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Here and There[1] Early 19th-Century Transatlantic Emigration and the Discourse on Social Reform

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Abstract
The European 19th century has been described as the century of utopias and, at the same time, as the century of transatlantic emigration. This article examines how these two histories intersected in a shared spatio-temporal frame: a post-revolutionary chronotope, which distinguished the European «here and now» from the American «there and then» in both temporal and ontological terms. Emerging from the contrasting legacies of the American and the French Revolution, this chronotope structured a migration discourse in which religious separatists and socialist reformers were envisioned as prototypes of a future social order to be realized overseas. Manifest in transnational debates on the land of promise and the land of experiments, we trace the discursive entanglement of emigration, millennialism, social reform, and early communism in the first half of the 19th century. By examining the influence of settler groups such as the Harmony Society, the New Harmony Society, and the Icarians on the social question, we follow the topos of *Here and There* from its religious articulations through its secular translations to the eventual disenchantment of the New World. The act of emigration lost its connotation of a reformist intervention and was increasingly cast as a self-serving reaction to economic conditions. We argue that this shift prefigured the structural logic of later migration theory in which emigrant agency was subjected to a law-like interplay of «push» and «pull» factors.

Keywords:
- transatlantic migration,
- millennialism,
- utopian communities,
- communism,
- chronotope,
- push and pull

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Introduction: The Structure of a European Debate

«Here and There, or, Emigration a Remedy» (1848) presents, at first glance, a family narrative oscillating between poverty and prosperity (see figure 1). The left side of the image – the *Here* – depicts an impoverished family of seven at a street corner in front of a wall plastered with posters in a generic British industrial townscape. The right side – the *There* – offers an alternate vision of the same family: now well-nourished, they are gathered around a richly laid table and engage in acts of charity, distributing food to a stranger, in what seems to be a distant land, perhaps one of the British colonies, to which the family has successfully emigrated.

The wood engraving appeared in the satirical magazine Punch, one of the early Victorian periodicals.[2] Such textual and visual representations of hunger were widespread in middle-class magazines of the 1840s. They added a different narrative dimension to the so-called «Hungry Forties» than mere newspaper reports did (Boyce 2012:424). In juxtaposing projected poverty and imagined wealth, the illustration tells

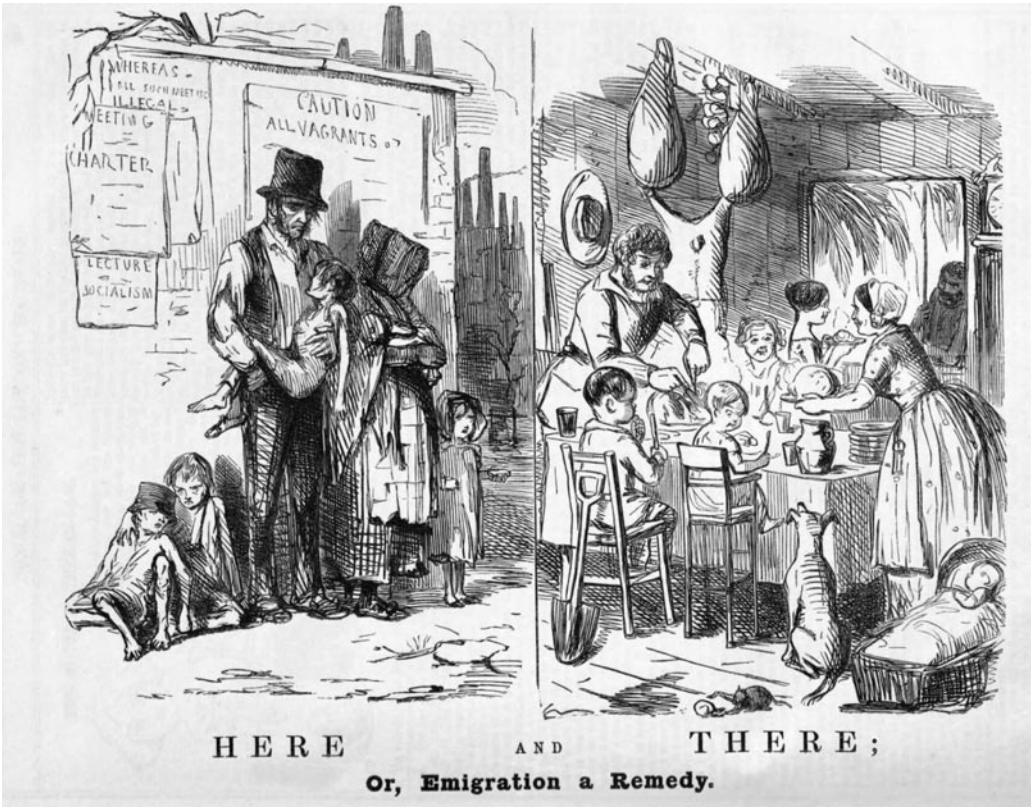

Fig. 1: Here and There; or, Emigration a Remedy. Caricature in Punch vol. 15, no. 364, July 8, 1848, providing an early visual of the 'push / pull' binary in the context of the social question. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, 4 Per. 16 b-15, p. 27, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10532065-6.

2. A full-page cartoon, it was published without additional textual framing or commentary.

the story of what would, a century later, be conceptualized in migration studies as «push» and «pull» factors (Lee 1966).[3] Already visually encoded is the stereotypical image of the desperate migrant, drawn toward a land of plenty. However, the supposed inevitability of poverty as a push factor is called into question: the image's caption, «Emigration, a Remedy», satirical in tone, implies a fundamental capacity for agency. Two options are laid out side by side: poverty here, prosperity there – *you* decide.

Another plotline is hidden in the image. Here and There also references two sides of a social reformist discourse. The image's coding of the space for the good life by a palm tree draws not only on colonial connotations, but on the utopian literary tradition's 'far away island.' On the side of the Here, in contrast, the posters on the wall feature, next to warnings to vagrants and beggars, announcements of meetings referencing the working-class Chartist movement and advertisements for a lecture on socialism. Both point to alternative visions of social transformation at home – alternatives that would have to be fought for. From the early until the mid-19th century, discourses of emigration and social reform were closely intertwined. Be it religious migrants from the British Isles, France, the German lands, or Scandinavia: «the early emigration rested on political opposition and not merely on the demand for religious freedom» (Østrem 2014:12).[4]

In what follows, we sketch this entanglement of early 19th-century discourses on collective transatlantic emigration and social reform, before turning, in the second part of the article, to its eventual disentanglement. While North America had been the destination for religious emigration of Christian Zionite groups throughout the 18th century, the results of the American and the French Revolution changed both the temporal and the ontological connotations of the American There.[5] This post-revolutionary chronotope made the US and its frontier a region belonging «not to times past but to the time we are entering» (Arndt 1980b:181–182), and attracted separatist groups marked not only by a new place-bound millennial theology, but by a societal organization very different from their predecessors. The Württemberg separatists who founded the communal capitalistic Harmony Society in 1805 as the nucleus of the Kingdom of Justice became a widely discussed prototype of collective emigration to initiate a new social order. From a European perspective, America became the 'land of experiments' when, by the 1820s, early socialists around Robert Owen translated the religious chronotope into psychological terms, arguing that only There, future society could be built from scratch.

We use the term chronotope in Bakhtin's (1981) sense of the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relations, adapting it from its original literary-theoretical context to fore-

3. Lee (1966) conceptualized the decision to migrate as based on «a consideration of positive and negative factors at origin and destination» (1966:52), later called push and pull factors.
4. «den tidlege untvandringa kvilte på ein politisk opposisjon og ikkje berre på kravet om religiøs fridom.» All translations from Scandinavian languages and German are by the authors.
5. While this article focuses on the debate with regard to Western European transatlantic emigration, North America was not the only imagined elsewhere for the good life. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, Central Europe and the Russian Empire exerted considerable attraction on contemporaries (see Beer and Dahlmann 1999). For some regions of Europe, the Russian Empire served as a similar «testing ground for alternative modes of communal life» (Crane 2006:54), the potential especially developed within the European revivalist movement, with Tsar Alexander I cast as a messianic figure (Haumann 1992). The pietist writings of Jung-Stilling played a central role in this context (Petrov 2007).

ground the historically specific configuration of distinct temporalities assigned to the European «here and now» and the American «there and then.» As a discursive frame, this chronotope connected early 19th-century European debates on emigration and social reform by defining perceptions of agency, affordance, and the location of social change. As the social question intensified in Europe toward the mid-19th century, the terms of debate on millennial societies began to shift. In the second part of this article, we show how the meanings of *Here* and *There* were renegotiated within an increasingly radicalized European social discourse. In the events leading up to the uprisings of 1848, the young communist movement emerged from a defining controversy over emigration: reform there or revolution here? Echoing conservative anti-emigration propaganda, albeit for different reasons, the communal settlements – often founded as empirical social experiments, with their economic success or failure offering a measure of alternative societal models – were now dismissed as a fancy of sectarian 'utopians.' Not only did the disenchantment of the post-revolutionary Here and There into a reality and dream binary change modes of reform, but it also transformed the understanding of the emigrant. Emigration was redefined from an active, reformist intervention into a passive, self-serving response to socio-economic conditions subsequently captured in the structural logic and implied psychology of modelling the causes of migration as an interplay of push and pull factors.

The Post-Revolutionary Chronotope: Collective Emigration and the Millennium

Sloopers and Separatists

In 1817, the damaged Dutch ship *De Zee Ploeg* anchored in Bergen. On board were around 400 emigrants from the Duchy of Württemberg, who needed to spend the winter before making another attempt to cross to America the following spring. The motives behind their risky journey were diverse (Anonymous 1822:1): Poor harvests of 1816 had ruined many farmsteads, taxes were high, and the region, previously occupied by Napoleon, had for years been marked by waves of emigration. Württemberg was also the former home of one of the most successful attempts at collective emigration, the Harmony Society, which served as a «model of group migration» (Arndt 1977:241) inspiring many transatlantic crossings throughout the first half of the 19th century. Founded in 1805 by a group of Württemberg separatists, the Harmony Society established its first communal settlement Harmonie at the Connoquenessing in Pennsylvania. In 1814, they relocated to remote Indiana Territory, building Harmonie at the Wabash. Able to house up to a thousand people, their progress and economic success were extensively monitored by both the American and the European press. Later, in 1824, they relocated once more to build their final and most extensive settlement, Oekonomie at the Ohio. Some of the German emigrants aboard *De Zee Ploeg* hoped to be admitted into this famous society.

In her studies of the influence of the events of 1817 on Norwegian emigration, Ingrid Semmingsen (1974; 1976; 1983) concludes it to be likely «that the notion of emigration originated in the contact between Norwegian dissenters – the Haugeans and the Quakers – and the German separatists» (Semmingsen 1976: 136).[6] Their presence coincides with an

6. «at tanken om utvandring har sitt utspring i kontakten mellom norske dissentere – haugianere og kvekere – og de tyske separatistene.»

early wave of «Amerikafeber [America fever]» among parts of the Norwegian population (Semmingsen 1976:133). Also for the young Cleng Peerson (1783–1865), organizer of the first Norwegian group emigration, contact with them seems likely, possibly laying the foundation for his idea of communal living: «His endeavour then, as it still is now, was to unite all Norwegians into a community that should have all property in common» (Ole Rynning in Blegen 1958: 34).[7] Peerson and the Sloopers left Norway in 1825 to, as Den Norske Rigstidende noted polemically, «finde et Canaans land [find a Canaan's land]» (July 25, 1825:1) and, «being poor + pennyless in a foreign country», contacted the general manager of the Harmony Society, Frederick Rapp, shortly after their arrival to ask for a loan of 1600 USD (see figure 2). The American historian Mario S. de Pillis argued, based on this contact, that Norwegian emigration started as «a communitarian venture» (de Pillis 1962), posing the question of why the Sloopers would turn to the Harmonists rather than religious communities such as the Quakers, located closer to their prospected upstate New York Kendall colony (Semmingsen 1976, 136). Semmingsen assumes that the dissenters in Bergen had remained in correspondence with «Rappitene [the Rappites]», here designated after the linen weaver and preacher George Rapp (1757–1847) who initiated the Society (see also Haanes 2021b), but the two letters that document continuing contact were not written by those Germans who actually became Harmonists.[8] Still, it seems clear that the information about the Harmony Society first arrived via the *De Zee Ploeg* in Norway, as the first of many Norwegian newspaper reports about them did not appear until 1819 (Morgenbladet, September 9, 1819:2013–2014; Anonymous, Den Norske Rigstidende, September 10, 1819:5–6; Christiansand Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger, October 6, 1819:2).

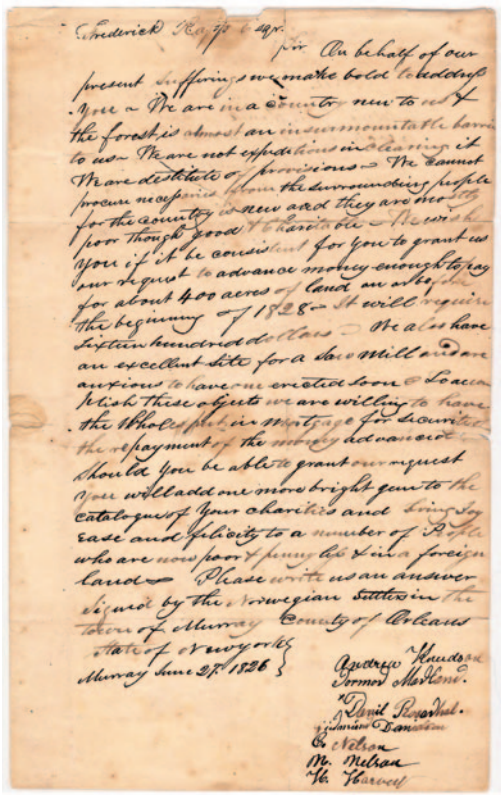

Fig. 2: Letter from the Sloopers and Cleng Peerson to Frederick Rapp, managing director of the Harmony Society, June 10, 1826. The Norwegian emigrants requested $1,600 to pay off land for the Kendall Colony and to build a sawmill. The mention of their challenges clearing the forest («almost an insurmountable barrier to us») led the Society to decide against offering support. The Society found the venture to appear insufficiently organized, indicating that the Norwegians were not among those destined to establish the earthly Jerusalem. The Sloopers later moved on to the Fox River region in Illinois. Manuscript Group 185, Business File, Box 20. Courtesy of Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Old Economy Village Archives.

The Post-Revolutionary Chronotope

In learning, by way of personal contacts, about the Harmonists' endeavor, the Norwegians were latecomers to a public European discourse on emigration in the context of social reform. In religious terms, this discourse connected to a new form of premillennialism in which America figured

7. «Hans Bestæbelse var den gang og er endnu, at forene alle Norske til et Samfund, som skulde have al Ejendom tilfølles.»
8. Fourteen of the Germans stranded in Bergen became members of the Society in 1819, for a list see Arndt (1975:692).

as the site of the Second Coming. In socialist terms, it took the form of a millenarianism in which America became the arena to prove the feasibility of alternative orders of society by recreating it from scratch. While part of the transatlantic instantiation of a «Jerusalem Code» (see Haanes 2021a), the role of the Harmony Society in this discourse was far more foundational than acknowledged in Norwegian emigration history. The Society was not simply another reiteration of the type of religious migration that had taken place throughout the 18th century. Zionite millennialist groups like the ascetically withdrawn Society of the Woman in the Wilderness and the Ephrata community, or the expanding Unity of the Brethren (Moravians), Francke Foundation-sponsored Salzburger protestants, and the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing (Shakers) had set out for refuge during the transition to the millennium or to proselytize all nations as a requirement for the Second Coming. At least initially, America was not a special place *per se* to them, but primarily a periphery. A colony of the British and French, it could not yet be perceived as the place where the economy of Zion was to be installed and Solomon's temple was to be erected as the throne of Christ. As with the later Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the Harmony Society's endeavor was grounded in a new and quite different chronotope. Specific to the early 19th century, it was based on the assumption of a temporal and ontological difference between Europe and America, emerging from the contrasting results of the American and the French Revolution. The independence of the US and the enthusiasm of French revolutionaries fighting for the millennial Kingdom of Justice (Eßbach 2014:392–401) while confronted with an accelerating restoration of Europe moving toward a Pentarchy and 'Holy Alliance,' gave renewed meaning to the contrast between 'old' Europe and the 'new' world. As prophesied in Revelation, Europe was stuck in the grip of the dragon with seven heads, manifest in the major monarchies and the papacy. Liberated America, in contrast, allowed both God and humans to act and prepare the ground for the fulfillment of salvation history.

The migration of the Harmonists – or the Sloopers (Haanes 2021b:215) – did not result from the «push» of religious persecution. In Württemberg, a «brother church» with about 2000 members had formed around George Rapp which was not so much suppressed as it had become infamous for doing «as they please» (Arndt 1980a:146; see also Ehmer 2001:329), documented in two decades of formal complaints, reports, and theological assessments (Arndt 1980a). In 1802, Rapp was compared to Thomas Müntzer, leader of the 16th-century Peasants' War, and a major investigation was started, which Rapp responded to by organizing mass gatherings.[9] After that, they did not so much flee Württemberg but left in a march, singing their travel songs about the whore that is the Lutheran church, and contrasting the Here and There of Europe (rather than just Württemberg) and America: «Here is just war and strife, there is calm without end […

9. It has been stated that the emigration of the Harmonists followed a period of suppression including a lengthy imprisonment of George Rapp (e.g., Haanes 2021b:212), but this is based on a mistranslation. The «arrests» mentioned in the sources during the time of the investigation refer to a prohibition of selling property, first to ensure a possible seizure of capital, then to secure the currency from deflation resulting from property sales before the mass emigration.

]. How happy we shall be, when led forth from Babel unto North America, where God Himself reigns over us» (Arndt 1980a:449).[10] From an early 19th-century pietist perspective, American freedom of religion could not be understood in a secular and distanced manner, as a mere freedom to engage in 'practices of faith,' but was conceived of as the remaining opportunity for God's active intervention in the world (see also Sundby's contribution to this issue of TfK). As the woman «clothed with the sun», the church in its original form prophesied in Revelation 12, the Harmonists were to build their abode in the wilderness and birth Christ (Ott 2014).

When discussing the Harmonists historically, the term «Rappites», still common in almost all accounts of religious emigration, is highly misleading, as it is emic to the historical discourse on social reform. Like similar instances of denoting dissident societies as defined by a *leader*, such as denoting the Societies of Friends as «Haugeans», «Rappite» was an early polemical term used by conservative actors to suggest that mass emigration was triggered by a *following* and that the economic success of the movement resulted from a strict and potentially oppressive leadership structure – a stark contrast to the Harmonists' self-understanding of a (gender-neutral) «brotherhood», embarking

> towards a better future; a beautiful golden time – where the redeemed human will no longer suffer; where the nations, just like families, will live together; where there is but one homeland; where there are no leaders; but just fathers: where there are no slaves, just brothers (Harmonie-Gesellschaft 1826: 265).[11]

Upon arriving in America, George Rapp acted as «agent for the united society of Germans» (Arndt 1980b:42), which then became the legal entity George Rapp & Society to negotiate with Thomas Jefferson and organize the purchase of land. The Harmony Society was founded on February 17, 1805, through the Articles of Association (see Arndt 1980b:80–91). Following the Book of Acts' idea of the church as the congregation having «all things in common» (Acts 4:32), by signing the Articles of Association, applicants gifted all their property to the Society «as if we never had nor possessed the same» (Arndt 1980b:89). In doing so, they placed their labor power at the disposal of superintendents elected by the congregation, and in return, secured access to church, school, and all necessities of life – such as food, medicine, and housing – even in old age or in the event of illness, for themselves and their families. This legal document would endure three Supreme Court rulings (Arndt 1980b:81) and become a foundational paper in the social-reformatory discourse, developing a major influence on the later idea of communism, but not yet understood to be communistic. For the Harmonists, it provided the foundation for the society of the Kingdom of Justice.

It was a new form of life in the New World, for which the Harmonists provided

10. «Hier herrscht nur Krieg und Streit, dort ist die Ruhe ohne End […]. Wie glücklich sind wir nun, wenn wir von Babel ausgeführt in Nord America, wo Gott uns selbst regiert.»
11. «einer beßern Zukunft entgegen; einer schönern guldenen Zeit – wo der gerettete Mensch nicht mehr erliegen wird; wo die Nationen, gleich eben so viel Familien bey einander wohnen werden; wo es nur Ein Vaterlande geben wird; wo es keine Herrscher geben wird, sondern nur Väter: wo keine Sklaven sind, sonder nur Brüder.»

a benchmark:

> we live from a common treasury, and sing our songs of joy. We bring ourselves, in free repose, to health and contentment. […] How happy we brothers are, that freed from the oppressor's yoke, we live for humanity's good. We are not poor, we are not rich: the great as well as the small are brothers, they are all equal, all members of the fellowship (Harmonie-Gesellschaft 1820:142).[12]

While the individual was taken out of the economic pursuit of gain, the collective action of the «religious company» (Schweizer 1823:183) was decidedly for profit. What started in 1805 with the mass production of houses and facilities to become self-sufficient turned into a «Christian communal capitalism» (see Slaughter 2020 and 2023): a venture of building and selling settlements, trademarking products, trading stocks, expanding craft shops into factories, and issuing loans to state governments. The revenue was dedicated to building the temple and establishing the New World's – Zion's – millennial economy. The Harmonists served as the custodians of the millennium. It was this context, more than earlier contacts, that made it natural for the Norwegian Sloopers and many other emigrant parties to contact their manager Frederick Rapp for a loan.

The Naturalized Chronotope

The Harmonists' departure into an American There, where «all of creation seems newer [scheint die ganze Schöpfung neuer]» (Manuscript Hymnal [Maria Vesterin], PM 4.5 AKQ (c. 1816/17):11), quickly became a prototype of both collective emigration and social reform across Europe «that can, due to its success and the stir it caused, be called truly *world-historical*» (Brauns 1833:214).[13] From the moment of their arrival, the Society's constitution and fate were followed closely in the American daily press (Arndt 1980b:15–16;33–34). In 1810, the first reports of this «frugal, industrious and thriving people» (Cobbett's Weekly Political Register, September 29, 1810:483) made their way back to Europe. The Harmonists' settlements became popular destinations for diplomats, educators, economists, and political scientists – thus entering the genre of the travelogue. The first detailed «account of the association of Harmonie» can be found in the 1810 work of the Irishman Fortescue Cuming, where it was described how «this little republick» of equals had, in terms of Revelation, «made the 'wilderness to blossom as the rose'» (Cuming 1810:497). Particularly influential internationally were the *Travels in the United States of America* (1812) by the Scottish cartographer John Melish, which were published in multiple editions and translations. Detailing their organization and prosperity in contrast to other settlements, Melish transformed the travel report into a foundational medium of the social reform discourse. In the following decades, dozens of accounts documented in great detail the communal social structure of the Harmonist settlements: they often listed, across several pages, the harvest yields of previous years,

12. «aus einer Casse leben wir, und singen Freuden=Lieder. Wir bringen uns in freyer Ruh, Gesundheit und Vergnügen zu. […] Wie glücklich sind wir Brüder doch, daß wir befreyt vom Treiber=Joch, zum Wohl der Menschheit leben. Wir sind nicht arm und sind nicht reich: der Große wie der Kleine, sind Brüder, sie sind alle gleich, sind Glieder der Gemeine.»
13. «die man wegen ihres Erfolges und erregten Aufsehens wahrhaft *welthistorisch* nennen darf.»

the production and income of workshops, technological innovations and the use of machinery, working hours, and sought to capture the mood and spirit of the inhabitants. European newspapers frequently reprinted these reports for public debates, and the monitoring of social-reformist groups, their everyday lives and economic organization, became increasingly constitutive of the popular image of America.

Melish's report on the Harmony Society also drew the attention of Welsh industrialist and social reformer Robert Owen (1771–1858) to America, who had been experimenting with cooperative trade and free education at his New Lanark textile mill. When the Harmony Society offered their Indiana settlement for sale in 1824, Owen purchased it as a «Village of Unity and Mutual Cooperation» (Lewis 2016: 172). Teaming up with geologist William Maclure (1763–1840), he transported a 'boatload of knowledge' – scientists from the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences and Pestalozzian educators from Europe – up the Ohio River to the remote settlement. As with the Harmonists, the aim was to create «an entire new state of society», only this time it would be based on «useful knowledge» not obtained from scripture but from a thorough reading of the Book of Nature (New-Harmony Gazette, October 1, 1825:1; see Pitzer 2012:41–77). Even though it was a decidedly secular endeavor – a term Owen himself first used in the modern sense in his *Declaration of Mental Independence* (New-Harmony Gazette, July 12, 1826:329), later promulgated by his supporters in the British National Secular Society –, Owen proclaimed *New* Harmony the site and the society from which the millennium would emerge (Rinsma 2019:199). All the tools necessary «to identify and publish data about objects of natural history» were brought to the «tiny, isolated island of civilization – the equivalent of a futurist lunar base – » at the American frontier (Rinsma 2019:12). The «natural system» was supposed to reveal the blueprint for a reformed society. Settlers were drawn by a range of free educational institutions, and entered inspired debates on how to implement an economic system that would make nature's abundant wealth accessible to all. And while the former Harmonist church was transformed into a lecture hall, the chronotope articulating an ontological difference between the European Here and the American There was sustained. The millennium could only be realized in America. This time, the claim was grounded in a psychological argument.

Owen's and Maclure's approach to the millennial *New Moral World* was grounded in associationism – a theory of mind developed from British empiricism, assuming that all higher cognitive functions arise from the association of ideas. As a blank slate, the human mind would be shaped and inscribed by the conditions of society from the moment of birth. Arbitrary associations, not grounded in reality, would be conveyed through societal «prejudice.» In the Old World, this prejudice had become institutionalized as «superstition»: religion, the nations, the monarchy, hierarchy, ideas of race (New-Harmony Gazette, October 29, 1825:35) were not based on the evidence of the senses, but promulgated through unreflected associations that led to a distorted perception of what is natural. Because the child's mind was a blank slate, a new state of society could only be brought into being in a country and a «preliminary» society that was itself a blank slate. The goal of the provisional New Harmony Society was to establish a temporary space where natural history superseded human history, bridging

the gap between religious New World millennialism and the «millennium of pure reason» (see Baumgartner 1999: 119–149). Far from the reach of European monarchies, factories, and institutional churches, in an isolated community of goods, a new generation could be brought up without prejudice, taught with no «word of speculation» uttered, solely through what presented itself «by the direct exercise of the senses» (Maclure 1968:242,234). This future American generation was supposed to become the first generation to experience the world anew, as it truly was.

With the striking contrast between the Harmony Society and the New Harmony Society, both agreeing on the fundamental aspects of societal organization, but differing in their relation to God and thus, seemingly, changing a key factor in the order of society, American intentional communities first revealed their characters as social «experiments» in a scientific sense. Comparison of their programs and their progress became the basis for addressing fundamental questions of modern statehood through seemingly empirical means: Is religious faith the foundation of a functioning social order? What kind of educational system fosters prosperity? Which forms of freedom and security guarantee productivity? The «case» of New Harmony provided an empirical foundation to the European discourse on social reform in which it started to make sense to differentiate between political, economic, educational, and religious *factors*, to alter them one at a time, and to pose the question of which elements were necessary to create sustainable societies. An increasing number of similar 'case studies' began to capture the European imagination, ranging from Pietist Zoarites (Fernandez 2019) to the socialist phalanstères of the Fourierists (Guarneri 1991). Though often remote and geographically isolated, each of these communal experiments and *special-purpose* migrations unfolded under the watchful eye of the European public. «Whatever version of the utopian dream Europeans embraced», the vision of a new age

> in an Eden-like setting, the notion of America as a blank slate upon which the social contract could be drawn anew […], or the belief that a spacious refuge for religious dissenters might become the millennial Ground—these ideas were imposed on the New World landscape (Guarneri 1994:73).

«Amerika er Experimenternes Land [America is the land of experiments]» (Den Norske Rigstidende, November 29, 1847:2). By the 1840s, when groups such as the millennial Swedish Bishop Hill Colony ('Jansonites', Wejrud 2002), or the communist Icarians (Johnson 2022) with Étienne Cabet (1788–1856) set out for the United States, newspapers in Europe and beyond directly announced the beginning of a new attempt «of convincing antiquated Europe of the excellence of their doctrines» (St. Croix Avis, January 22, 1849:4). The rapid rise of the Latter-Day Saints, from which Cabet purchased the town of Nauvoo, further cemented the foundational Here and There dichotomy of an «American Zion» (Park 2024), drawing individual emigrants who envisioned a renewed communal life. The chronotope of a placebound future that allowed the European *here and now* to be criticized through an already enacted *there and then* gave the question of social reform additional urgency, with the radical consequence being promoted by a new movement: early communism.

The Dissolution of the Chronotope: Pre-Revolutionary Emigration Critique

In October 1844, the young Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) informed his friend Karl Marx (1818–1883) in Paris that he intended to write a report on the successful implementation of communism:

> The Germans are still very unclear about the practical feasibility of communism; to put an end to this nonsense, I'll write a short pamphlet showing that the thing has already been carried out, and I'll provide a popular account of the practice of communism as it exists in England and America. (Engels [1844] 1963:8)[14]

Engels' evidence for the feasibility of communism was the communal emigrant settlements and, in particular, the Harmony Society. His « Beschreibung der in neuerer Zeit entstandenen und noch bestehenden kommunistischen Ansiedlungen [Description of the Communist Settlements Recently Founded and Still Existing]» was first published anonymously in December 1844 and aimed to demonstrate both a «general need for a new order of human society» and that communist principles had already become social reality in the settlements being founded «at every moment» in North America (Anonymous [Engels] 1845:335–336). Engels did not, however, offer detailed accounts of the communities he mentioned. While he drew a sharp distinction between the «crude and irrational views» of certain groups whom he considered unrelated to genuine communism (Anonymous [Engels] 1845:327), his criterion of communal property enabled him to incorporate the Shakers, Quakers, and the thriving settlements of the Harmony Society into his story of communist success. For this purpose, he downplayed their religious foundations: «Most of the newer settlements are also completely free of religious nonsense, and the English socialists, although very tolerant, are almost all without religion» (Anonymous [Engels] 1845:327).[15]

It is unlikely that Engels's judgment stemmed from ignorance. He came from a Pietist background himself and, at the age of eighteen, had already authored a scathing critique of the Elberfeld revival movement and Rhenish Pietism (Engels [1839] 1981:413–432). Although he did not know the emigrant communities firsthand, he, like many of his contemporaries, could draw detailed information from the stream of reports provided by newspapers such as the Morgenblatt für Gebildete Stände, the London Morning Chronicle, Robert Owen's New Moral World, and the Northern Star (Leopold 2010: 32;35–36), as well as from an ever-increasing number of travel accounts. In a moment of what Leopold (2012:348) calls «communitarian enthusiasm», the pious settlements became representative of «communism», a term still so open and fluid that it could be made to serve a variety of agendas. Only a few years later, however, these «experiments» in communal property would be subsumed under the demarcation label «utopian socialism» (Marx/Engels [1848] 1999). The sudden shift was, in large part, caused by the debates on emigration taking place among European early communists in the mid-1840s.

14. «Die Germanen sind alle noch sehr im unklaren wegen der praktischen Ausführbarkeit des Kommunismus; um diese Lumperei zu beseitigen, werd' ich eine kleine Broschüre schreiben, das die Sache schon ausgeführt ist, und die England und Amerika bestehende Praxis des Kommunismus populär schildern.»
15. «Von den neueren Ansiedelungen sind auch fast alle ganz frei von religiösen Flausen und die englischen Socialisten, obwohl sie sehr tolerant sind, haben fast Alle gar keine Religion.»

Emigration and European Communism

Even within Europe, the modeling of societal alternatives was closely bound up with the experience of (internal) migration and exile. As early as the revolutionary upheavals at the end of the 18th century, political refugees had become a global «mass phenomenon» (Jansen 2018: 495; Pestel 2017) and formed the conditions for the emergence of the communist movement. From the 1830s onward, European internal migration reached its peak. The July Revolution in Paris triggered a wave of 'restorative' backlash, prompting many radicals to seek refuge. Paris, Zurich, Geneva, Brussels, and London were regarded as liberal and became centers of asylum for dissidents, reformers, and the so-called early socialists, among them figures such as Étienne Cabet and Wilhelm Weitling (1808–1871) before they left for America, Marx, Engels, and many others (Diaz 2021; Lattek 2002). Models of the ideal society were conceived in exile. Yet, their practical enactment overseas soon sparked controversy, as not everyone welcomed transatlantic emigration and the idea that North America was the site of the future.

Parallel to Engels's enthusiastic portrayal of the North American settlements as proof for the feasibility of communism, one of the leading figures of the early socialist movement in Parisian exile, August Hermann Ewerbeck (1816–1860), published a comprehensive critique of society and social conditions (Ewerbeck 1844:2–4). His starting point was an emigrant community as imagined and popularized by the Swiss brushmaker Andreas Dietsch (1807–1845) who had outlined his *Vision of the Millennial Kingdom* (1842), followed by *The Founding of New Helvetia* (1843), a practical guide for prospective emigrants that would locate this place of happiness in North America. Ewerbeck's piece already reads like a modern analysis of an imbalance in migration dynamics: Emigration, he argued, was driven by economic hardship. The hope for a better life, the «pull» factor in present terminology, however, was only present in the stories told by fraudulent recruiters and smugglers, American speculators, and adventurers who shamelessly exploited the hopes of the destitute. Tolerating the emigration business meant causing misery while weakening the European economies through the outflow of skilled labor. Ewerbeck's central concern, however, was that mass emigration would undermine the socialist movement: «For Europe, people of energy and talent are urgently needed on the new battlefield.» (Ewerbeck 1844:3)[16]

Three years later, Ewerbeck had changed his mind. In the preface to his German translation of the utopian novel *Voyage en Icarie* (1840/42) by French communist Étienne Cabet, he praised Cabet's «höchst großartigen Auswanderungsplan nach Amerika [magnificent emigration plan to America]» (Ewerbeck 1847:XX). By now, however, he stood rather alone – at odds with most French and German exile communists, as well as with the English social reformers. Despite strong warnings from Icarian exiles in London (Bensimon 2021:276; Höppner and Seidel-Höppner 2002:187–188), Cabet had issued a call for emigration in his newspaper Le Populaire de 1841, referencing his novel: «Allons en Icarie! [Off to Icaria!]» (Le Populaire, May 9, 1847:4), an appeal that attracted media attention all over Europe. Further appeals to workers (Le Populaire, May 16, 1847:4) and to women (Le Populaire, May 23, 1847:4)

16. «Für Europa sind überdies Leute von Energie und Talent auf dem neuen Kampfplatze hochnöthig.»

followed. While conservative commentators met Cabet's ambition to get one million communists to «one of the remotest regions, to which the civilization and corruption of our time have not yet penetrated»[17] with the question of how many communists he believed possibly exist (e.g. Trondhjems Stiftstidende, June 28, 1847:3; see Leipziger Zeitung, May 27, 1847:2495) and otherwise wished him, polemically, «Glückliche Reise! [Happy travels!]» (e.g., Der Humorist, May 31, 1847:314), the response of communist actors was by now largely negative (Johnson 1974:243–250; Höppner and Seidel-Höppner 2002:186–197; 652–662). In two lengthy rebuttals, one of the leading French communist newspapers harshly condemned the emigration appeal (La Fraternité de 1845, no. 29, May 1847:242–244; no. 30, June 1847:249–250). The plan, they argued, was unfeasible, indeed, impracticable with Cabet's diverse following and the difficult climatic conditions at the proposed destination. Even more serious, however, was the assessment that emigration amounted to a form of individual pursuit of happiness. Communism was a task for *all* of humanity and could only be realized collectively. Emigration, they concluded, was immoral. Similar arguments had already been voiced by German exile communists in London, who had repeatedly returned to the emigration question in the context of their foundational debates on the principles of communism (see Diskussionen [1845–1846] 1970:214–237). While a few supporters still saw America in the light of the Owenite chronotope as the only «firm ground [fester Boden]» on which «humanity could mature for this noble purpose [communism]»[18], dissenting voices predominated: «Are we to emigrate to America and enjoy our lives in the cozy seclusion of a communist colony? No! We are working for posterity.»[19] (Diskussionen [1845–1846] 1970:215,220) Communism meant to serve a higher purpose, and that purpose increasingly came to be seen as irreconcilable with emigration and the post-revolutionary chronotope.

Leading members of the Fraternal Democrats, the first international workers' movement and central hub within the European exile network (Bensimon 2021:277), joined French and German communists in rejecting Cabet's plans. In his keynote address at the second anniversary celebration on September 20, 1847, one of the speakers, Ernest Charles Jones, emphatically warned against the «two dangers» to the communist movement: emigration and fragmentation. Emigrants, who are «the strongest, the most enterprising», are most urgently needed in Europe: «*Here*, every day, they grow more strong: *there* they stand alone.» Here, was the appeal, «you must found your colonies» (Northern Star, September 25, 1847:8).

By the mid-1840s, the radicals' argument and language began, in this way, to approximate a long-established conservative anti-emigration discourse. From the theological side, it had been argued that emigration violates the call to bear suffering within one's ordained social station. From the perspective of nation-building endeavors, emigrants simply withdrew their productive force. The influential German political theorist Friedrich List, who had visited the Harmony Society in their settlement

17. «et af de yderste Landstrøg, hvorhen vor Tids Civilisation og Fordærvethet endnu ikke er trængt.»
18. «die Menschheit noch eher zu diesem edlen Zweck reifen kann.»
19. «Sollen wir auswandern nach Amerika und in der gemütlichen Zurückgezogenheit einer kommunistischen Kolonie uns unseres Lebens freuen? Nein! Wir arbeiten für die Nachwelt.»

Oekonomie to study their socio-economic organization and discussed it in a series of writings, argued in *The National System of Political Economy* (1841) that from «a national point of view», a limited and highly targeted emigration would be of value in the creation of transnational trade networks, but questioned what «good is it if the emigrants to North America become ever so prosperous» (List [1841] 1904:345). Efforts to gain prosperity needed to be directed towards the nation. Polemics about the emigrant abandoning his fatherland were omnipresent in the anti-emigration propaganda (e.g., Strandhagen 2024). The communists and radicals now began to echo this voice, albeit identifying another purpose with staying here: while the future society needed to be built from scratch, the old needed to be torn down.

The Collapse of the Chronotope

Here and There, along with the ontological and temporal distinctiveness of the There, began to collapse. In the 1845 Fliegende Blätter caricature «The German Emigrant», a typical here-there representation is altered to depict two contrasting scenes titled «Dream and Reality» (see fig. 3). The upper image, «The Lottery Player», contrasts imagined winnings and a resulting inversion of social roles with the actual losses of gambling and the given social reality. In the «Dream», the debtor can dismiss his now subservient creditor with disdain («Here is your money – now out the door with you»), because «It is the rich man's right to be uncivil.» In «Reality», the economic and social hopes are undercut. Creditors in capitalist attire do not care for the «hopeless torments» of the poor. The lower illustration, «The German Emigrant», similarly contrasts the dream of America with a bitter reality. The dream is a fantasy of colonial authority and wealth: «Yes, yes, that's it, it surely must be so, / That's how I picture life across the

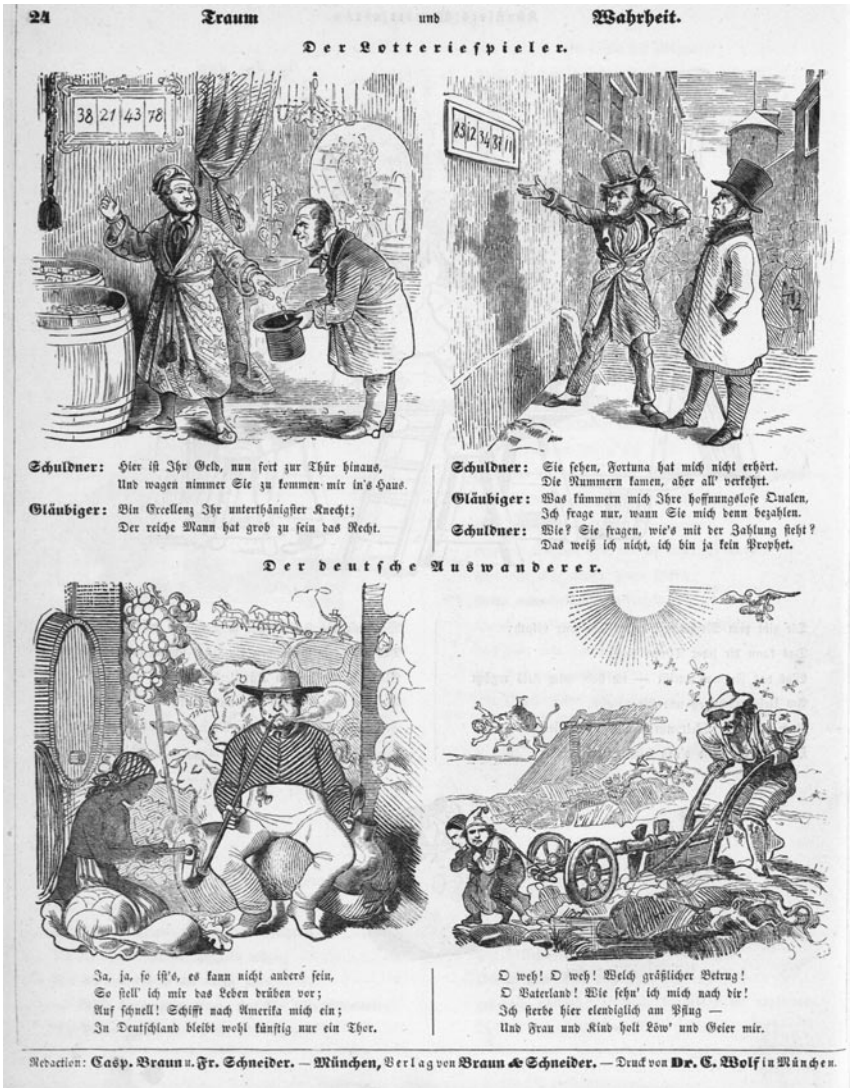

Fig. 3: Traum und Wahrheit. Caricature in Fliegende Blätter vol. 1, no. 3, 1845. Here and There are just the same. Just as the lottery player imagines himself able to pay off his creditors and expel them from his house, the German emigrant may dream of a life of prosperity and (colonial) authority. Both, however, are overtaken by reality, in which no one cares about their «hopeless torments.» Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, Fliegende Blätter – 1.1844/45, Nr. 3, p. 24, doi.org/10.11588/diglit.2111#0028.

sea; / Now quick! Put me on a ship to go; / In Germany, fools are all that's left to be.» The reality, however, is a nightmare. Swarmed by mosquitoes, the emigrant suffers under a blazing sun with his plough drawn by his children: «Oh woe! Oh woe! What dreadful, ghastly fraud! / Oh Fatherland! How I long to be with thee! / I die here wretchedly behind the plough – / While lion and vulture take my wife and baby.» «The German Emigrant» is no anti-emigration propaganda, just as «The Lottery Player» is no critique of working-class gambling habits. The message is a social commentary: there is no escape from poverty in the capitalist system. In later renditions of the popular motif, however, the upper half of the picture would be left out, disconnecting the emigrant discourse from this element of social critique. Still, the «lottery player» already erodes the post-revolutionary chronotope of the Here and There, which had made the emigrant a leading agent of social change. There is no place-bound future, no distinctive quality to an independent America.

By 1847, the mood within the communist movement had ultimately turned, with new lines of argument emerging constantly. Emigration contradicts the true nature of communism: a community of goods, such as the Harmony Society, could not be established by a small group without taking on «a wholly exclusive, sectarian character [einen völlig ausschließenden, einen sektenartigen Charakter].» Also new was the warning that the United States was a nation like any other: «Let anyone who wishes to go to America with Cabet first read a report on the persecutions that the Mormons–a religious-communist sect–have been and still are subjected to there»[20] (Anonymous [Schapper] 1847:6–7). The «Auswanderungstaumel [emigration frenzy]» needed to stop because people who strive for «eine bessere, eine neue Welt [a better, a new world]», are gravely mistaken if they project this hope onto America. With the republic – or happiness – not simply to be found there, it must be fought for here (Anonymous 1847:14). For the communist movement, transatlantic emigration increasingly collided with their establishment as a *European* force. If it turned out that communist society could be realized only There, communism would cease to be a universal model of social organization or a task for all humanity. What was at stake was no longer the practical feasibility of the model, for which Engels had declared the pietists to be communists, but its universal validity.

Until 1846, Engels had still defended the settlement societies against «trivial nonsense» that had been «voiced against the colonies»[21] by emigration critics (Engels [1846] 1963:63). By 1847, matters had changed. The successful American Revolution and the failed French Revolution no longer defined the temporal frame: it was the *upcoming* revolution that would define the future. Rather than fleeing from prevailing conditions, the imperative was to change them – if necessary, by force. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, hastily completed and published amid the upheavals of the February Revolution in 1848, alternative socialist and communist doctrines were ultimately designated as «utopian socialism.» Conceptually, this utopian socialism may have encompassed more than just communitarian modes of life (see Leopold

20. «Möge Jeder, welcher mit Cabet nach Amerika gehen will, zuerst einen Bericht über die Verfolgungen lesen, denen die Mormonen, eine religiös=kommunistische Sekte, dort ausgesetzt waren und noch sind.»
21. «schwatzt er [Hermann Kriege, a socialist who had emigrated to the US] einiges triviale Zeug gegen die Kolonien.»

2012:349; Leopold 2005). In the *Manifesto*, however, it was defined and exclusively exemplified by the «fehlschlagende Experimente [failing experiments]» of the emigrants, who «are still dreaming of the experimental realization of their social utopias», the «founding of individual phalansteries» (Charles Fourier), the «establishment of home colonies» (Robert Owen), or the «erection of a little Icaria» (Étienne Cabet) – «pocket-edition of the New Jerusalem» (Marx/Engels [1848] 1999: 53,54).[22] It was all a dream. The *Manifesto* reduced the emigrants to dreamers who had fled abroad *before* the revolution and whose property, accordingly, would be confiscated in the new societal order, as they had failed to act (Marx/Engels [1848] 1999:42). Utopianism and emigration became conceptually linked, and this association entered directly into the theoretical foundations of communism and the wider discourse on social reform.

Conclusion

The motif of *Here* and *There*, translated into «reality» and «dream», now turned against the emigrant. *Per Svensson's Colony in America* (1869) (see figure 4) depicts another confrontation of an emigrant's dream with reality, stripped of all social critique. A colonial fantasy («As he imagined it») turns out to be a nightmare («As it really was») of physical labor and cannibalistic rituals. At a time when Swedish mass emigration to North America was approaching its peak, this illustration in the Swedish quarterly Läsning för folket accompanied a cautionary tale. The gullible Per falls for dubious promises, leading him to abandon his homeland to seek a better life in America. Having ended up in miserable living conditions, he devotes himself to warning others not to make the same mistake (Barton 1994:71–72). Emigration is no remedy.

Svensson's imagined world, the There of the Harmonists, Owenites, and Icarians, draws on motifs from the fictional Land of Cockaigne such as the hammock and an overflowing fishing net. Fooled by an emigration agent, he has fallen victim to his poor judgment. His false ideas are mocked and ridiculed. An alternative is no longer present. The actual conditions in the Here are left unaddressed, as is any reference to social alternatives. The There is no longer associated with any higher ambition, no vision of a good society or ideal life. Instead, the image suggests that Svensson would have been satisfied with just a little more, reducing emigrant hopes and dreams to idleness and the satisfaction of basic needs. Where the lottery player still offered a binary visual structure of labor versus capital, Per Svensson's suffering is no longer part of a larger social diagnosis. Instead, it appears self-inflicted. Systemic injustice is rendered as personal failure. The image presents a visual critique of utopianism in the service of the national political goal of deterring emigration. *Reality* is set in opposition to *false imagination*. But Svensson shows remorse: he repents for having had hopes.

In the context of the early 19th-century emigration discourse, the term utopia, once denoting an ideal state design and later deployed as a «political fighting word» against socialist doctrines (Hölscher 1997:767), became an internal marker of differentiation used to distinguish between correct and false understandings of social reform and nascent communism. Instead of a blueprint for the good place to be actively

22. «träumen noch immer die versuchsweise Verwirklichung ihrer gesellschaftlichen Utopien, Stiftung einzelner Phalanstere, Gründung von home-Kolonien, Errichtung eines kleinen Ikariens – Duodez-Ausgabe des neuen Jerusalems –.»

Fig. 4: Per Svenssons nybygge i Amerika. Caricature in Läsning for folket 35, 1869. In removing the Here, the social criticism is removed. Rather than affording an alternative, the There remains an illusion. Wikimedia commons, public domain.

realized from scratch, *utopia* now signaled expressions of (false) imaginations. The critique of utopian ideals turned into the critique of the utopians. In the *Manifesto*, the emigrants were dreamers who had evaded their moral and political obligation to fight for the good at home. The critique of ideas became a critique of actions or of the lack thereof, feeding into the wider emigration discourse. The 1848 revolutions redirected reform energies from overseas settlement schemes to the struggle for change in Europe. In the context of nation building, raising mass emigration appeared as a drain on economic productivity and a weakening of political capacity at home. In the collapse of the chronotope, radical, national, and conservative critiques of emigration led to the same conclusion: The emigrants followed a chimera to escape from reality, betraying the good cause – whether that be the responsibility to one's own community, fatherland, nation, or class.

This anti-utopian impulse, embedded in the disenchanted *Here* and *There* dichotomy, remains inscribed in the genealogy of contemporary debates on migration. Since the mid-19th century, national economic theory (e.g., List 1841) and international demographic statistics (e.g., Adolphe Quételet, see Rygiel 2024) provided the structural and statistical logic by which migration would be *explained* by unfavorable conditions in one place and attractive opportunities in another. Poverty, persecution, and the individual's passive hope for a better life remain core interpretative patterns of (historical) migration research as much as of popular political debates on migration (Garelli & Tazzioli 2021). What once belonged to a specific and contested historical discourse was, by the close of the «utopian century» (Kumar 1987:33), rearticulated as the «laws of migration» (see Ravenstein 1885): unfavorable conditions in the place of origin and attractive oppor-

tunities elsewhere trigger movement. The law-like principle was subsequently codified through the identification of statistically normalized «reasons» for migration (Lee 1966) and eventually embedded in the functionalist language of «push» and «pull» factors.[23] The migrant had turned from an activist into a sport of faith.

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23. Since then, the model has been thoroughly criticized and formally abandoned for its analytical limitations and oversimplifications (de Haas 2021). Still, thinking on migration long remained «mired in nineteenth-century concepts» (Massey et al. 1993:432) and single cause style explanation (see Arango 2000:293) – despite the fact that both the 'grandfather' and the 'father' of the push/pull model were themselves skeptical of causal determinism (Ravenstein 1885:198; Lee 1966: 50–51). It has been argued that the 'spirit' of the model (general reasons, causes, the idea of factor-drivenness and functionality) still prevails (de Haas 2023:63), inscribed in the functionalist framework of migration studies.

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