When looking at German-speaking émigré historians who fled from Nazi rule, we can broadly distinguish between two generations: the first generation, who had trained as historians in their German-speaking countries, and the second generation, who escaped as children or teenagers and then studied in the countries of reception. While the story of the first generation, especially in the USA but to a smaller extent also elsewhere, is well-researched,¹ the second generation is not.² This is all the more remarkable because many of these émigrés not only played a prominent role among historians in their new home countries, but also considerably influenced the West German Zunft of historians in the post-war period. The volume under review here fills this research gap admirably. Based on a conference held at the GHI Washington in 2012 coinciding with the Institute’s twenty-fifth anniversary, the volume consists of more than twenty essays grouped into five thematic parts. In his highly instructive introduction Andreas W. Daum lays the ground and deals with

² So far, the existing literature consists of a number of articles and fascinating autobiographies by several members of this generation, such as Peter Gay, My German Question: Growing up in Nazi Berlin (New Haven, 1998); George L. Mosse, Confronting History: A Memoir (Madison, 2000); and Fritz R. Stern, Five Germanys I Have Known (New York, 2006).
the second generation collectively, describing their origins, migrations, research interests, and identities, and contextualizes these findings. There are 107 second-generation émigré historians in North America, slightly more than the 98 of the first generation. Daum stresses that despite the diversity of backgrounds to be found among them and the fact that they are far more ‘Americanized’ than the first generation, a certain ‘distinctiveness’ (p. 30) has remained.

The first part of the volume offers autobiographical testimonies by second-generation émigrés, namely Klemens von Klemperer, Walter Laqueur, Peter Paret, Fritz Stern, Georg G. Iggers, Gerhard L. Weinberg, Hanna Holborn Gray, Peter Loewenberg, and Renate Bridenthal. In their insightful contributions, a number of common characteristics emerge: several contributors stress the importance of first-generation émigré scholars—historians but also others—along with American historians for their intellectual formation. All address the question of identity and express varying degrees of connectedness with their former German or Austrian homes, while at the same time stressing their firm grounding in the USA. The memoirs also chronicle the hardships that some of the émigrés and their families experienced during their flight from Nazism. Thus they serve as a counterbalance to a historiography of intellectual emigration which often focuses on success stories. All autobiographers did eventually succeed, but emotional and psychological costs should not be forgotten. A noteworthy feature is the strong political impetus which Iggers and Bridenthal show, for instance, and which made them active members in American political and social movements from the 1950s on.

The contributions by Catherine Epstein and Volker R. Berghahn in the second part offer conceptual insights into the second generation. Epstein describes the group as a whole, underlining some of the issues mentioned in the autobiographies in the previous section. She ends her essay with a discussion of the role the Holocaust played as a research topic. She argues—somewhat differently to Herf and Aschheim—that ‘while these émigré historians’ works were key for the analysis of the German cultural antecedents to the Holocaust, it is striking that none of them researched the details of the Holocaust per se’ (p. 149). Instead, they made their biggest contributions to the Sonderweg thesis. Berghahn deals with the second generation in a broader conceptual and analytical way and thus offers an over-arch-
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ing contribution, complementing other contributions in the volume which are more focused on individual scholars. Especially fruitful is his discussion of the theoretical concept of generation and his observations on the question of return.

The writing of history by émigré historians is the topic of the contributions by Steven E. Aschheim, Jeffrey Herf, Helmut Walser Smith, Doris L. Bergen, and Marjorie Lamberti in the third section of the volume. In his essay, Aschheim picks up the argument of his *Beyond the Border*, and compares and contrasts social historians in West Germany with émigré historians in the USA and their ‘reinvention’ (p. 186) of German cultural and intellectual history. His main point is that both historiographical projects ‘represent significantly different, emotionally fraught confrontations with a traumatizing past’ (p. 179). Whereas the social historians, perhaps out of ‘unconscious, filial loyalty’ (p. 182) to their academic fathers, were more preoccupied with structures than with people and their minds, the opposite holds true for the émigré historians. In the same vein, Herf stresses the contributions by the second generation to research on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, and their achievement in bringing these topics from the periphery to the centre of historiography. Bergen also deals with the contribution made by Raul Hilberg, Gerhard Weinberg, and Henry Friedlander to research on the Holocaust. She chronicles their achievement, especially when it comes to bringing the topic to the forefront of research, widening the scope of sources, establishing a certain writing style, and opening up the field.

The contributions by Smith and Lamberti treat the achievements of two individual historians. Smith deals with Peter Gay’s oeuvre and argues that the basis for much of his work was laid in the 1950s, ‘in a context at once American and émigré European’ (p. 211). He chronicles Gay’s work first on the Enlightenment and then on Weimar cultures and argues that his research on Germany can be seen in the context of his reconnection with Germany in the 1960s. Lamberti’s contribution deals with Gerda Lerner, who was even more of an outsider in American academia as she was not only a Jewish refugee, but also a woman. Lerner contributed significantly to the rise of women’s history in the USA, was politically active on the left, a member of the

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peace movement, and served as president of the Organization of American Historians in 1981. Lamberti addresses the relationship between the refugee experience and the work as a historian, which is an open or underlying topic in many of the contributions in this volume. Here she makes the important point that Lerner, who had become thoroughly Americanized, even losing her fluency in German, began in her autobiographical statements from the 1990s on to stress the close link between her experience as an ‘outsider’ and the situation of the women she researched, who were defined as ‘the Other’ (p. 250). This observation underlines the fact that the relationship between biography and work is indeed complicated and that the narratives which the émigré historians construct concerning these questions often change over time.

The fourth part offers comparative and transnational perspectives, dealing with the other two main countries of reception, that is, the UK and Israel, and the impact of the second generation on West German historiography. Shulamit Volkov points out that the situation in Israel differed markedly from that in the UK and the USA because until her generation started their academic careers, ‘every faculty member in Israel was an émigré’ (p. 262). The special situation of Israel as a young state accounts for the fact that, in all cases, a long time elapsed between the immigration of the second generation and the start of their academic careers. Peter Alter’s description of the setting in the UK shows that the situation there was easier than in Israel but more difficult than in the USA. He points out that, unlike the first generation, the second generation left a visible mark on British historiography with many also acting, like their counterparts in the USA, as bridge-builders between their new home and Germany.

The contribution by Philipp Stelzel deals with the émigrés’ impact on German historiography, an essential question since most of them at some point interacted with West German colleagues and wrote on German history. Stelzel argues that ‘the second-generation émigré historians supported the interpretive and methodological diversification of the German historical profession, the former most notably during the Fischer-Kontroverse’ (p. 288). But it is interesting to note the ‘non-reception’ (p. 297) of their studies in intellectual and cultural history, even though their idea of an ideological German Sonderweg would have tied in well with the social and political concept of a
Sonderweg advanced by German historians in the 1970s. Contrary to the explanation put forward by Aschheim in this volume, Stelzel argues that this non-reception by West German social historians might not be the result of ‘ulterior motives’ (p. 298), but rather of the fact that ‘historians of Wehler’s generation associated intellectual history—or rather Geistesgeschichte and Ideengeschichte—with an older German historiographical tradition . . . which they considered either potentially apologetic or simply not very fruitful heuristically’ (pp. 297–8). In their personal commentaries at the end of this section, Gerhard A. Ritter and Jürgen Kocka stress the importance of the émigré historians for their individual development as historians and the modernization and diversification of West German historiography as a whole.

The last part of the book provides a biobibliographic guide to the second generation. In the introductory chapter to his part, Daum offers a detailed discussion of the methodology which is of value not only to the present volume but also for other researchers pursuing similar projects. The subsequent biographies by Daum and Sherry L. Föhr provide for the first time a detailed overview (more than 110 pages long) of the second generation in North America, offering information on biographical and family data, professional careers and activities, archival holdings, Festschriften, and autobiographical writings. The biographies are well researched, highly informative, and reveal the diversity of the émigré historians’ experiences. They are a valuable resource and a starting point for further research, especially on those émigrés who are less well known. The biographies are followed by a selected bibliography on the topic.

Several questions recur throughout volume: the first concerns the relationship between the émigrés’ biographies and their research interests. In the introduction, Daum cautions against establishing ‘a direct causal connection between the experience of emigration and the research émigrés undertook years later’ (p. 4), but a number of essays establish just such a connection. Personal experience might not have been the primary motive for the choice of a particular research topic, but perhaps became apparent as a motive only in hindsight, as Lamberti demonstrates in Lerner’s case. In addition, such a connection does not necessarily ‘invalidate’ such research, as Georg G. Iggers points out (p. 91). A second debated question is the role which the Holocaust and/or the Sonderweg played in the re-
search carried out by second-generation scholars, and whether they were, indeed, more preoccupied with 1933 or 1941–2. Since the contributions in the volume deal mainly with Stern, Mosse, Gay, Laqueur, Hilberg, and Friedlander, a comparison with the work done by fellow émigré historians might help to contextualize this question and provide a broader basis for an answer.

The volume also raises a number of questions which merit further research. One concerns the specific situation of women, who faced additional obstacles when compared with men. It is interesting that 19 per cent of the second generation in the USA are female, whereas in the corresponding group in Israel and the UK, women are more or less absent. What conditions led to this greater success of women in the USA? How closely related was their academic success to the introduction of women’s studies, where several, such as Lerner and Bridenthal, left their mark? It would also be worth shedding further light on those refugees who were not racially persecuted and their specific experience. Likewise, the implications of political involvement, and in a number of cases, teaching at black colleges would also be worth exploring. So far, the involvement of émigrés on the left has been stressed, but that of those who were politically conservative would also merit further research. Finally, when looking at their influence on German historiography, it would be interesting to explore their impact in the GDR, to see whether it was indeed as marginal as present research suggests.

Like the volume on the first generation published twenty-five years ago by Lehmann and Sheehan, this book sheds new light on a hitherto little-researched subject and will remain a standard work for years to come. It provides an admirable overview of the very heterogeneous second generation in the USA, and will certainly stimulate further research in the field.

4 For teaching at black colleges see Gabrielle Simon Edgcomb, *From Swastika to Jim Crow: Refugee Scholars at Black Colleges* (Malabar, Fla., 1993).
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