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**Klaus Dehne.** *Deutsche Einwanderer im lÖ¤ndlichen SÖ¼d-Indiana (USA): Eine historisch-geographische Analyse.* Passau: Selbstverlag des Faches Geographie der UniversitÖ¤t Passau, 2003. 108 pp. EUR 19.90, paper, ISBN 978-3-9807866-1-4.

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Students of German immigration to North America, who have followed research in the field over the past twenty years, will find much that is familiar in this slim volume. With respect to methodology, design, context, and data sources, the work has a good deal in common with many other such studies. But in terms of the distinctive nature of the communities under scrutiny here and the questions author Klaus Dehne asks about them, the research constitutes an intriguing departure from the mean that, in the end, makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the nature of German immigrant communities in the United States.

Some of the most significant advancements in immigration history over the past two decades have stemmed from studies that focused on the trans-Atlantic nature of nineteenth-century immigration from northwest Europe. In order to more fully understand the total immigrant experience from start to finish, dozens of such studies undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s tended to focus as much attention on pre-migration conditions in local immigrant sending regions in Europe as on receiving locales in North America. The result was richer analyses of immigrant chains set within the framework of contemporary social theory that overcame earlier, overly romantic explanations for emigration and clarified, in better detail, the local, regional, and global drivers responsible for the mass migrations of the nineteenth century.

Dehne's study departs from this model of analysis by focusing almost entirely on the nature of immigrant communities on the American side, with only cursory attention paid to conditions in the European sending region. As such, Dehne is not so much concerned with why the migration occurred as with the settlement, growth, and development of the immigrant study communities in the United States. But what truly distinguishes this work, from the plethora of studies of Midwestern immigrant communities that have been written over the years, is the nature of the study itself: a longitudinal, comparative analysis of two civil townships in neighboring counties in southern Indiana, both settled in the mid-nineteenth century by groups of German immigrants but with distinctive regional origins in Germany. The author's research questions center on agricultural and socio-economic diversity and difference in these immigrant populations and communities over time and space. Employing the traditional array of primary sources such as manuscript census schedules, county histories, funeral and tax records, and plat books, the study seeks to account for these observed differences.

Dehne begins with a quite thorough and complete review of the secondary literature related to German immigration to rural North America and

places his own study within this literary context. From this review of the relevant literature, eight hypotheses related to German immigration and assimilation in North America are presented. In essence, Dehne's work here is an attempt to test these hypotheses in the communities studied in southern Indiana. The second chapter identifies and describes in some detail the two communities studied, each settled in the 1840s. The first, Widner Township in Knox County, represents a clear case of chain migration that resulted in a rather homogeneous immigrant community: seventy-one percent of the immigrants hailed from the small principality of Lippe-Detmold in northwest Germany and nearly three-quarters were Protestant (Lippe-Detmold had been Protestant since the Reformation). The second, Ferdinand Township in Dubois County, represents a textbook example of a planned Catholic immigrant settlement venture, initiated by an early Catholic priest, which resulted in a community that was heterogeneous in terms of regional origins in Germany but that was at the same time very homogeneous in terms of religious confession. Almost all of the immigrants were Catholic but hailed from a variety of locations in Germany, especially Bavaria, Hannover, Westphalia, and Alsace. A significant number of early settlers were also recruited from other German immigrant communities within the United States. These distinctions, and the comparison and contrast of the settlement and development of the communities over time, are by far the most intriguing and distinctive aspects of Dehne's study. Chapter 3 situates the immigration to southern Indiana within the context of German immigration to rural America in general. This is accomplished through a discussion of timing, numbers, and areas of settlement, as well as population development and land alienation patterns, that compares southern Indiana to the national model.

The most important and significant findings of Dehne's research are presented in chapters 4 and 5, in which the two study communities are contrasted in terms of ethnic identity, acculturation, and economic development over time. Employing primary data in the form of manuscript census schedules, land and tax records, and county histories and atlases, statistics regarding land ownership patterns, demographic and social structure and population and age characteristics are presented for each community and are compared with each other, as well as to their American neighbors. Many of the results of this analysis are not surprising and dovetail well with the findings of other such studies of rural German immigrant communities. For example, by 1880 the rate of farm ownership among German farmers was around fifteen percent higher than their American counterparts, but the size of German-owned farms was slightly smaller. Using manuscript agricultural census data, Dehne confirms the pattern of economic acculturation of German immigrant farmers that has been reported in many other similar studies: during the early, formative years of initial settlement, agricultural differences between German and American farmers in terms of types of crops and livestock raised and in terms of acreage devoted to each were rather significant. Within ten years, however, Germans appear to have adapted to the American Midwestern agricultural system, a system that is extensive and market-driven in nature and less diverse than the system practiced in nineteenth-century Germany.

To readers of this forum, such findings are hardly surprising. Much more intriguing, however, is the comparison of the two German study communities. Here, Dehne convincingly shows that observed differences in land ownership, patterns of land alienation, rates of agricultural assimilation, and socio-cultural phenomena can be accounted for by the differences in regional origins of the early immigrants, as well as by whether or not Germans constituted a numerical majority in their communities. In Ferdinand Township, German farmers far outnumbered American farmers, while in Widner Township, German farmers constituted a numerical minori-

ty. Dehne argues that German farmers in Ferdinand Township were "secluded" and "cut off" from outside American influences and thus did not adapt to American cultural and economic norms as quickly or as pervasively as the Germans in Widner Township who, as a result of more frequent interactions with their American neighbors, adopted American ways more quickly. So too, as Dehne describes in chapters 6 and 7, these differences are played out in the extent of German ethnicity and the traces of that identity in the cultural landscape. In the close-knit immigrant Catholic community of Ferdinand Township, the use of German as a first language persisted far longer, well after World War II, than in Widner Township. Likewise, the ethnic cultural landscape imprint, manifested most vividly in church architecture, cemeteries and the use of German place names, is more pervasive and complete in Ferdinand Township. One might make the argument, however, that this is explained more by the fact that the Ferdinand Township is overwhelmingly Catholic and that Catholic religious landscapes, with an emphasis on symbolism, ornate structure, and decoration, are often more "pronounced" than Protestant ones with less pervasive, outward signs of religious symbolism.

In the end, Dehne's study represents a welcome addition to the large literature relating to the nature of German immigrant communities in the United States in the nineteenth century. It is well written and concise, the questions are well researched and presented clearly, and the maps, tables, and figures are all of very good quality and are informative to the reader. For the most part, the results of the study confirm much of what has been written before, in countless numbers of immigrant community studies that focus on assimilation and acculturation processes. In this regard, much of what is contained in the book is not new or theoretically significant. Indeed, the study is largely descriptive and noticeably lacking in theoretical underpinning, with nary a hint of social theory within which the research might be conceptualized. In this regard, the book is not so much historical geography (despite the large number of maps depicting such things as land ownership patterns) as it is social history. Nevertheless, the work is a significant contribution because it tackles a subject that has rarely been addressed in German immigrant community studies in its comparison and contrast of two communities that were established at the same time and place but by groups with different regional origins in Germany and dissimilar settlement processes (chain migration versus a planned settlement venture). As Dehne demonstrates, this made all the difference when it came to issues such as religious heritage, acculturation rates, adoption of American agricultural techniques, and cultural landscape imprint. For these reasons, the book is a welcome addition to the literature on the subject.

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