

WAGNER, Jonathan — *A History of Migration from Germany to Canada, 1850–1939*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006. Pp. 284.

The stated purpose of Jonathan Wagner's book is to explain "why and how German migration to Canada occurred as it did" from the mid-nineteenth century to the outbreak of the Second World War (p. 12). While placing this immigration in the context of the larger Atlantic system of this period (the migrations from Europe to the Western Hemisphere), Wagner claims that there was something "special and unique" (p. 4) to Canada's German migrations, and that this uniqueness can be located in the distinct national histories of the two countries. More specifically, he focuses on the different pace of modernization that shaped German and Canadian developments, respectively. His book analyses in detail the political, economic, social, and technological transformations that prompted people to migrate, as well as the ideological themes that provided rationalizations and justifications in both sending and receiving countries.

Analysing the entire process of an international flow of people from one country to another within this context of interlocking political, social, economic, and ideological systems is a task that most migration historians would shy away from, possibly with good reason. For one, such an undertaking requires extensive archival work in two countries. Historians familiar with Wagner's earlier book, *Brothers Beyond the Sea*, are aware that he knows his way around in both the Canadian national archives and in several German archives relevant to migration history. This may, in fact, be the major strength of his book.

For Canadian readers, Wagner provides fascinating insights into how Canada was perceived and marketed abroad. He also reminds his audience that sending countries such as Germany were not oblivious to the phenomenon of migration and that a lively political and intellectual debate attempted to make sense of this outflow, just as receiving countries had to make sense of the intake of so many migrants.

Ultimately, however, Wagner struggles to explain why migrations from Germany to Canada did not happen, or at least not on any significant scale. With the exception of a few years in the second half of the 1920s, Canada was a distant also-ran in German migrants' list of desirable countries, the United States always being the undisputed favourite, but South American countries also faring better than the northern dominion. Wagner finds his explanation in the half-developed state of Canada's economy and a policy that targeted agricultural migrants only, thereby missing the ever-growing pool of urbanized unskilled workers in rapidly industrializing Germany. At times he is harsh in his condemnation of Canadian immigration policies as "feckless" (p. 129), "anachronistic" (p. 145), and ineffective. He fails to explain, however, why Canada would have benefited from more migrants from Germany (possibly to compete more effectively with the United States, which received millions of Germans?), and he only briefly hints at the likelihood of a more deliberate agenda behind the farmers-only policy, which created, as a convenient by-product, "a kind of temporary, fluctuating, migrant guest-worker system" (p. 123) for the country's industrial

labour needs, since immigrant farmers almost invariably had to seek additional seasonal employment.

Wagner's book is divided into four parts, each covering roughly two decades. Each part follows a similar pattern of providing the political and economic context in both countries, then discussing the soliciting of migrants by public and private Canadian agents, the facilitation of migration by German secular and religious agencies, the social profile of the migrants, and the process of migration — the voyage across the Atlantic.

During the early period covered by this book, Canadian authorities created an image of Canada that would be presented to German audiences and would remain "largely consistent" (p. 31) throughout the entire period. There was a heavy emphasis on the romantic dimension of unspoiled nature and abundant wildlife, supplemented by progressive elements such as political liberties, an excellent education system, and material well-being. Migration policies in the German states and the Canadian provinces in this pre-unification period were unorganized or non-existent, recruitment efforts primitive, and travel from Continental Europe to British North America still arduous and even dangerous.

Over the next two periods covered by Wagner, two modernizing states on both sides of the Atlantic became increasingly active in extending control over the migrants and the process of migration. Germany's socio-economic turmoil of the 1870s and 1880s provided a torrent of emigrants from non-traditional areas such as the northeast of the country. Here was a chance for effective recruitment in Germany, but the British-oriented nationalism of the Canadian elites and the prevailing ideology of giving private interests the upper hand in Canada's immigration policy led to a missed opportunity. Starting in the 1890s, nationalism also became a factor on the German side of the equation, where the out-migration of badly needed agricultural labourers from the northeast was increasingly frowned upon. By the 1920s Canada even became a *bête noire* for many right-wing German propagandists whose emphasis on the organically grown national community of the *Volk* raised further ideological obstacles in the already narrow path of migration from Germany to Canada.

Throughout the book we learn little about the migrants themselves, whose social profiles and regions of origin varied, as did their travel experiences. Glimpses of their stories emerge from Wagner's excellent sources, and one wishes that there were more emphasis on microanalysis to flesh out the macro-level data. The migrant experience, however, is intentionally not what Wagner is interested in with this book, so he should not be faulted for excluding it. However, his theoretical framework also raises questions; his unidirectional migration pattern does not place migration into the larger context of mobility that includes seasonal and circular migrations. He makes what many migration historians do not see as a clear-cut distinction between land-seekers and job-seekers and does not place enough emphasis on the agricultural transformations that shaped internal and international migration patterns in this period. There are a few minor editing mistakes of mis-spelling names (Klotz on p. 98), misidentifying positions (p. 108, the German consul in Winnipeg in 1887 was William Hespeler), and

mistranslations (p. 94, the *Kathedersozialisten* of 1870s Germany were lectern socialists, not cathedral socialists).

The wealth of detail in Wagner's analysis may not add up to a compelling narrative or a convincing theoretical model. However, the book will remain in my personal library as an extremely useful reference and starting point for more detailed examinations of topics such as the manufacturing of national images, secular and religious aid to migrants, and emigration discourses.

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WOOD, B. Anne — *Evangelical Balance Sheet: Character, Family, and Business in Mid-Victorian Nova Scotia*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006. Pp.197.

From 1862 until his death in 1886 at age 51, Norman Rudolf, a Pictou businessman, head of a growing family and active in the life of his local Anglican church, the Sons of Temperance, and the YMCA, recorded his perceptions of daily life in five volumes of a journal. Made available for microfilming to the Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management in the 1970s and 1980s, the journal was the only document left by Rudolf and thus represented a formidable interpretive challenge. Building on her extensive publications on various aspects of nineteenth-century Pictou life, Anne Wood has succeeded admirably in placing it within a meaningful cultural context. With the exception of the final chapter, she focuses on the Pictou years, 1862 to 1870, at which point — for economic reasons — the Rudolfs moved to Scotland, eventually settling near Liverpool.

Commenced when Rudolf was 27 and prompted by a passage from that well-worn seventeenth-century call to “religious seriousness” in George Herbert's *Country Parson*, the journal apparently makes little explicit mention of Rudolf's own spirituality or his evangelical search for meaning in everyday life. Instead, it is daily and weekly rituals of prayer, Bible reading, Sunday School work, and church attendance that give evidence of his evangelical commitment. The latter becomes part of the book's primary theme: Rudolf's expression of an ideal of character that “involved a type of balance sheet of his evangelical service to his God, his family, his business, and his community” (p. xxiv). Drawing for theory on Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* and on recent literature on Victorian gender and middle-class formation, Wood proceeds to offer a detailed account of the varied ways Rudolf explored in his diary the concept of character to which he aspired.

Evangelicals took themselves and their faith most seriously, and Wood's analysis is no less thorough and earnest. Extensive citations from the journal and from the secondary literature illustrate that Rudolf's views were representative of a