



INTRODUCTION

German Historians and Central European History in North America after 1945

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Scholars born in German-speaking countries have played, and continue to play, a major role in Anglo-American historical studies. The most influential among them were the German-Jewish and left-liberal historians who had to flee persecution in Nazi Germany and occupied Austria between 1933 and 1945. Those refugees who came as adults, like Dietrich Gerhard, Felix Gilbert, Hajo Holborn, Ernst Kantorowicz, Gerhard Masur, Arthur Rosenberg, Hans Rosenberg, and Hans Rothfels, constituted a first generation of émigrés. They were instrumental in bringing German-style historical scholarship to the English-speaking world. Their struggle to resume their substantive research and their political engagement against the Nazi dictatorship—whether from Britain, Canada, or the United States—has already been treated in a number of historiographical studies. It is this initial group of refugee historians from German-speaking countries that has become emblematic of the successes and frustrations with integration into an Anglo-American context as well as of the vicissitudes of cultural transfer from the continent.¹ Central European history, and especially German-Jewish history and the histories of the Third Reich and the Holocaust, were the fields in which these refugee historians became particularly prominent within their new environments.

The younger German-Jewish émigré historians—genocide survivors and their descendants, who were trained in the United States, Canada, or Britain²—constituted a second generation of refugees that exerted an even greater intellectual impact. Their careers and contributions, often overlapping with those of their predecessors, have been explored in some detail in a groundbreaking 2016 study, *The Second Generation: Émigrés from Nazi Germany as Historians*, edited by Andreas W. Daum, Hartmut Lehmann, and James J. Sheehan. That volume lists 107 historians, twenty (19 percent)

of whom were women, who all were forced to leave their home country because of Nazi persecution. Most of them were born in the first three decades of the twentieth century.³ This second group of refugees included such prominent and widely published historians as Werner T. Angress, Renate Bridenthal, Henry Friedlander, Peter Gay, Georg G. Iggers, Klemens von Klemperer, Walter Laqueur, Gerda Lerner, George Mosse, Peter Paret, Fritz Stern, and Gerhard Weinberg. Some of these scholars have written autobiographical accounts of their transatlantic experiences.⁴ But many other German-born migrant scholars published little and focused more on teaching; they did not have such distinguished careers. Several have been largely forgotten today.⁵

Much less is known about the voluntary migration experiences of German-born historians who came to Canada and the United States beginning in the late 1950s and constituted a third generation of transatlantic migrants. These later German-born scholars faced no existential threat but migrated instead due to personal choices, including the search for better academic training or career opportunities. Some arrived as children or adolescents with their families, some as high schoolers, and others as undergraduate or graduate students, or postdocs after defending a dissertation or *Habilitation* in Germany (the latter is a kind of second dissertation, required in the German academic system for a full professorship). Others migrated because they received a job offer from an American or Canadian history department. Those who came as adults often left their home country because they hoped for a different style of education or more advantageous job opportunities within a more innovative, liberal, and less hierarchical academic system. Their migrations were aided not only by the pre-1933 tradition of German-American academic exchanges, which continued after World War II, but also by the assistance of German-Jewish and left-liberal German scholars of the first and second émigré generations, who had settled in North America since the 1930s as part of the European Jewish diaspora. The networks they had built, and the reputation of their scholarship, opened doors for the following German migrant historians.⁶

Though little recognized by the historical profession in North America, the number of German migrant historians of this third generation who moved to Canada and particularly the United States since the late 1950s was considerable. This group was and still remains significantly larger than any other national group of historians who came from Europe to North America after 1945, including Britain. Since the end of World War II, the United States has been the preferred country for migration for German historians, followed by Austria, Britain, and Switzerland.⁷ The main reason for this preference was the migrants' language abilities: English became the lingua franca, which West German academics already had learned at their *Gymnasien* (the upper-level middle and high school). Other important pull factors for their migration include the host countries' general willingness to integrate them into their academic systems and demonstrated appreciation for their specific scholarly expertise.⁸

Much like the earlier two generations of German migrant historians in North America, many scholars of this third generation became transatlantic intermediaries. They utilized their bicultural experiences and insider perspectives on their country of

origin while translating and interpreting history and culture for their American and Canadian colleagues and students. At the same time, they often also informed German audiences about developments and debates within the American and Canadian academic systems and history-related professions. Their transatlantic perspectives allowed several of them to deeply influence theoretical and methodological debates on both sides of the Atlantic. Although the main research fields of most German historians who came to North America from the late 1950s onward were and remain modern central European history, in particular Jewish history, the history of the Weimar Republic, the history of the Third Reich and the Holocaust, and post-1945 German history, an increasing number of migrant historians is also contributing to other fields of historical scholarship.

Of course, notoriety and recognition has varied widely for the migrant historians who arrived since the 1950s, as was the case with the two generations of émigré historians before them. Both depended on several factors, including their research fields, the development of their academic careers, specific demands from their institutions, and the general state of the academic job market in their destination country. Some have worked at well-funded private universities or even in the Ivy League, while others joined large but frequently less-funded public research universities or found employment at small private liberal arts colleges or regional public universities that focus more on teaching. A third group worked in independent academic research institutions.

In this book, we explore this important third generation of German-born migrant historians and trace their commonalities as well as their individual experiences. For analytical clarity, we use in addition to the concept of “generation” the more fluid notion of a “cohort,” which we employ for the three age groups in the third generation: migrants born during the 1930s and 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, and 1970s and 1980s.⁹ In our exploration of the collective and individual experiences of this third generation of migrant historians, we focus on three overriding themes. Firstly, we analyze their German backgrounds, formative cultural influences, and formal educations to establish what motivated them to emigrate to North America. Secondly, we examine how their migration experiences informed their research and teaching as well as their professional service, standing, and influence in both the North American and German history professions. And thirdly, we discuss more generally the impact of the transatlantic exchanges promoted by these German and American historians on the scholarship on modern German and central European history.¹⁰

With our first cluster of questions on “scientific persona formation,” we analyze the personal trajectories and institutional structures that informed the academic migration by probing age, gender, and social milieu specific motives for migrating to Canada or the United States, with a focus on the push and pull factors. We examine the socioeconomic backgrounds and gender identities of migrant historians and how these contributed to their decisions to venture abroad and their success in the new country. Moreover, we investigate the extent of their schooling and academic training in Germany, and in Canada or the United States. Also important are their personal

and scholarly networks and the role of individual mentors. In general, we explore the role of coincidences of opportunities and hindrances that arose during the scholars' training and careers. The answers to these demographic questions reveal not only commonalities and differences but also help us to establish which images of their former home country they carried with them.¹¹ This latter aspect also includes the study of the different trajectories of the small group of German migrant historians who grew up in the former GDR and experienced the unification of the two Germanies; that special circumstance dramatically influenced their lives and work and clearly differentiated them from the historians who had lived in West Germany.

A second cluster of questions deals with the migrants' acculturation and subsequent academic careers in an unfamiliar scholarly culture and the different rules which they had to learn. As new arrivals, they had to undergo a process of "Americanization" that transformed their identities, so they could function in a new academic setting.¹² Only by developing a hybrid identity, which is characteristic of migrants more generally, could they integrate themselves into a foreign academic system and culture; however, this also allowed them to act as a transatlantic bridge. The extent to which they succeeded in remaking themselves depended upon the individuals' ages and identities, as well as upon the institutional opportunities and political circumstances that promoted or hindered their transformation and acculturation. All faced the problem of fashioning a scholarly career in a new cultural environment, which they had to understand and navigate. Their success in this endeavor was determined in part by the academic job market, the extent to which they were willing and able to fit themselves into Anglo-American academic patterns, and how much they catered to cultural stereotypes of "typical Germanness" in North America and aligned with popular assumptions about past and present developments "specific" to central Europe. Another important factor was their age of migration and the stage in their academic education or career. The earlier they migrated, the easier seems to have been their acculturation in the new culture and society. The answers to these questions shed light on whether the newcomers experienced the informality and openness of the American system as liberating, unsettling, or a mixture of both, and on what they felt they gained and lost in the process of academic migration.

A final set of questions focuses on the intellectual encounters between German-speaking migrant historians and their new academic settings. We investigate whether these historians primarily followed individual paths, favored certain intellectual topics and methodological approaches as a group, or mainly adapted to the cultural assumptions, expectations, and hiring needs of the North American colleges, universities, and academic institutions in their fields, research, and teaching. How did these different factors affect their chances of getting hired by North American history departments? In which ways did these factors impact the fields and methodologies of these migrant historians during their academic careers in North America? For example, did the earlier two generations of German academic migrants—each containing several highly visible German-Jewish and left-liberal refugee historians, who worked with particular success in the field of modern central European history (notably on

the Third Reich and the Holocaust)—help pave the way for the third generation of migrant historians from Germany to work on the same important subjects? Were these newer migrant scholars perceived in North America as “native” German-speaking experts? Were the postwar academic migrants considered to possess more authenticity and authority if they worked on these specific subjects because of their “German background”? In this volume we can only start to answer these latter questions. We focus mainly on the experience and perspective of the migrant historians themselves. Much more research is needed to advance our knowledge about the perception and recognition of this third generation of German émigrés by other scholars, on the one hand by German historians, whose country they left, and on the other hand by American and Canadian historians, to whose countries they came, and of course also by other international scholars.

With our approach, we also seek to determine how much the research preoccupations that the third generation of German migrant historians brought with them to the American and Canadian institutions that hired them changed from one age cohort to another, following thematic and methodological trends both in Germany and North America. Is there a noticeable difference in fields of research and approaches between the three different age cohorts within this generation? Furthermore, did their questions, approaches, and interests deviate from those of their American-born colleagues and graduate students in central European history, who were socialized in a different society and academic culture and faced the challenge of learning the German language and becoming familiar with a foreign culture? What kind of contributions did these transatlantic hybrid historians make to the writing of German and European history on both sides of the Atlantic? And finally, what impact did their publications and teaching have on images of Germany in North America and on conceptions of Canada and the United States within Germany?¹³

This complex investigation should help to explain the existence of a closer transatlantic scholarly community concerned with the German past than one finds among historians of other European countries. While refugees from Nazi Germany played a foundational role in establishing a democratic history to counter the nationalist master narrative, German-born, Jewish, and non-Jewish historians continued their work in the postwar decades and created a new academic network across the Atlantic. Did success in integrating into the American academic system make the migrant scholars largely invisible as a group to their Anglo-American colleagues and even to their fellow migrants? Particularly if they came as adults, their key advantage seems to have been their bicultural perspective, which offered both an insider’s sensitivity to shades of textual meaning and an outsider’s critical distance from their origins—and sometimes also from their new country. The historiographical challenge is therefore to recover the precise nature of the contributions that helped to establish a reading of the German past as a paradigmatic fall from grace and subsequent redemption.¹⁴

We address the above questions not only by combining political, social, and cultural history with the history of science but also by utilizing quantitative and qualitative meth-

ods. All the chapters in this volume are written by historians with a German-American background. In the first part, “German (Migrant) Historians in North America since 1945: Careers and Academic Institutions,” comprising three chapters, we analyze the collective career and migration patterns of the German-born historians who came to North America since the 1950s. Here we also address the changing contexts of the higher education systems from which they came and which they entered, as well the central institutions that fostered transatlantic exchanges. The first part begins with a prosopographical chapter by Karen Hagemann, which provides a cohort analysis of the overall group of German migrant historians whom we identified based on a database that we started to build in 2020. This chapter presents a social and political framework by analyzing the social composition, migration history, and career paths of our sample of seventy-seven German historians—born between the 1930s and 1980s and still living in Canada and the United States—whom we were able to identify. Sixty-nine of them responded to our request to fill out a biographical questionnaire on their social background, education, academic career path, and the motives for their migration. Moreover, ten historians are already deceased. In addition to the questionnaire, we also used for our FileMaker database the biographical information provided on university and personal websites as well as in print, for example in obituaries. Furthermore, we utilized autobiographical publications by German migrant historians. In the appendix of this book, we provide a list of the German migrant historians of the third generation, whom we identified.¹⁵

In total, we included in the database eighty-seven German-born scholars who migrated to North America from the late 1950s onward and work(ed) as historians at a college, university, or other academic institution to the present or until their retirement. Nine of them found a home in Canada and seventy-eight in the United States. In the sample, eighty-three were born in West and only four in East Germany; twenty-five (29 percent) are women. Twenty-two scholars belong to the first cohort; these were born during the 1930s and 1940s and grew up in wartime and postwar Germany, at the peak of the Cold War. Three in this cohort (14 percent) are women. Forty-three belong to the second cohort; they were born in the years of the economic recovery during the 1950s and 1960s and were adolescents and young adults in the 1970s and 1980s, during the *détente* of the Cold War. Fifteen in this second cohort (35 percent) are women. Twenty-two belong to the third cohort; they were born during the 1970s and 1980s and educated in the period of the collapse of communism. Seven in this third cohort (32 percent) are women.¹⁶

The migration of younger German historians to Canada and the United States seems to have declined in recent years. This is also noticeable in the age composition of our sample of German-born migrant historians: the third cohort is significantly smaller than the second. One reason is that the general number of advertised positions in history at Canadian and American universities and colleges has decreased due to severe funding cuts in the humanities, especially since the financial crisis in 2008–09.¹⁷ Another is that the hiring preferences of North American history departments have

shifted. With the move to global history and the increasing call for more gender, racial, and ethnic diversity, the hiring of white German—in their majority male—historians who work on twentieth-century Europe has become less attractive. In general, European history, and with it modern German history, lost some of its importance in many North American history departments. In other words, the pull factors that augmented the chances of German historians on the North American academic labor market declined, and the competition on this job market severely increased for historians who started to search for a position during the last decade. The migrant rates in the different age cohorts of our sample of German-born historians who migrated since the 1950s clearly reflects such developments in the academic labor market.

The second chapter, by Andrea Sinn, focuses on the German Studies Professorship Program in North America by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), which started in 1984 in the United States and two years later in Canada. Until 2023, it had brought 157 mostly German scholars (32 percent of them women) as visiting professors for up to five years to the United States and Canada for the purposes of teaching and research. In 2023, fifteen positions were filled in the USA and six in Canada. Eighty percent of them were or are postdocs from different fields in the humanities and social sciences; most are historians, political scientists, and German studies scholars.¹⁸ This unusual program was part of the foreign cultural policy with which the government of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) attempted to strengthen transatlantic relations by conveying a more accurate and up-to-date image of postwar German life and letters to the North American world. For the individual exchange professors, the DAAD teaching positions were a chance to experience a different, less hierarchical university system and style of teaching as well as to participate more closely in the English language research discourses within their fields of specialization.

The third chapter, by Scott H. Krause, examines the development of the German Historical Institute (GHI) in Washington, DC, which was modeled after similar, earlier established institutions in London (1976), Paris (1958), and Rome (1888). The GHI was founded in 1987 as a transatlantic hub for advanced historical research on German, European, and American history and as a place to host American-German scholarly debates. While the conservative chancellor Helmut Kohl and his party, the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU), wanted to create an institutional counterpoint to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on the Mall in Washington, DC, the scholarly community saw the GHI as a chance to enhance transatlantic academic research and exchange through fellowships, conferences, publications, and the like.¹⁹ Taken together, the DAAD German Studies Professorship Program and the German Historical Institute in Washington, DC, have created an exceptional institutional base for German studies in North America. This was further strengthened by the German-American Fulbright Commission (Fulbright Germany), which has facilitated academic exchange between the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany since 1952.

The second part, “Transatlantic Academic Migration: Individual Narratives,” presents autobiographical narratives written by eight male and three female historians of

the first and second age cohorts in our sample of German migrant historians born between the 1930s and 1960s. Most of these are based on a presentation of their story at a workshop titled “German Historians in North America after 1945: Transatlantic Careers and Scholarly Contributions,” held at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in March 2022, on which this book is partly based. Among these highlighted German scholars, the first left their home country during the 1950s and 1960s, and the last came to North America between the 2000s and 2010s. Because age differences played a crucial role in their socialization, education, career prospects, and migration experiences, we have organized their narratives according to their year of birth, starting with the oldest. The authors from the first cohort (born during the 1930s and 1940s) include—in the order of their ages—Volker Berghahn, Konrad H. Jaraus, Irmgard Steinisch, and Michael Geyer. The authors from the middle cohort (born during the 1950s and 1960s) are—again, in order of birth—Karen Hagemann, Thomas Kühne, Wolf Gruner, Andreas Daum, Ulrike Strasser, Frank Biess, and Gregor Thum. Because the migrant historians from the third cohort who participated in the workshop all felt that they were too young to publish autobiographical texts, we invited some of them instead to contribute thematic essays. These scholars include Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, Scott H. Krause, Andrea Sinn, and Anna von der Golz.

The eleven historians of the first two age cohorts address in their autobiographical contributions some of our research questions from their individual perspectives. In contrast to conventional autobiographical writing, we asked them neither to produce a set of nostalgic anecdotes nor to merely offer heartwarming success stories about overcoming adversity. Instead, we requested that they present critical self-reflections on their personal decisions and motives and ponder the resulting consequences. Borrowing an approach used in the history of science, we hoped that they would turn autobiographical information and reflection into an archive for analyzing professional careers and identifying historical interpretations. Such a method transforms the autobiographical weakness of factual recollection into a strength by deciphering memory construction, allowing generalizations across individual cases.²⁰ This effort has resulted in the assembly of a self-generated collective biography of German-born scholars involved in intellectual migration across the Atlantic.²¹ Avoiding a “heroic” narrative, self-construction written with hindsight has been a challenging enterprise for all the authors in the volume since memoirists tend to be subject to personal “biographical illusions.”²² Nevertheless, we hope that the contributions to this volume are interesting for readers because we encouraged the authors to steer away from streamlined success narratives that focus on achievements and to reflect instead on encountered ambiguities and paradoxes by addressing obstacles that they experienced and unexpected opportunities that they used.²³

Taken together, these accounts offer and encourage critical and multifaceted analyses that compare the individual stories and place them within their transatlantic historical contexts. They are as illuminating for the German as they are for the American and Canadian academic systems because the authors reflect on both, from a compar-

tive perspective, and point to weaknesses and strengths. The authors' contemplations on their personal motives for academic migration to North America highlight some of the challenges that the West German academic system—with its currently 422 institutions (108 of them universities)²⁴—faced in past decades and which are partly still unsolved today. These challenges include the hierarchical structure of the West German academic system, the absence of a tenure-track system for academic careers, and lack of diversity as well as continuing gender discrimination. Vice versa, their reflections show the broad variety among colleges and universities in Canada and the United States. The Canadian higher education system alone encompasses ninety-seven colleges and universities. In the US, 3,931 degree-granting postsecondary institutions were recognized by the federal government in 2021; 2,637 of them were four-year institutions, including 629 public colleges.²⁵ Beyond the important distinction between public and private colleges and universities, these differences include vastly divergent levels of funding, different teaching loads between research universities and institutions dedicated primarily to teaching, and finally, their regional locations. The latter is of particular importance for public colleges and universities because differences in the education policies of Democratic- and Republican-controlled US federal states have visibly increased during the last decade. This has far-reaching effects, not only on academic cultures and teaching but also on admissions and hiring policies. These growing differences also affect efforts to establish more gender, racial, and ethnic diversity in curricula as well as the composition of faculty and students.²⁶

The three chapters in the third part, “Transatlantic Scholarship: Key Themes and Debates in Twentieth-Century German History,” explore crucial periods, themes, and approaches in the work generated by these German-born historians in North America and their roles and influences in creating transatlantic German-American scholarship. These chapters examine research on the Third Reich, World War II, the Holocaust, German-Jewish history and antisemitism, and post-1945 German history. Helmut Wälsch Smith, who belongs to the second cohort of migrant historians in our sample and came as a child to the United States, discusses the topic of developments in the scholarship on National Socialism and the Holocaust as an émigré phenomenon.²⁷ Thomas Pegelow Kaplan analyzes the transatlantic scholarship on modern German-Jewish history. He demonstrates the importance of an institutional infrastructure of research centers and libraries that opened on both sides of the Atlantic for the development of research in the fields of Jewish history and Holocaust. The first and still one of the most pivotal of these institutions is the Leo Baeck Institute New York, founded in 1955 by leading German-Jewish émigré intellectuals who wanted to preserve the vibrant cultural heritage of the German-speaking Jewry that was nearly destroyed in the Holocaust.²⁸ Anna von der Goltz studies transatlantic-influenced developments in the historiography of post-1945 Germany.²⁹ These historiographical probes demonstrate close and productive interactions between German- and American-born scholars working in similar research areas in North America and also important transatlantic exchanges and transfers of ideas.

The themes of these three chapters reflect main fields of research of the German migrant historians in North America and the temporal, regional, and thematic foci of their work. Of the eighty-seven in our sample, seventy-eight scholars work(ed) on nineteenth and twentieth-century history. Among them, sixty-six (85 percent) focus(ed) on the twentieth century, and particularly on the Third Reich and the Holocaust (39 percent), and the post-1945 era (34 percent). Broadly defined, modern central European history is clearly the major field of research and teaching of most of the historians in our sample. This temporal and regional focus reveals not only interest emanating from North American history departments, in which twentieth-century European and German history until recently have belonged to the core of the curriculum, but also the dominance of a twentieth-century orientation in most departments. In accordance with general developments in historical scholarship, which since the 1990s have gradually shifted from regional interests toward broader-scoped global history, currently more German-born historians—especially in the two younger cohorts—work on regions beyond Germany and Europe and on comparative, transnational, global, and colonial history (though sometimes in addition to central European history). This expansion in the regional range of scholarship by German migrant historians has developed hand in hand with a greater diversity of methodological approaches and thematic fields of historical scholarship. These trends reflect the overall evolution of the history profession since the 1980s.³⁰

Using a combination of different approaches and perspectives, the authors of this volume seek to make an innovative contribution to research on German-American transatlantic careers and scholarship. We address the most challenging methodological question of the book—if and how historians should draw on their autobiographical stories and personal experiences to contribute to the overall history of their academic discipline and to university systems—in the second part, on “Transatlantic Academic Migration: Individual Narratives.” There, we experiment by taking an unusual approach—using the participants’ life stories as sources for scholarly reflection on broader patterns of personal experience and disciplinary evolution. We hope that this novel method will yield some new insights on both individual trajectories and the general development of the field.³¹

In conclusion, we want to emphasize the following six points that our analyses of the post-1950s migration patterns of German-born historians to North America and their intellectual contributions to historical scholarship suggest. Firstly, an important precondition both for the development of academic exchanges between Germany and North America, especially with the United States, and for the transatlantic migration of German historians since the late 1950s was the increasingly developed institutional infrastructure. That allowed German undergraduate and graduate students, postdoc scholars, and professors to travel and stay for shorter or longer periods in Canada or the US. Particularly important have been the German Academic Exchange Service, re-founded in 1950, the German-American Fulbright Program, established in 1952, and the German Historical Institute in Washington, DC, opened in 1987. The DAAD and

the Fulbright Program finance study abroad for undergraduate and graduate students and for the research of postdocs. In addition, the DAAD started its German Studies Professorship Program in 1984 and supports shorter visiting professorships as well as the funding of transatlantic workshops and conferences. The GHI, as a center for advanced historical research, funds postdoc fellowships, initiates transatlantic research projects, and (co-)organizes research colloquia and other events, including conferences. Its declared aims are to facilitate dialogue and collaboration across national and disciplinary boundaries, and to foster transatlantic scholarly debates between junior and senior scholars around the world.³² Especially valuable for the development of transatlantic scholarship in the fields of Jewish history and Holocaust studies is the Leo Baeck Institute New York, founded in 1955. This institutional infrastructure dedicated to transatlantic academic exchange, which in large part is funded by the German state and German foundations, is significantly more extensive than that of other European states. Its existence reflects the close political relations between West Germany and the United States that evolved during the Cold War. Unintentionally, it provided in several cases preconditions for a successful migration of German historians to North America.

Secondly, and differently from the first and second generations of migrant historians who had to flee Nazi Germany as adults or children during or shortly after World War II to settle in North America, the third generation, which departed Germany since the late 1950s, migrated voluntarily, if they came as adults, mainly for educational or professional reasons. They hoped for a less hierarchical education system and better professional opportunities. The largest group were labor migrants born during the 1950s and 1960s, who had few employment opportunities in the German academic system. This was not only due to an extreme overproduction of qualified historians and a concurrent severe shortage of professorship positions. Another reason seems to be that several of the scholars who successfully migrated wrote their dissertation or *Habilitation* in new fields of historical research and applied innovative theoretical and methodological approaches—such as cultural history, everyday history, new intellectual history, the new military history, and gender history (including the history of masculinity). This was often not appreciated by the mainly male professors in the German history profession who made hiring decisions. However, because of their innovative and often internationally recognized scholarship they were welcomed in the American and Canadian academic systems. The German brain drain was therefore a North American brain gain. At the same time the push away from (West) Germany seems to have been in many, if not in most, cases greater than the pull of the academic system of Canada and the United States. One underlying commonality shared by most migrant historians is that their academic careers, like those of the majority of scholars, have depended on opportunities and coincidences, generated by push and pull factors that worked for the individual in ways they could not have foreseen when they started their academic education.

Thirdly, due to their bicultural backgrounds and careers, many of these academic migrants tended to subscribe to a critical view of German history that rejects nation-

alist apologetics. Acting as a kind of externalized conscience, these scholars have intervened continually in important German debates. These include the *Fischerkontroverse* (the debate in the 1960s between historian Fritz Fischer, his supporters, and opponents about Germany's responsibility for the start of World War I);³³ the first *Historikerstreit* (a West German dispute in the late 1980s between conservative and left-liberal academics about how to incorporate Nazi Germany and the Holocaust into German historiography);³⁴ the *Historikerinnenstreit* in the late 1980s and early 1990s (which discussed the involvement of different groups of women in Nazi Germany and the Holocaust);³⁵ and currently, the so-called *Historikerstreit 2.0* (concerning the singularity of the Holocaust, other genocides, colonialism, and conceptualizations of antisemitism).³⁶ Most émigré German historians emphasize(d) the necessity to uphold a democratic perspective that openly accepts responsibility for the crimes of the Holocaust. Such critical interventions from the outside have not always been appreciated by more traditionalist colleagues in the German academic system, who resent outside interference in what they consider their own field of research.

Fourthly, in their new Anglo-American community many migrant historians have also promoted a nuanced view of the German past that rejects the simplified clichés of British, Canadian, and American propaganda generated during World War II and the early postwar years, which condemned all Germans as Nazi perpetrators. In doing so, they have contributed to a more complex understanding of the paradoxical mixture of positive potentials and negative outcomes in Germany's past. They have deeply explored the development of the Nazi state, its murderous war, and the Holocaust, and—following the defeat of Germany—the emergence of the two German states: the German Democratic Republic (GDR), a socialist dictatorship controlled by the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) and enmeshed with the Warsaw Pact, and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), a democratic society with a social market economy and also a NATO member that supported postwar recoveries of human rights.³⁷ In the current academic and public debate over the need to revise historiography on the GDR and the everyday life experiences of ordinary East German people, migrant historians and other scholars from anglophone countries are intensively involved.³⁸ They have thereby helped to create a fuller understanding of the new Germany that emerged after the “peaceful revolution” and reunification.

Fifthly, combining American innovations with German research depth, the transatlantic interchange of topics and methodologies has been extraordinarily fruitful in producing a multifaceted understanding of the past that makes central European history such an exciting field of scholarship.³⁹ Interpreted from this combination of internal and external perspectives, the German story offers both new avenues of exploration and valuable reminders because it investigates the whole range of human endeavors—from exemplifying absolute evil during the fascist and communist dictatorships to demonstrating the recovery of civil society and human rights. Even for a long overdue postcolonial discussion, the German story provides abiding lessons that might have something to say to a deeply polarized American society.

Finally, the very participation of German migrant historians in a lively English language discussion about German history has created a transatlantic research and memory community that has widened and deepened our understanding of the German past beyond the discussion in Germany itself. By helping to deprovincialize central European History, the international dialogue about German history has corrected the omission of historians outside of Germany in German scholarship.⁴⁰ Since Germans have been involved in mostly negative ways in the history of numerous other countries, their impact needs to be recovered from a multitude of perspectives.⁴¹ The present book offers one outside effort at reconstruction that complements the view from inside Germany.

Karen Hagemann (born 1955 in Hamburg) studied history, German language and literature, and education at the University of Hamburg from 1974 to 1980, where she passed her first state examination for teaching at secondary schools (*Erstes Staatsexamen für das höhere Lehramt*). In 1989, she defended her Dr. phil. at the same university. Beginning in 1987, she started as a lecturer (*Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin*) and then became a senior lecturer (*Wissenschaftliche Assistentin*), first in the Department of History at the Technical University of Berlin (TUB) and, from 1995, at the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Women and Gender, which she cofounded with Karin Hausen. In 2000, she defended her *Habilitation* at the TUB. After receiving fellowships and visiting professorships in the United States, Canada (where she was the DAAD Chair at the Munk Center of the University of Toronto), and Germany, she was professor and co-director of the Center for Border Studies at the University of Glamorgan, Wales, from 2003 to 2005 and has been, since 2005, James G. Kenan Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her main fields of research are modern German, European, and transatlantic history, social and cultural history, the history of military and war, and women's and gender history. Her most important publications include *The Oxford Handbook of Gender, War, and the Western World since 1600*, edited with Stefan Dudink and Sonya O. Rose (Oxford University Press, 2020); *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon: History, Culture, Memory* (Cambridge University Press, 2019); *Gendering Post-1945 German History: Entanglements*, edited with Donna Harsch and Friederike Brühöfener (Berghahn Books, 2019); *'Männlicher Muth und deutsche Ehre': Nation, Militär und Geschlecht zur Zeit der Antinapoleonischen Kriege Preußens* (Schöningh, 2002, *Habilitation*); and *Frauenalltag und Männerpolitik: Alltagsleben und gesellschaftliches Handeln von Arbeiterfrauen in der Weimarer Republik* (J. H. W. Dietz, 1990, dissertation).

Konrad H. Jarusch (born 1941 in Magdeburg) grew up in Bavaria and the Rhineland. After earning his high school diploma (*Abitur*) in Krefeld, he moved to the United States to study at the University of Wyoming in 1960 and defended his PhD dissertation at the University of Wisconsin in 1969. He started his teaching career as an assistant professor at the University of Missouri, Columbia. Since 1983, he has been teaching as Lurcy Professor of European Civilization at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he is now a professor emeritus. He served as president of the German

Studies Association in 1985–86 and was chair of the Conference Group of Central European History. From 1994 to 1998, he was a cofounder and codirector of the UNC Center for European Studies, and from 1998 to 2006, codirector of the Center for Contemporary History in Potsdam. The focus of his work is modern German and European history, especially the history of World War I, the history of students and professions in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Germany, and post-1945 German history. His most important recent publications include *The Burden of German History: A Transatlantic Life* (Berghahn Books, 2023); *Embattled Europe: A Progressive Alternative* (Princeton University Press, 2021); *Broken Lives: How Ordinary Germans Experienced the Twentieth Century* (Princeton University Press, 2018); *Out of Ashes: A New History of Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton University Press, 2015); and *The Enigmatic Chancellor: Bethmann Hollweg and the Hubris of Imperial Germany* (Yale University Press, 1973, dissertation).

Notes

1. See Hartmut Lehmann and James Sheehan, eds., *An Interrupted Past: German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Gerhard A. Ritter, ed., *German Refugee Historians and Friedrich Meinecke: Letters and Documents, 1910–1977* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Georg Iggers, “Refugee Historians from Nazi Germany: Political Attitudes towards Democracy,” Monna and Otto Weinmann Lecture (Washington, DC: National Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2005); and Axel Fair-Schulz and Mario Kessler, eds., *German Scholars in Exile: New Studies in Intellectual History* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011).
2. On German-Jewish refugees to Great Britain, see Marion Berghahn, *Continental Britons: German-Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), on academics, see esp. 78–83; on the migration of young German Jews, see Walter Laqueur, *Generation Exodus: the Fate of Young Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2001), on their migration to Britain, see 189–214, and to the United States, 129–60; and as a comparative case study, see Lori Gemeiner Bihler, *Cities of Refuge: German Jews in London and New York, 1935–1945* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2018).
3. Andreas W. Daum, Hartmut Lehmann, and James J. Sheehan, eds., *The Second Generation: Émigrés from Nazi Germany as Historians* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 338–453; see also Catherine Epstein, *A Past Renewed: A Catalog of German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
4. For the scholarly accounts of Jewish refugee historians, see for example Werner T. Angress, *Witness to the Storm: A Jewish Journey from Nazi Berlin to the 82nd Airborne, 1920–1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012); Peter Gay, *My German Question: Growing Up in Nazi Berlin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988); Georg and Wilma Iggers, *Zwei Seiten einer Geschichte: Lebensbericht aus unruhigen Zeiten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002); Fritz Stern, *Five Germanys I Have Known* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2006); and Gerda Lerner, *Fireweed: A Political Autobiography* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2002).
5. See Emily J. Levine, *Allies and Rivals: German-American Exchange and the Rise of the Modern Research University* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2021).
6. See Philipp Stelzel, *History after Hitler: A Transatlantic Enterprise* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).
7. For Britain see Geoff Eley, “Crossing the North Sea: Is there a British approach to German History?” in *Rewriting German History: New Perspectives on Modern Germany*, ed. Jan Rieger and Nikolaus Wachsmann (London and New York: Palgrave, 2015), 1–28; for a more global perspective re-

- cently, see Stefan Berger and Philipp Müller, eds., *Dynamics of Emigration: Émigré Scholars and the Production of Historical Knowledge in the 20th Century* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2022).
8. For more, see Hagemann's contribution in chapter 1 of this volume.
 9. For methodological reflections on the concepts of generation and cohort, see Hartmut Berghoff et al., eds., *History by Generations: Generational Dynamics in Modern History* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2013).
 10. For example, Konrad H. Jarausch, "Contemporary History as Transatlantic Project: The German Problem, 1960–2010," in *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, Supplement 24 (Cologne: Gesis, 2012), 7–49.
 11. For a similar approach, see Pieter Huistra and Kaat Wils, "The Exchange Programme of the Belgian-American Educational Foundation: An Institutional Perspective on Scientific Persona Formation (1920–1940)," *Low Countries Historical Review* 131:4 (2016): 112–34.
 12. Konrad H. Jarausch and Hannes Siegrist, eds., *Amerikanisierung und Sowjetisierung in Deutschland, 1945–1970* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1997).
 13. For example, Konrad H. Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).
 14. For history, see Stelzel, *History after Hitler*; and for German studies, Paul Michael Lützeler and Peter Höyng, eds., *Transatlantic German Studies: Testimonies to the Profession* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2018).
 15. Two of the seventy-seven still living historians did not want to be included.
 16. See chapter 1 in this volume.
 17. See Jeffrey R. Brown and Caroline M. Hoxby, eds., *How the Financial Crisis and Great Recession Affected Higher Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).
 18. See chapter 2 in this volume.
 19. See chapter 3 in this volume.
 20. There is already a rich set of such academic autobiographies, assembled by H-Diplo and *Historical Social Research*, which can serve as a guide for disciplined self-reflection; see for example Charles Maier, "H-Diplo Memories," H-Diplo Essay 280, Essay Series on Learning the Scholar's Craft: Reflections of Historians and International Relations Scholars, 16 October 2020, issforum.org/essays/PDF/E280.pdf. See also Wilhelm Heinz Schroeder, "Collective Biography as an Interdisciplinary Method in Historical Social Research," *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, Supplement 23 (Cologne: Gesis, 2011); and Lutz Niethammer, *Memory and History: Essays in Contemporary History* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2012).
 21. Moreover, the scholarly recollections of Jewish refugee historians such as Tom Angress, Peter Gay, George Iggers, Gerda Lerner, and Fritz Stern provide inspiring examples of the weaving of individual threads into a broader tapestry. See Angress, *Witness to the Storm*; Gay, *My German Question*; Georg and Wilma Iggers, *Zwei Seiten einer Geschichte*; Lerner, *Fireweed*; and Stern, *Five Germanys*.
 22. The term "biographical illusions" is used by Pierre Bourdieu in "L'illusion biographique," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 62–63 (June 1986): 69–72; on the construction of experiences, see Joan W. Scott, "Experiences," in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (London: Routledge, 1992), 22–40.
 23. See Volker Depkat, "Autobiographie und die soziale Konstruktion von Wirklichkeit," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 29 (2003): 441–76; Jeremy Popkin, *History, Historians, and Autobiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Luisa Passerini and Alexander C. T. Geppert, eds., *European Ego-histoires: Historiography and the Self, 1970–2000*, special issue, *Historien: A Review of the Past and Other Stories* 3 (2001), doi.org/10.12681/historen.96, esp. the introduction, "Historians in Flux: The Concept, Task and Challenge of ego-histoire," 7–18. As an example, see Konrad H. Jarausch, *Broken Lives: How Ordinary Germans Experienced the 20th Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018).

24. "Hochschulen nach Hochschulart," DeStatis, Statistisches Bundesamt, www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Bildung-Forschung-Kultur/Hochschulen/Tabellen/hochschulen-hochschularten.html (accessed 8 July 2023).
25. Ryan Harris, "How Many Colleges Are in the US (2024)," *NutMeg Education*, 17 January 2024, <https://nutmegeducation.com/how-many-colleges-are-in-the-us> (accessed 13 May 2024); and "Canadian Universities," Universities Canada (website), www.universitystudy.ca/canadian-universities/ (accessed 27 July 2023).
26. See Kim Parker, "The Growing Partisan Divide in Views of Higher Education," *Pew Research Center*, 19 August 2019, www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/08/19/the-growing-partisan-divide-in-views-of-higher-education-2/ (accessed 8 July 2023).
27. See chapter 15 in this volume.
28. See chapter 16 in this volume.
29. See chapter 17 in this volume.
30. See chapter 1 in this volume.
31. For a similar effort in *Germanistik*, see Frank Trommler, *Die hellen Jahre über dem Atlantik: Leben zwischen Deutschland und Amerika* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2022); and in international relations studies, see Felix Rösch, ed., *Émigré Scholars and the Genesis of International Relations: A European Discipline in America?* (London: Palgrave, 2014).
32. German Historical Institute Washington (homepage), ghi-dc.org/ (accessed 27 July 2023).
33. See Klaus Große Kracht, "Die Fischer-Kontroverse: Von der Fachdebatte zum Publikumsstreit," in *Die zankende Zunft: Historische Kontroversen in Deutschland nach 1945*, ed. Große Kracht (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 47–68; Große Kracht, "'An das gute Gewissen der Deutschen ist eine Mine gelegt.': Fritz Fischer und die Kontinuitäten deutscher Geschichte," in *50 Klassiker der Zeitgeschichte*, ed. Jürgen Danyel, Jan-Holger Kirsch, and Martin Sabrow (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 66–70; Konrad H. Jarausch, "Der nationale Tabubruch. Wissenschaft, Öffentlichkeit und Politik in der Fischer-Kontroverse," in *Zeitgeschichte als Streitgeschichte. Große Kontroversen seit 1945*, ed. Martin Sabrow, Ralph Jessen, and Klaus Große Kracht (Munich: Beck, 2003), 20–40; and Matthew Stibbe, "The Fischer Controversy over German War Aims in the First World War and its Reception by East German Historians, 1961–1989," *The Historical Journal* 46:3 (2003): 649–68.
34. See Klaus Große Kracht, "Der Historikerstreit: Grabenkampf in der Geschichtskultur," in Große Kracht, ed., *Die zankende Zunft*, 91–114; Ulrich Herbert, "Der Historikerstreit: Politische, wissenschaftliche, biographische Aspekte," in Sabrow, Jessen, and Große Kracht, ed., *Zeitgeschichte als Streitgeschichte*, 94–113; Richard J. Evans, *Im Schatten Hitlers? Historikerstreit und Vergangenheitsbewältigung in der Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991); Nicolas Berg, *The Holocaust and the West German Historians: Historical Interpretation and Autobiographical Memory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015); and Ernst Reinhard Piper, ed. "Historikerstreit": *Die Dokumentation der Kontroverse um die Einzigartigkeit der nationalsozialistischen Judenvernichtung* (Munich and Zurich: Piper Verlag, 1987).
35. On the *Historikerinnenstreit*, which is less well known in the profession and the public, see Adelheid von Saldern, "Victims or Perpetrators? Controversies about the Role of Women in the Nazi State," in *Nazism and German Society 1933–1945*, ed. David Crew (London: Routledge, 1994), 141–66; Carola Sachse, "Frauenforschung zum Nationalsozialismus," *Mittelweg* 36:6 (1997): 24–42; and Claudia Koonz, "A Tributary and a Mainstream: Gender, Public Memory, and the Historiography of Nazi Germany," in *Gendering Modern German History: Rewriting Historiography*, ed. Karen Hagemann and Jean Quataert (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 147–67.
36. See A. Dirk Moses, "Der Katechismus der Deutschen," *Geschichte der Gegenwart*, 23 May 2021, at: geschichtedergegenwart.ch/der-katechismus-der-deutschen/ (accessed 26 July 2023); Frank Bajohr and Rachel O'Sullivan, "Holocaust, Kolonialismus und NS-Imperialismus: Forschung im Schatten einer polemischen Debatte," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 70:1 (2022), <https://>

- doi.org/10.1515/vfzg-2022-0008 (accessed 26 July 2023); Michael Rothberg, *Multidirektionale Erinnerung: Holocaustgedenken im Zeitalter der Dekolonisierung* (Berlin: Metropol, 2021); Susan Neimann and Michael Wildt, eds., *Historiker streiten: Gewalt und Holocaust—Die Debatte* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2022); and Jürgen Zimmerer, ed., *Erinnerungskämpfe: Neues deutsches Geschichtsbewusstsein* (Ditzingen: Reclam 2023).
37. Jarausch, *After Hitler*; Edgar Wolfrum, *Die geglückte Demokratie: Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von ihren Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2006); and recently, Anna Corsten, *Unbequeme Erinnerung: Emigrierte Historiker in der westdeutschen und US-amerikanischen NS- und Holocaust-Forschung, 1945–1998* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2023).
 38. See for example, Katja Hoyer, *Diesseits der Mauer: Eine neue Geschichte der DDR, 1949–1990* (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe, 2023), in English: *Beyond the Wall: East Germany, 1949–1990* (London: Random House, 2023). Hoyer was born in East Germany in 1985, graduated from the University of Jena, and migrated in 2010 to the United Kingdom, where she teaches at the Kings College in London.
 39. Helmut Walser Smith, *Germany, A Nation in Its Time: Before, During, and After Nationalism, 1500–2000* (New York: Liveright, 2020).
 40. One recent example is a volume with autobiographical essays of leading German historians (twenty-six men and two women) born before 1943. See Christoph Dipper and Heinz Duchardt, eds., *Generation im Aufbruch: Die Geschichtswissenschaft in Deutschland im Spiegel autobiographischer Porträts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2024).
 41. David Blackbourn, *Germany in the World: A Global History, 1500–2000* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2022).