Historical Society Newsletter* 17 (November 1981): 1–20; Harvey E. Bross and Leo A. Schelbert, "Reconstruction of Early New Basel Community of Dickinson County, Kansas," *Swiss American Historical Society Newsletter* 19 (1983): 30–44. For Germans from Bukovina, see Irmgard Hein Ellingson, "The Bukovina Germans in Kansas: 200 Year History of Lutheran Swabians," *Ethnic Heritage Studies* 6 (Hays, Kans.: Fort Hays State University, December 1987); Craig Miner, *West of Wichita: Settling the High Plains of Kansas, 1865–1890* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986).

The scholars who contributed essays on the Bukovinans added considerably to the depth and sophistication of our understanding of their history and culture.

among Germans who came separately to the Kansas frontier, I made a study of the various German social organizations in Wabaunsee County. And, using archival sources in Hamburg as well as local materials, I described the many steps and the hazards of emigration for those Germans bold enough to try it.⁵⁶

The *Annotated Bibliography* has been a helpful resource for citing publications in Kansas history through the 1980s. For the 1990s and later, the annual bibliographies of the *Yearbook of German–American Studies* index articles referring to Kansas and provide an excellent guide to the trends in historical writing.⁵⁷ As before, the bulk of scholarship and publication focuses on Germans from Russia. Beside the traditional studies of migration and settlement some new themes emerged. Scholars often had studied the wonderful heritage of languages and customs of the Russian German Catholics in the central towns of Victoria, Herzog, and Catherine in Ellis County. But important settlements of Bukovinian Germans also formed and clustered around the town of Ellis, in the northwest of the county, and some European Germans settled in Walker in the southeast. The scholars who contributed essays to the Max Kade Center’s publication on the Bukovinians added considerably to the depth and sophistication of our understanding of their history and culture. Now only the Walker Germans remain to be studied.⁵⁸

An intriguing group of studies in medical anthropology uses closely knit communities of Kansas Mennonites as its field of study. The 1990s also was a particularly fruitful decade for published family histories and biographies. New demographic studies, such as Shortridge’s *Peopling the Plains* and Aidan McQuillan’s examination of Russian Germans in *Prevailing Over Time* added greater depth to our knowledge of both migration and assimilation. James Juhnke provided another excellent examination of Mennonite attitudes, this time toward the Vietnam War.⁵⁹

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The body of historical literature on Germans in Kansas already is extensive. My effort in this essay has been to introduce it, to provide an overview of it, and to indicate some of the important benchmarks that it has produced along the

56. Turk, “The German Newspapers of Kansas”; Turk, “Getting Together: German–American Social Organizations on the Kansas Frontier,” *Kansas Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1994): 57–67; Turk, “Selling the Heartland: Agents, Agencies, Press and Policies Promoting German Emigration to Kansas in the Nineteenth Century,” *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 12 (Autumn 1989): 150–59.

57. I consulted nine issues of the *Yearbook* to assess the most recent trends in writing about Germans of Kansas. Those volumes included eighty-eight works referring to Kansas Germans; of these, sixty-six items referred to Germans from Russia.

58. William D. Keel and Kurt Rein, eds., *German Emigration from Bukovina to the Americas* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1966). Ellis is the headquarters of the Bukovina Society.

59. For anthropological studies of the Mennonites, see, for example, Joan Stevenson, Phillip Everson, and Laurine Rogers, “Changes in Fertility Relative to Starting, Stopping, and Spacing Behaviors in a Migrating Mennonite Community, 1775–1889,” *Social Biology* 41 (Spring/Summer 1994): 83–95; Michael H. Crawford, ed., *Different Seasons: Biological Aging among the Mennonites of the Midwestern United States* (Lawrence: Department of Anthropology, University of Kansas, 2000). For demographic studies, see Shortridge, *Peopling the Plains*; D. Aidan McQuillan, *Prevailing Over Time: Ethnic Adjustment on the Kansas Prairies, 1875–1925* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990); James C. Juhnke, “Clashing Symbols in a Quiet Town: Hesston in the Vietnam War Era,” *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 32 (Autumn 2000): 142–53.

way.⁶⁰ Now we must suggest some directions for future research that might contribute both to a data base and to the analytical discussion of this important population, and that might advance our understanding of Germans' roles in Kansas history.

It is self-evident, from the previous discussion, that much of our awareness of Germans in Kansas is based on the visibility of the Germans from Russia, and especially on the Mennonites. From the early observation of local exotic settlements to the growing body of Mennonite scholars and publications and the work of scholars in multiple disciplines, we have widened our focus on the Germans from Russia. Productive questions have been asked and answered. Publications have considered the nature of their communities prior to emigration and after their relocation in Kansas. Many of these studies are histories of towns, persons, and institutions, and many include the underlying assumption of cultural pluralism within the state. This is solid, traditional ethnic history.

Kathleen Neils Conzen, one of the most important innovators in the field of ethnic history, identified this theme in assimilation theory:

Assumptions about the inability of immigrant cultures to withstand the onslaught of the American mainstream long encouraged scholars to focus on the seemingly more problematic issue of structural assimilation. . . . [M]ost work in this pluralist mode remains content to view culture as, at best, an intervening variable . . . "cultural baggage" that is unpacked, used, perhaps re-defined, to console, support, and defend the immigrant in the process of immigration.

She singles out the works of Milton Gordon, previously discussed, and John Bodnar as particularly representative of this perspective, agreeing with Bodnar that this straight line assimilation has probably occurred in urban areas. But her inquiry now goes further, focusing on the singular persistence of ethnicity in rural areas, indeed, the "ethnicization" of identity in these areas as immigrants created communities distinct from both their former European and their new American



While much of the research to date focuses on the Volga Germans in Ellis County and the Mennonites in south-central Kansas, many European German settlements have been neglected in the studies of Germans in Kansas. Pictured here is an 1890s gathering in the home of Adolph Lange, a member of the European German community in Leavenworth.

60. As a German historian, I am not fully familiar with all the current issues and theories pertaining to Kansas and American history that others may wish to add or that I may have overlooked. I urge interested readers to mine the footnotes and bibliographies of the publications for even more valuable resources.

The second generation of immigrants often sought to be more American than their migrant parents, while their children, the third generation, often sought to go back to their roots.

homelands. She asks why and how they created a culture that has withstood the “onslaught” of Americanization. Her query is particularly important in our context because she focuses on migration to rural areas, the primary arena for ethnic studies in Kansas. Studies from this perspective would be very valuable.⁶¹

Many of the studies about Russian Germans divide them by their religious communities and attribute the persistence of such factors as language and custom to religious practice. But is religion the only distinguishing mark of their persistence? It might be fruitful to ascertain whether similarities persist despite religious differences to better understand the significance of their Russian experience. Did the same characteristics emerge across each of the major denominations (Catholic, Lutheran, Mennonite), or did some change more than others? And if so, why and how? Similarly, how does association with the larger Russian German immigration, as reflected by the research of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, reinforce their identity? Did settlement in different locations in the United States or Canada significantly change any aspects of it? Is there an urban/rural dichotomy that needs further evaluation?

Moreover, much of the work to date focuses on communities where the Germans from Russia are in a majority: the Volga Germans in Ellis County, the Mennonites in Marion, McPherson, and Harvey Counties. But these studies need to be continued with examination of regions where they formed a minority or competed with other ethnic groups. Did “ethnicization” occur in the same way, and to the same extent, when Russian Germans were in the minority?

Finally, we need inquiries that, like Carol Coburn’s, bring in the generational factor. Common wisdom has it that the second generation of immigrants often sought to be more American than their migrant parents, while their children, the third generation, often sought to go back to their roots. Was this tendency evident among Russian Germans?

Switching our focus away from those Germans who came to Kansas from Russia, it is evident that research into European German immigrants still lags far behind. They remain essentially invisible, in a historical sense. While it is personally gratifying that my 1979 article on community formation by the Germans of Atchison has been reprinted twice in anthologies and is included in a forthcoming collection of essays published as a territorial sesquicentennial project by the Kansas State Historical Society, it is indicative of the fact that not enough Kansas historians are researching the “majority” Germans.⁶² Language facility undoubt-

61. Kathleen Neils Conzen, *Making Their Own America: Assimilation Theory and the German Peasant Pioneer* (New York: Berg Publishers, 1990), 3, 7–8. This publication of the Annual Lecture Series No. 3 of the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C., also contains Mack Walker, “Sombart and the Sauk River Settlements, and Jörg Nagler, “Ethnic Persistence and Transformation: A Response to Kathleen N. Conzen.” See John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).

62. Turk, “The Germans of Atchison, 1854–1859: Development of an Ethnic Community,” in *History of the Peoples of Kansas: An Anthology*, ed. Rita Napier, with Carol Coburn (Lawrence: University of Kansas Division of Continuing Studies, 1985); Rita Napier, ed., *Kansas and the West: New Perspectives* (University Press of Kansas, 2003); Turk, “The Germans of Atchison, 1854–1859: Development of an

edly plays a major role in that deficit. In fact, two very fine recent theses from the American Studies program at the University of Kansas indicate ample resources in German. Katya Rampelmann's "Small Town Germans: The Germans of Lawrence, Kansas from 1854 to 1918," written in 1993, and Stefan Klinke's "Eudora, Kansas: The Transformation of a German Frontier into a Midwestern Town," completed in 2000, give excellent insight into the Germans' community formation. Both authors are from Germany, however, which explains their ability to use primary documents. It probably also explains why each focused on communities in Douglas County.

But ample English-language resources are available as well. The 1883 Cutler and Andreas *History of the State of Kansas* (available in its 1976 reprint version and online) contains valuable information about some Germans, their occupations, churches, and club affiliations to aid in building community profiles.⁶³ While the biographies are volunteered and the history anecdotal, valuable local information on individuals and their social networks is included in the narrative for each local population. County histories can be mined similarly and could help build the necessary data bases. The German-language press is abundant, and many churches have important records for historians. Like Carol Coburn, scholars can elect to work with translators to cope with handwritten or difficult documents.

While much has been done, much still remains to be accomplished. And however historians, especially those of European Germans, proceed, they need to ask the same types of questions that have been raised regarding Germans from Russia. Studies need to take the whole process of immigration into consideration: the localities and conditions in Germany, the decision-making and leadership for emigration, the problems of transit, stops along the way, and the eventual settlement in Kansas and community building. As Clara Fields and Stefan Klinke indicate, many Germans formed town companies to handle their land acquisition in Kansas; these little-known organizations could form a very productive field for investigation of frontier development. It would be interesting to compare the persistence and land use patterns of emigrants who came from Europe (and might not be able to afford to return) with those who had resided in another American state before settling in Kansas. Of course, examination of churches and religious practice, land usage, politics, education, rural/urban dichotomies, and assimilation are still wide open for research. Ultimately, a comparison of European and Russian German immigrants in Kansas history would be very satisfying. [KH]

It is evident that research into European German immigrants still lags far behind. They remain essentially invisible, in a historical sense.

Ethnic Community," in *Territorial Kansas Reader*, ed. Virgil W. Dean (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 2005); "Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission Bibliography: Settlement and Development," <http://www.kshs.org/sesquicentennial/history.htm>.

63. William G. Cutler and Alfred T. Andreas, *History of the State of Kansas*, 2 vols. (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), online at www.kanecoll.org/book/cutler.