Conceptualizing America in Early Modern Central Europe

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"Ei, Mammi, ist dieses nich das gelobte Land?"¹

The expansion of Europe in the period 1500 to 1800 opened the door to two major streams of migration, which together brought about the foundation and consolidation of an Atlantic World. The first was the forced resettlement of approximately eleven million Africans, the second, the altogether smaller movement of between two and three million Europeans.² While the validity of the term “European America” is questionable and certainly not ideal, it is nonetheless useful when counterbalanced with the equally crude “Aboriginal” or “Indigenous America.”³ By the eighteenth century, Europe and the Americas were linked economically, socially, and culturally, with America acquiring a reputation as the land of opportunity, advancement, and adventure. Just as the construct “Europe” — the image of a set of societies seen to share cultural and social constructs — resulted in the “Europeanization of Europe” in the preceding centuries,⁴ the “Americanization of America” had taken place in European lore and literature by the mid-eighteenth century.⁵

America was, as John Locke noted, “in the beginning”, new in both relation and relationship.⁶ For David Hume,⁷ were it not for the seemingly endless supply of resources from America, Europe would soon be financially reduced to the level of China. Edmund Burke was fascinated with America, yet unsure of the effects travel had on young men’s moral characters.⁸ Montesquieu and Voltaire may have been cynical and sarcastic in their comments on the newly settled continent, yet both eagerly observed its development. America captured the mind and imagination of a Europe unsure of its future, busy in the pursuit of conformity, stability, and the finite.⁹

Nations observed each other and compared and contrasted national characteristics, failings, and strengths. A nation was distinguished by its manners, laws and language; by these categories the Spanish, English, French, and Dutch colonies were clearly distinguishable to Hume.¹⁰ Not just America, but Native Americans offered an obvious foil to the inveighed effeminacy of eighteenth-century manners. John Brown, in his “Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times” (1757), based on his translation of Lafitau’s account of the Iroquois, appeals to the masculinity and quasi-savage attributes of this noble nation. Their “rude form of savage Tragedy” evident in the performance of their “Songfeast”, appealed to Brown, with its clear definition of role and social function, something he clearly saw threatened in his European society.
These "simple Indian swains" lived in a land "where Happiness and Quiet sit enthroned", a veritable pastoral heaven.¹¹

Travel literature and histories of distant lands and peoples served to highlight the variety of societies living under various laws and customs, many having little in common with Christian Europe. East and West met on the sea of opportunity and it was the possibility of financial advancement as much as any other reason which encouraged the chronicling and exchange of knowledge. The task very often seemed hopeless to the travelogue writer; Smollett, in his contribution to Sir William Blackstone's Universal History in 1736, complained of the impossible task of "filling up a chasm of fifteen or sixteen sheets, with a description of a country which all the art of man cannot spin out to half the number".¹² His Terra Australis Incognita was nonetheless seen as an essential part of any history which laid claim to a universal cosmopolitanism.

America, too, presented problems, but was seen to be in an advantageous state of flux. Adam Smith recorded its discovery as one of "the two greatest and most important events recorded in the history of mankind", ranking it together with the discovery of a sea passage to the East Indies. America would be the example to all other distant parts of the world to "relieve one another's wants, to increase one another's enjoyments, and to encourage one another's industry".¹³ America was perceived to be in a formative period of its history, so much so that William Robertson, writing his History of America in 1777, refused to continue with his volume on North America when revolt broke out in the Colonies. He expected a new system to arise there: "Inquiries and speculations [...] which exist no longer, cannot be interesting."¹⁴

The diversity of emerging American society, more than anything else, attracted the attention of the European imagination. Iroquois and French, Dutch and English, Catholic and Protestant, Slave and Freeman; all aroused images of a cultural carnival in a European population hungry for tales of life abroad. This was especially true of the German reading public, evident from the advertisements placed in eighteenth-century newspapers, offering books to loan or buy. The American Freebooter,¹⁵ History of the French and English Plantations in North America,¹⁶ The British Empire in America,¹⁷ General History of the Lands and Peoples of America,¹⁸ The Swedish Robinson Crusoe,¹⁹ are a number of the titles regularly advertised in German language newspapers of the period.

It is critical to remember that so-called "European" representations of the New World were almost uniquely western-seaboard European, that is, the imagery and language of those states with direct interests in the colonial venture.²⁰ No German state acquired American colonies, which makes the colonizing activities of Germans in the eighteenth century all the more fascinating. Relying on the invitation and support of states and governments actively involved in the transportation and settlement of willing migrants,
German migration in the eighteenth century became the template for subsequent European emigration to North America. Becoming active in a market for human capital not of their making or design, Germans possessed what Smith called the "general disposition to truck, barter, and exchange," not alone labour, but information. Many doubted the German bel esprit, but none their ability to persevere and succeed. Germans excelled at the type of erudition which their manners allowed them; confined by their cold and crude air, they were solid, exact, erudite and possessed judgement. Many in America thought them too fond of their own language and manners and "generally disagreeable to an English Eye." Yet Germans became the most migratory of all European groups in the eighteenth century, with approximately 100,000 moving across the Atlantic and another 400,000 forming the so-called "pedestrian migration" to Eastern Europe. The figures vary, but the notion of a society untouched and unaware of the possibilities of relocation must be disavowed. Emigration was an option, for many an unquestionable inevitability, awaiting only a final impetus.

The German-speaking population of western and central Europe lived in a multiplicity of states and statelets, enclosed in a complicated Pandora's box of tradition and uncertainty. "There is no country in all Christendom which embraces under one name so many lands as Germany," wrote the sixteenth-century geographer Matthias Quad. The Habsburgs, as Holy Roman Emperors, with their capital at Vienna, became synonymous with identity; lacking any other reason for shared identity, these territories, from Brussels and the Southern Netherlands in the west to Wallachia and Transylvania in the east, from the Kingdom of Croatia in the south to Silesia and Lusatia in the north, constituted the Holy Roman Empire. And it was from this non-state, this "mildly centrifugal agglutination of bewilderingly heterogeneous elements," that most German-speaking migrants came.

Living, as they did, in an organic state which osmatically acquired knowledge and information from both the east and the west of the continent, it is natural that a differentiated set of images of the New World synthesized in central Europe. New myths of origin and a new vision of the world was being fabricated in the German lands, the humanist notion that "the whole world [...] belonged to the German by right of conquest" became current. Those very images, their foundation in tradition, their evolution in contemporary culture, and their metamorphosis into a uniquely central European conception of New World life and society require analysis. For as much through the direct trade and contact with the Americas in the pre-1700 period, as through the filtering of information by travellers and cultural brokers in the period after the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1713/4), did the imaginative mind of the central European lands conceive and perceive America. America became and remained a state of mind for Central Europeans.
Images of other peoples could mutate or develop as stereotypes. In addition to the Native American or Indian, crucial to the German state of mind was the received representation of the Ottoman and the Turk. The Turk, as heathen, infidel, and cultural-linguistically other, was a devilish creature, never to be trusted and devoid of esoteric beauty. The Turk as ‘problem’, as perception, is a fundamental element in the adaptation and adoption of a European consciousness, vis-a-vis non-Europeans. As early as the end of the fifteenth century Erasmus of Rotterdam was writing in the Querela Placis of how the solidarity of European princes in their war against the Turks promoted a common European consciousness. This age-old opposition against the absolute common enemy of Europe was reinforced by a substantial, some would say enormous, anti-Turk literature in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which resulted in a distinct genre referred to as the Türkenbüchlein.

The need to have an enemy, an opposition, was absolute and real. This representation of the evil Turk was enforced through religious wars and apocryphal stories and the stereotype thus became a point of departure for further inquiry and construction of identity. In Louis Le Roy’s Oratio de Pace et Concordia, the author often confused the respublica christiana with Europa, with christiana concordia and Europea concordia. For him, the only Christendom was Europe and vice-versa. Yet diverse and divergent cultural and ideological shades of Christian identity clearly did exist in this amalgous “Europe.” Historians from equally diverse backgrounds and trainings are now calling for greater consideration of these issues. For instance, pictorial representation attributes Turkish physical characteristics to inbreeding, a suggestion also made concerning the Native American.

So “Europe” was defined by contrast to “Turk”; added to this defining equation was Europeanness as fabricated vis-a-vis the Americas and Native Americans, as well as vis-a-vis fellow Europeans. European receptivity of New World encounters and images was severely limited, with European interpretations encrusted with mediaeval myths and legends. The image of the Turk became, by transference, the representational model for the Native American, being forced geographically, culturally, morally and theologically to appear as the “other.” New information concerning America was subject to comparative analysis, which forced a European reliance on the stock cliché imagery already in existence. While America, “unlike the lands of Europe, was not inscribed with the ciphers of a human past”, the tradition of a native culture adapting to the land was replaced by a European need to inscribe a textual meaning on the New World landscape, just as had been done in Europe. Just as in Europe, itself a “cultural invention”, cultural boundaries remained as hazy and contested as political and territorial boundaries. Like territorial boundaries they changed with the shifting fortunes of colonial struggles.
The image of the North American “Indian” was a Spanish legacy to Europe, as Spanish exploration and settlement of the Americas resulted in geographical and anthropological reports. Language was, as the Spaniard Antonio de Nebrija wrote to Queen Isabella in 1492, “the instrument of empire”, and was clearly an integral part of colonial expansion. These Indians, “for so caule wee all nations of the newe founde lands” entered the vocabulary of France, of England, and of Germany. Descriptions of native life led to discussion of “Armenica,” or “America.” Corruption and extrapolation of the Spanish and Dutch imagery of the early sixteenth century entered the English and French imagination. Like the Turks, their neighbours to the east, American Indians were by definition uncivilised, as they were unchristian, and the adjectival use of “sauvage” in French or “savage” in English became de rigueur. When Jacques Cartier encountered the native Americans of the Gaspé Basin in 1534, he described them as unmatched in their savagery: “These men may very well and truely be called wilde, because there is no poorer people in the world.”

This terminology describing “Indians” was used at this time in Europe for one other group, also seen to be untameable and unrestrictable: the Gypsies of the Balkans, the ‘link’ group between Ottoman and Habsburg empires. The German philosopher Herder, in his “Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind,” written between 1784 and 1791, suggested that “this abject Indian cast [i.e. the Gypsies] were useful only for military training. Interestingly, as in the delimitation of civility in eastern and central Europe, the defining line was drawn between those who lived “this side of the forest,” i.e., the Cis-silvanii, and those on the other side of the forest, the Trans-silvanii, with the name becoming geographically associated with a territory [Transylvania] which had become ‘Ottomanized’. For western Europeans, wood dwellers formed the border, the quarantine zone, the frontier of civilization. Central Europe, as colonial British America, was considered by many to be a marchland or frontier.

Sixteenth-century western Europeans employed a variant of the Latin silvaticus, a man of the woods or an inhabitant of the forest, to indicate a Native American, as the early use of sauvage, salvatico, and salvage indicates. It has been suggested that this terminus anima, together with the image of the “wilder Mann,” “the wild man,” also used for the Native American and the non-western European inhabitant of the continent, originated in the German lands, and indicated one lacking in civilized knowledge or will, existing on the very borders of humanity and animality, and ignorant of God and morality. The necessity to include new stories, images, and accounts in a pictorial and verbal vernacular was evident to the early modern author. The ordered universe inherited from the Middle Ages required stability and order; a fixed system for a fixed mind. The many-pieced jigsaw puzzle which was Central Europe initially resisted the intrusion of America into its rubric; the puzzle was solved by
reforming its story using stock tools. This creation of a discernable cultural paradigm created, by extension, an understandable barbarity. "Wildness [...] implied everything that eluded Christian norms and the established framework of Christian society, referring to what was uncanny, unruly, raw, unpredictable, foreign, uncultured, and uncultivated. It included the unfamiliar as well as the unintelligible. Just as the wildness is the background against which medieval society is delineated, so wildness in the widest sense is the background of God's lucid order of creation. Man in his unreconstructed state, faraway nations, and savage creatures at home thus came to share the same essential quality."

Following in this tradition, Roger Williams' catalogue of the nomenclature used in reference to America divides names for Native Americans into two categories: those of the English variety, and those "which they give themselves." Williams lists, albeit further down his list of terms and references, infidel, heathen, nation, tribe, and barbarian, all terms used for the Turks and most residents of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, until the very end of the eighteenth century, the non-Germanic inhabitants of the southern Habsburg lands were collectively referred to as the "Nationalities." The Turk was the natural inheritor of the cloak of barbarity and incivility. While "Wild Man" imagery had its part to play in stock imagery, the ongoing menace of the Turkish threat for the Central European, reaching the gates of the imperial capital twice in the early modern period, in 1529 and 1683, eased the comparison with the Native American threat, more often imaginary than real. This linkage facilitated a transition from description of the European other, those beyond the forest, to the American Indian as Noble Savage to the Noble American Indian, critic of European society and culture.

But can one validly speak of a single European consciousness of America, or was there simply a series of divergent, self-motivated national consciousnesses? As has been pointed out, European Americana can, broadly speaking, be divided into Catholic and Protestant, north and south; but what about east and west? The growing strength of the nation state in Europe facilitated the production of a plethora of publications, all serving national interests: Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man* may only mention the "poor Indian" in passing, but his "untutor'd mind" could well be that of an inhabitant of the void and uncultivated lands which Hume wrote about, namely Hungary. Inhabited, relatively densely in parts, they were void of civilization as they were void of western Europeans. Western European "civilizing" nations were as interested in Moor-European and Turkish-European contact as they were in Native American-European interaction. All were equally exotic and highlighted the civilizer's own sense of superiority and civility. Eighteenth-century America thereby had a lasting and formative impression on Central and Eastern European society.
Various attempts were made to link Native Americans to Europe; some suggested that they were lost Jews, others that they had crossed a frozen sea, or that there must be a “Narrow Sea towards the North” which, when frozen, allowed people to cross it. For many, the New World was the promised land, as portrayed in the “Exemplary Tales,” “El celoso extremeno,” of Miguel Cervantes' stories. Nonetheless, a defining concept of European identity was not forthcoming via juxtaposition with the North American “other.” Rather, the civilizing English referred to themselves as English, more often as Christian, which highlighted their common bonds with other Europeans. Rarely before 1700 did they refer to themselves as Europeans. One could come from “Kent and Christendome,” but not from some amalgamated Europe.

If this “amalgamated” Europe existed anywhere, in was in the area of interaction between the Germanic and non-Germanic lands of central Europe, all members of the same Empire. For two centuries before the large migrations of the eighteenth century, central European writers had, together with their colleagues in the Spanish Habsburg lands, received and adapted information coming from the Americas. One might draw representative samples from any of the central European language groups, but Czech is one of the most rewarding to consider. When Henry Harrisse was compiling his Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima in the last century, he was unaware of a Czech version of Amerigo Vespucci’s letter to Lorenzo Piero Francesco de’Medici, generally known as the Mundus Novus. Harrisse had cited the Latin translation by Dionysius Periegetes of the Situs Orbis, dating from either 1508 or 1518. This text was said to have the first “allusions to the Oceanic discoveries.” In his dedication, the publisher, Johannes Cuspinianus, wrote: “However, in our century there have been discovered regions, which were previously unknown and neglected by writers, about which, Venerable Father, I will send you a message.” Whatever the dating of both documents, they cannot prohibit us from the assumption that some Central European contacts had been made with travellers who had been in America, if not direct contact, and that news of the ‘New World’ had reached Central Europe by the early sixteenth century. The image of America established in the Central European psyche in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was to last until the great migrations of the nineteenth century, and therefore is of central importance in our understanding of the European perceptions of America in lands removed from the Atlantic.

The Central European nomenclature for the New World territories has, in its own right, a changing history. Just as news of the newly found continent changed, so, too, did the nomenclature. Typical references, “Orbis Novus,” “Mundus Novus,” “The West Indies” and “America also known as Brazil” came and went in succession. As Czech versions of Latin texts referred to Amerigo Vespucci as Vespucci Alberykus Wespucius, the way was not paved for the use of ‘America’ as an attributable terminus loci. Equally important
in considering the speed of acceptance or lack of it of names referring to North America is the relative isolation of Central European states from the sphere of imperial interest in America. Yet for Central Europe, the "New World" had a greater effect on the grand scheme of understanding, at a time when Europe was undergoing a mass theological re-examination, of how the world was ordered. As there was no direct Central European economic or political interest in America, the distant continent could only appeal to fantasy, to the religious spirit and to the imagination. This blending of the real and the imaginary was facilitated all the more by the ill-definition of the boundaries between the belles lettres and other more imaginative literary genres.

Throughout Europe, America quickly became synonymous with exoticism and adventure; in this way the "New World" was also a new world of literature. New discoveries were naturally incorporated into this revised image of the world; a scientifically explicable world was seen to be losing its mystique and the enigma was only restored with informative accounts of experience and adventure in America. For Central Europe, such literature bridged the gap between the New and "Old" Worlds, and also provide a link to those countries in western Europe directly involved in ventures overseas. Travel literature had an established history in Bohemia, dating back to the Middle Ages, with Sir John Mandeville's Travels and Marco Polo's adventures translated into the vernacular. Gradually, a more humanistic approach to travel writing replaced such fantastic allegories, and introduced documents such as the Czech An Account of the New Lands and the New World of Which We Had No Knowledge Before nor Had Anyone Heard. Works by Bartolomé de las Casas, José de Acosta, and Jean de Léry are also be found in Czech collections of this era. Czech calendars and Cosmologies from the mid to late sixteenth century show an eagerness to include new, non-standard information on the New World; Daniel Adam Veleslavín's Kalendr historicky (Historical Calendar) of 1590 attributed the discovery of America to Amerigo Vespuccius, stating that his voyage began on May 20, 1497. Veleslavín then proceeds to use the term 'America'.

Czech literature of this genre culminated in the work of John Amos Comenius and his proposed Theatrum universitatis rerum which he began in 1616 but never brought to a conclusion. Comenius planned to pay special attention to America in his study, having, over the course of his fascinating life, had many indirect encounters with the New World. Comenius' views of America and its poignant discovery pointed, for him, to an obvious conclusion: the Second Coming was imminent. This millenarian angle appears in a dramatic change in his attitude toward the political, social, and economic problems of his day. War and civil war, unrest and discovery; all seemed to support his hypothesis. America offered the ideal opportunity to recreate a perfect community, where the Native Americans, whom Comenius described as "white
unto harvest” might be educated and New England developed as a laboratory of sorts for his social experiments. World evangelization was incumbent upon all Christians, and Comenius insisted that “any neighbouring people, or any men in their own midst, who had not yet come to Christ” should and must be brought into the fold. Indeed, Comenius’ ideas in turn affected North America. Isolated settlements in Pennsylvania tried to unite church, state and school into ideal communities after his model. Comenius was even possibly asked by the younger John Winthrop to become President of Harvard College.

Information on America continued to be gathered and collected, not just in the Czech lands, but throughout Central Europe. Cosmologies included ever-expanding sections on the New World. Comenius’ highly important Orbis sensualium pictus (1658) contained the following description: “[The terrestrial globe], however, is divided into three continents: ours (which is subdivided into Europe, Asia and Africa), the American, whose inhabitants dwell on the other side of the globe from us, and the hitherto unknown Australian land.” The title page of his Lux e tenebris divided mankind into four categories: “Aquilonares”, “Orientales,” “Meridionales,” and “Occidentales,” the latter division comprising the Dutch, the English, the French, the Spanish, and on either side Americans, one (apparently) a Native American and the other (apparently) a Negro.

This comparison of the incomparable, of opposites, culturally, religiously, socially, civilly, was not unique to Europeans versus Native Americans, but also occurred within Europe. The “heathen” and “savage” analogies were as valid when western Europeans wrote and spoke about their contiguous neighbors to the east as when they discussed the exotic “others” of North America. The literary symbol of the Indian as the noble savage, the generic, the unsubjugated, also reached the central European psyche, but perhaps was here felt closer to the bone than in western Europe. The “New World” became a metaphor in Central European humanistic literature.

Accounts of the New World acting as the mirror in which self-styled civility could join the dots of its ill-defined outline. Moreover, for a Czech audience not engaged in settlement of overseas territories, a uniquely critical view of colonists is often evident in this literature. Quickly, however, the theory long read was called into practice, with Czech Protestants looking towards America as the land of religious freedom, following their defeat at the Battle of the White Mountain by Imperial forces in 1620. In this established tradition, Count Zinzendorf brought the Moravian Church to America.

In the spirit of Comenius, the New World was assuming the mantle of a blossoming Europe, a Europe no longer in its heyday. Europe had received its goodness from the east; the arts of war and literature, of language and learning. Now, these arts were passing away, as Comenius wrote: “Once the eastern parts, Assyria, Egypt, the Jewish lands, flourished; they excelled in the arts of
war and letters. Both [arts] then passed to Europe; barbarians overran everything there. Now again in Europe everything is rebelling, crumbling, raving, approaching a general downfall. The New World by contrast is beginning to flower.82 Other writers developed this idea still further: Václav Budovec, in his treatise Antialkordn (The Anti-Koran) wove the interrelated threads of politics and religion into a theological tapestry for the world: America was proof that the world must be about to end, as its discovery was symptomatic of the coming of the Kingdom of Christ. Interestingly, Budovec proposed the exile of all civil and religious enemies to the “New World,” for there too “quidam Americanus pseudoapostolus,” “some American pseudoapostle,” was at work. His most interesting development of his thesis compares the role of eastern Europe with that of America: both places should be used as a place of exile for heretics and unbelievers in direct contradistinction to Spanish ordinances on relocation to the New World. In this way, the Turk and the Native American were equally bad.83 Budovec's punning on “Transsylnavos” and “Transmarinos,” “beyond the forest” and “beyond the sea” is all the more apt when one remembers that so many of Central European migrants ended their lives in Penn's forest, Pennsylvania. The Germans were envisaged as frontier people, to be settled in the south-east to keep the Turkish infidel at bay, and in America so that the French in Canada might be confined “to their proper bounds.”84

Thus representative images and tales of New World life and lore penetrated Central Europe, through literature, first-hand accounts from travellers, and through religious imagery. During the decades between initial contact and the formation of a stock glossary of verbal and pictorial imagery, the active manipulation and retailing of New World encounters was an occasional, haphazard activity. By the beginning of the eighteenth century this had changed. The merging of information from all parts of Europe, seaboard and inland, had altered the conceptualizing of America as a land beyond civility and conformity, to a land ripe for exploitation and liberty. Reports of material success permeated even negative narratives, shifting the direction of interest in America from exotic and distant to rewarding and attainable. A symbiotic relationship was emerging in Central Europe between information and the retailers of information — those individuals involved in the solicitation and enticement of potential European migrants to America.

What remained wanting before movement occurred was an impetus. For many, this impetus was a letter, brought back from America or the neo acquisita of Hungary by a family member, friend or traveller. For many others, it was the news of a letter written, but confiscated by authorities in a damage-limitation exercise meant to prevent further emigration.85 Others still were tempted by the prospect of unlimited land in the east and in Pennsylvania; Scottish philosopher David Hume was informed of “Lands uncultivated, and put to no manner of use! This is not heard of in any part of Christendom;
except in some remote parts of Hungary." The comparisons and similarities between the two regions — the neo aquisita of the Banat of Temesvár, regained by the Habsburg Empire in 1717 and governed as a special region outside of the Kingdom of Hungary until 1780, and Pennsylvania — were often commented on. Agents, recruiters, emigration agencies, and transporters facilitated eighteenth-century emigration both to the East and to the West. Such go-betweens were of immense importance.

Agents and recruiters had enticed of potential candidates for relocation within Europe for many centuries before the eighteenth century. Never before, however, did the role of the intermediary play such a prominent role in the soliciting of specific tradesmen, farmers and general laborers for landowners and governments. The agent, typically referred to as a “Newlander” as a result of his (for it usually was a man) travel to, and return from the “New Land,” might work as a private individual, attracted by the prospect of free transit aboard a vessel to Rotterdam, perhaps in return for translation and interpretation services. Or he might offer to carry letters to the Old Country, acting as an unofficial postal official or Postbote. He might engage in the collection of remittances and cash inheritance, by acquiring legal permission to act on behalf of his client, or by paying his client in advance on the basis of future acquisition. He might work for a Pennsylvanian, New England or Hungarian landowner, promising to secure an agreed number of farmers, craftsmen or settlers on given terms and conditions. Or, as was more frequently the case, he might be placed under contractual obligation to a Rotterdam shipping merchant, or to the Habsburg’s Banat administration in Vienna, to advertise, encourage, and attract families and friends to move.

For various reasons, including religion, language, and credibility, return migrants presented the best opportunity for contractual fulfilment. Johannes Belm returned from the Hungarian Banat, with the encouragement of the Viennese administration, to his home region of Bregenz on Lake Geneva, where he organized and led the emigration of several hundred families to the Banat. Johann Oswald, from Honzrath in the Saarland, made several trips back to his home area, and over the course of several years brought in the region of five thousand friends, neighbours, and interested parties from the Saar to the Banat. Families from the German region of Hauenstein forcibly settled in the Banat were willingly followed by others from the same region. Equally with those agents working to attract families and individuals to emigrate to Pennsylvania, individuals such as Johannes Crell (Crellius) re-established contact with friends and colleagues along the Rhine-Main river network, using them to entice locals
to move to America. And Johannes Tschudi, possibly as a result of seeing a
Newlander work on his original voyage to North America, used the
opportunity of his return to the Basel region to acquire a wife and attract and
encite others to leave with him.

Cultural brokers were not unique to the trade in travel; many similarities
exist between the activities of Newlanders and the activities of go-betweens or
intermediaries in the Republic of Letters in the eighteenth century. In both
cases, individuals facilitated the relaying of information — in the Newlanders' case concerning the advantages involved in relocation — from source to recipient. This might have otherwise been impossible, where no other means of communication was available, or simply more expedient, in the face of expensive communications or legal restrictions on information dissemination. The use of an agent might also have "underlying sociological meaning." The party being solicited might be — or with Newlanders, always was — of a lower social status to that of the savant or landowner initiating the action. Thus Tschudi received the support of the British envoy at Frankfurt-am-Main in his efforts to find settlers for Pennsylvania, although the latter did not actively engage in the solicitation of settlers. Tschudi's actions temporarily raised him from his lowly status as a cooper to an important link in the settlement chain. "The use of an intermediary when one wishes to make a request or an arrangement is a well-known process whereby one attempts to achieve one's ends while not assuming the full burden of responsibility and loss of status if one is successful."

Newlanders had the linguistic capabilities, the savoir faire from past experience, and the established contacts which enabled them to monopolize this market as long as it remained new. Tschudi's contacts with merchants in Rotterdam and with the British envoy to Frankfurth gave him higher status within the community, and thus more credibility with potential emigrants than did the distant and anonymous beneficiary of the Werbung. The role of the Newlander retained its importance only as long as the communication networks remained new; once there were established and credible purveyors of information, Newlanders became obsolete. Thus when one of Crell's subordinate agents in Frankfurt, named Luther, initiated and maintained written correspondence with Crell's employer in Massachusetts, Crell was no longer necessary. Luther strengthened his new-found friendship by making his correspondent godfather to one of his children. Eventually Crell was excluded from future business dealings.

Paralleling the activities of literary agents for libraries, Newlanders most often were not approached by merchants, but initiated the process by approaching merchants and offering to bring a cargo of human freights. The similarities are overwhelming when one considers that the issue was not always that straightforward; when sentiment entered the equation, the agent felt a
responsibility to both parties. Thus when Oswald died in the Banat, shortly
after arriving with a new party of settlers from his home territory, his wife
wrote to the administration, requesting money and support to ensure the
venture be brought to a successful end. Otherwise, many if not all of the
families would return whence they came. 9

Not only did state governments prompt, foster, and encourage the
movement of people. The exchange of letters across the Atlantic and Europe
offered an additional incentive and encouragement to emigrate, coming from
individuals already successfully settled in the new lands to the east and to the
west. Letters, very often containing exaggerated claims of success and triumph
against the wilderness, provided a wealth of information for potential emigrants.
As the number of German settlers grew in the colonies, so did the volume of
letters and personal contacts, which brought even more immigrants to the
newly settled areas.

The advantages in using fresh colonists, or at least those with a first-hand
knowledge of the land to be settled, as Werber, or settlement agents, were
quickly realized. 10 Areas of Hungary and along the border with the Ottoman
Empire were settled after special permission was received from the Viennese
Chamber to send advertisers and agents into the Empire to gather colonists
for new lands. 11 Agents for Hungary initiated the process of winning parish
clergy over to their side, asking them to mention the possibilities of resettlement
in church. Agents made repeated advertising trips to the German lands,
drumming up settlers. Although locatores existed for many centuries before
the eighteenth century — the Knights Templar, for example, used agents and
locatores to attract settlers to Königsberg following its foundation in 1255 —
ever before the eighteenth century did the role of the intermediary play such
an important part in the soliciting of specific tradesmen, farmers, and general
labourers. 12

The best agents, referred to in the North American context as a Neuländer
[Newlander] or Seelenverkäufer [Seller of Souls], were return migrants. They
shared the new recruits' religion and language, and thus were credible to them. 13
Many agents gained the blessing of priests. One of the most successful emissaries
for the settlement of the Banat in Hungary was the Temesvár resident Johann
Oswald. 14 Like many other settlement agents, he enthusiastically beat the
advertising drum, both literally and figuratively. Through his actions he
attracted many thousands to come to the Banat. 15

No more than fifteen per cent of the total number of German migrants in
the eighteenth century chose to go to British North America. 16 The reason
was Habsburg authorities were simultaneously using cultural and information
brokers to encourage new colonies and settlements in the far more easily
accessible Kingdom of Hungary. 17 Only with the re-conquest of the area
from the Ottoman empire in 1717 did the 'Land of the Three Rivers' come to
be called the "Banat of Temesvár" or the "Temeser Banat." Prior to Turkish rule, the region was governed as a union of individual Comitats, or counties. From the reconquest of Ofen, it was clear to the Austrians that the territory would only be held if loyal subjects were settled there. In 1689 a "Kaiserliche Kommission zur Einrichtung Ungarns" was created, with a primary concern being the attraction of German settlers. In a notorious quotation which is often cited, but should not be taken at face value, the Commission called for German settlers so "that the Kingdom [i.e. of Hungary], or at least a greater part of it, might become increasingly Germanised, that the Hungarian blood, which is naturally inclined to revolution and disquiet, might be tempered with the German, and thereby brought to a constant trust and love of their natural, hereditary monarchy and nobility." Settlers were conceived as the best bastion against the enemy, in this terra deserta. Indeed, they were envisaged as "eine Vormauer der Christenheit", "a bulwark of Christianity," and colonization was planned with this in full awareness.

The hope of attracting new colonists to settle in North America and in the Banat through the actions of advertisers and agents did not end with the Seven Years War. In 1763 a new period of Theresian settlement began with the issuing of a new settlement patent. And continuing up to the colonising efforts for Galicia (and indeed for Washington's settlement along the Ohio) in the 1770s and '80s, much was learned from the activities of agents in the earlier settlement of Pennsylvania and the Banat. Indeed, a key element involved in the activities of agents sent to attract settlers for Galicia — that agents recruit settlers for the region only in lands with similar climates — was a direct consequence of the failed Spanish settlement of New Barcelona in the Banat in the 1730s. And although the activities of agents and emissaries were by this time more clearly defined, they continued to play a significant role in the settlement and colonization of North America and the Banat of Temesvár.

Agents and their activities spurred eighteenth-century rulers and governments into legislative action, necessitating definitions of freedom of movement, competition in the labor market, and in the supply of information. As with all intermediaries, agents working for governments and landowners facilitated a market hungry for labor, for 'human freights' as Dutch shippers referred to the German immigrants flooding the Rotterdam quays. Without agents, private settlement of lands in North America and Habsburg settlement of the Banat would have been impossible. Their first-hand knowledge of regional qualms and grievances allowed them to manipulate events for their advantage — if one village resented hunting limitations, the agent honed in on hunting rights in the new lands, and so on. Agents were the human face of a policy which would otherwise have remained anonymous. Only through their actions, their communication networks, their exchange of information, and their brokerage abilities, was colonization possible in the eighteenth century.
Cultural brokers crossed boundaries, sometimes porous, sometimes not, but these boundaries shifted and developed in ways as yet not fully understood.\textsuperscript{1} Being culturally amorphous, brokers functioned as an integral part of early modern migratory society.\textsuperscript{14}

Early modern Germans had sought freedom and opportunity in the Hungarian Banat, in Russia, and in America, never quite sure which was the "promised land."\textsuperscript{15} Images, stories, representations, and dreams all shaped the invention of a composite framework of discourse and belief, recycled from stock myth and cliché. Yet the underlying image of freedom, of distant yet attainable salvation, even redemption, was America, a metaphor for magic, mysticism, movement. It was, Stephen Greenblatt writes, through "the stories that a culture tells itself," that America was conceived in the German psyche. And these stories were built on far older foundations of language, culture, and definition.

Notes
1. This paper was originally presented to the Philadelphia [McNeil] Center for Early American Studies on March 21, 1997 under the title "To the East or to the West? German Migration in the Eighteenth Century, A Comparative Perspective." I am very grateful to Professor Richard S. Dunn for his invitation to present at the Philadelphia Center and to all who commented on that draft of this paper, especially to Sarah Knott, Konstantine Dierks and Nicholas Canny. Opening quotation from: Gary C. Hauze, \textit{Ist dieses nicht das gelobte Land?}, Falkner Swamp Reformed Church, Gilbertsville, Pennsylvania, 1975, v.


9. Ibid.

10. Miller, 205.


13. Ibid., 204.


15. Carlsruhe Wochenblatt oder Nachrichten, Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe, 12 Januar 1757.

16. Ibid., 18 May 1757.

17. Ibid., 29 July 1761.

18. Ibid., 4 November 1762.

19. Ibid., 19 January 1757.

20. The very use of the phrase “New World”, Mundus Novus, in a secular sense is both interesting and revolutionary in itself. The idea that a “new world” was a human reality, attainable by human means, showed the contradictory imagery associated with overseas exploration, expansion and settlement. For a brief consideration of the issue, see: Carlo Ginzburg, The Cheese and the Worms. The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller, (London, 1992), 81-86.


22. “Il faut du moins que vous confessiez, dit Ariste, que le bel esprit est de tous les pays & de toutes les nations; c'est-a-dire, que comme il y a eût autrefois de beaux esprits Grecs & Romains, il y a en a maintenant de François, d'Italiens, d'Espagnols, d'Anglois, d'Allemands mesme & de Muscovites. C'est une chose singuliere qu'un bel esprit Allemand ou Moscovite, reprit Eugene; & s'il y en a quelques-uns au monde, ils sont de la nature de ces esprits qui n'apparoiissent jamais sans causer de l'étonnement. Le Cardinal du Perron disoit un jour, en parlant du Jesuite Gretser: Il a bien de l'esprit pour un Allemand; comme si c'eust esté un prodige qu'un Allemand fort spirituel. [...] Le bel esprit tel que vous l'avez défini, ne s'accommode point du tout avec les temperament grossiers & les corps massifs des peuples du Nord. Enfin on n'y connoit point nostre bel esprit, ni cette belle science dont la politesse fait la principale partie." Dominique Bouhours, Les Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugene, Paris, 1691, “Le Bel Esprit”.


25. Günther Moltmann, “German Emigration


27. For more on regionalism and peripheries in Europe, see: Hans-Heinrich Nolte (ed.), *Internal Peripheries in European History*, (Göttingen, 1991), passim.


39. See, for example,: Stuart B. Schwartz (ed.), *Implicit Understandings. Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, (Cambridge, 1994, esp. Introduction, 1-22; Kiril Petkov, *Infidels, Turks, and Women: The South Slavs in the German Mond*, ca. 1400-1600, (Bein, 1997), 13-30, esp. 17: "It is surprising to note that historians only recently turned to investigate the image which 'marginal' European peoples, eastern Europeans, Irish, Scots, or Scandinavians, enjoyed in the core lands of Europe. Modern scholars appear just as fascinated with the image of the exotic Oriental, African, or later, American "other" as the late medievals and early moderns have been."

1987), 5-36, here: 15: "...and the propensity of Indian men to have sexual intercourse with any woman regardless whether she is a close relative or not."


47. Anthony Pagden, European Encounters with the New World, 118.


50. Angus Fraser, The Gypsies, (Blackwell, Oxford, 1992), 181. Gypsies did reach the New World during colonial times, favoring Pennsylvania and Virginia, but these groups left few lasting traces behind. Cf.: ibid., 235.


52. Berkhofer, 13. The Oxford English Dictionary definition of "Woodman" includes: "an inhabitant of the woods, a wild man, a savage; [s] a madman, lunatic, maniac.


54. Roger Williams, A Key Into the Language of America: Or, An Help to the Language of the Natives in That Part of America Called New-England, 1643.


56. Berkhofer, 75.


58. Simmons, 364.


60. Simmons, 374. See also: Ahmad Gunny, Images of Islam in Eighteenth-Century Writings, (London), 1996.


64. Kupperman, 1980, 110.
66. “The Genoese philosopher Paolo Mattia Doria described “our Europe” as like “one great family” Montesquieu declared that “L’Europe est un état composé de plusieurs provinces”, and Burke that “No European can be a complete exile in any part of Europe.”; Peter Burke, “Did Europe Exist Before 1700?”, History of European Ideas, 1, (1980), 21-29, here: 21.
70. Svejkovsky, 35.
71. Ibid., 39.
72. “Spis o nowych zemiech a o nowen swietie, o niemzto jsme prwe zadne znamosti nemeli, ani kdy co slychali”, after: Svejkovsky, 38.
75. Comenius’ Panorthosia XVIII.13, after: Sadler, 181.
77. Confusion still surrounds this story, which may be apocryphal. Cf.: Young, ff. In Cotton Mather’s Magnalia Christi Americana, the event was thus reported: “That brave old man, Johannes Amos Comenius, the fame of whose worth hath been trumpeted as far as more than three languages could carry it, was indeed agreed withall, by our Mr Winthrop in his travels through the low countries, to come over into New England, and illuminate this College and country in the quality of a President. But the solicitations of the Swedish Ambassador, diverting him another way, that incomparable Moravian became not an American.”; Magnalia Christi Americana, (New Haven, 1820), after: Daniel Murphy, Comenius: A Critical Reassessment of his Life and Work, (Dublin, 1995), 27.
78. “[Sphaera terrestria] centerum divisa est in tres continentes: nostram (qua subdivitur in Europam, Asiam et Africam), in Americam, cujus incole nobis sunt antipodes, et in terram Australem adhuc incognitam.”, in: Jan Amos Komensky, Johannis Amos Comenii Opera amnia, 17 (Prague, 1970), 204-5.
79. Dmitrij Cizevskij, “Aus zwei Welten, ‘s Gravenhage”, 1956, plate no.V, from the article: “Comenius und die Deutschen Pietisten”, 165-171. Also to be considered is the “Theatrum Orbis Terrarum” of Abraham Ortelius (1570) and the “Queen Europe” of Sebastien Münster’s Cosmographia (Basel edition, 1588).
80. Svejkovsky, 44.
81. Cf.: The translation of Jean de Léry’s Histoire d’un voyage fait en la terre du Brésil, autrement dite Amérique (1578) by Pavel Slovák and Matej Cyrus, with additions, entitled: Historie o plavenise do Ameriky, která i Brasilia slove, od Jana Léry z Burgundie, nejprv francouzsky sepisána, potom od neho do latinského jazyku vylozena, nyní pak ted léta 1590 z latinského jazyku do ceského prelozena (History of a Voyage to America, Which is also called Brazil, by Jean Léry of Burgundy, First Written in French, Then Translated by Him into the Latin Language, and now in this year 1590 Rendered from the Latin Language into Czech).
83. Julius Glücklich, Václava Budovce z Budova
korespondence z.let 1579-1619, (Praha, 1908), no. 67 and no. 69: “...qui omnes procul ad ultimos Indos vel anthropophagos relegandi” [...] all of these should be sent to the most remote Indians or cannibals. He also wrote: “Illosque nebulones e consortio fidelium ad Sarmatas vel Transsylvanos vel Transmarinos, imo ad ultimos Indos vel ad ipsa Tartara potius releget, ne non modo ecclesia Christi, set etiam ne rerum natura iis coniquinetur” [the Church should send those good-for-nothing fellows away to the Sarmats, Transsylvanians or Transmarinians or rather to the most remote Indians or directly to hell, so that neither the cristian Church nor the natural environment would be polluted by them]. This notion of sending ‘enemies’ of the state to America or to the east remained in common currency in Europe until the end of the eighteenth century, with Empress Maria Theresia sending many Viennese prostitutes to lands reconquered from the Turk and Benjamin Franklin wondered if it was a European conspiricy to send the poorest and most immoral lot to Philadelphia.


86. Eugene F. Miller, 446.


91. Hofkammerarchiv Wien (HKA), Banater Akten (BA), rote Nr. 14, fol. 34-38.

92. HKA BA r.Nr. 20, fol. 42-44; 104-112; r.Nr. 22, fol. 3-12; 17-18; 21; inter alia.

93. HKA BA r.Nr. 51, fol. 299-304.


95. Letters of Isaac and Jon. Pemberton to Hunt & Greenleaf, Merchants in London, suggest that Pemberton became interested in acquiring a vessel (the Crown) to engage in the transportation of Germans to Pennsylvania, as a result of talking to a Newlander. This Newlander may have been named Johannes Martin, also aboard the Crown, which carried Tschudi to Philadelphia in 1749.

96. Much of the following is inspired by, Anne Goldgar, Impolite Letters..., 30-44 and 147 ff.

97. Firth, after: Goldgar, 31.

98. Johannes Oswald, for example, first wrote to the Viennese Banat Administration offering to act as a Werber and to solicite settlers for the Banat. Goldgar suggests, similarly, that literary agents in the eighteenth century were not agents for the author at all, but rather the commissionnaires of the booksellers.

99. HKA BA r.Nr. 36, fol. 13; 327-330. Goldgar gives the following example: “When De la Motte was trying to place the translation of Chillingworth by Durette, a work he considered flawed, he asked Des Maizeaux whether it should really be published. “It would be hard on Mr. Durette, who has taken the trouble to translate them, and who is expecting a recompense for his work, to see him frustrated”; De la Motte said. “But on the other hand, it would be a shame to engage a young libraire who has confidence in you and me in large expenses that he will not be able to recover”. Goldgar, 44.

100. István Vonház, A szatmármegyei német telepítés, (Pécs, 1931), 221-4; Friedrich Lotz, "Zur Auswanderung aus Baden-Württemberg nach dem Südosten", 200-221, in Südostdeutsches Archiv, XII. (München, 1969), 120.
conceptualizing america in early modern central europe
d.
h.

esp. 204 ff.

to.

of Prussia, (Oxford, 1954), 52-4; Carl Haase
(hrsg.), Die Stadt des Mittelalters, Band III,
Darmstadt, 1972, 226-255; Hans Patze
(hrsg.), Reinhard Wenskus, Ausgewählte Aufsätze
zum frühen und preußischen Mittelalter,
Firmen, (Jan Thorbecke Verlag), 1986,
349.

103 Cf.: Alexander Krischan, "Der
Kolonistenzug des Pfarrers Sebastian Bleckner
ins Banat. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der
Gemeinde Hatzenfeld," in Deutsche Forschungen
in Südostende, Heft 3, 1942, 443-449; and HKA
B.A., L Nr. 14, fol. 35, for the case of Johann
Georg Belm (Pelm), who returned to Bregenz
in 1744 to escort his nephew, the priest Peter
Forster, and other families, to the Banat.

"Mittelburger, too, talks of the actions of
religious on the voyage of America.

104. Johann Oswald, born (?) 1712, died 16.
December 1752, age 40, in Neubeschenowa,
Banat; Karl H. Waldner, "Wanderungen aus
dem Raum des heutigen Saarlandes in das
Banat im 18. Jahrhundert", Schriftenreihe des
Donaudeutschen Kulturwerkes Saarland, 5,
1972, 67.

105. The "Werbetrommel", 'Advertising
Drum', is not just an allegorical image. Cf.: Károly Buchmann, A Délmagyarországi
Telepítések Története, (Budapest, 1936), 28-9;
István Vonház, A szatmárnémeti német telepítés,
(Péc, 1931), 220, ff.; Friedrich Lotz, 220-221.

106. Aaron S. Fogelman, Hopeful Journeys:
German Immigration, Settlement, and Political
Culture in Colonial America, 1717-1775,

107. Friedrich Reschke, "Genese und
Wandlung der Kulturlandschaft des
südostlichen Jugoslawischen Banats im
Wechsel des historischen Geschehens," Ph.D.
thesis, Cologne, 1968, 3-4; Irmgard Kuscko,
"Die Organisation der Veralbung in Banat
vom Jahre 1717-1738", Ph.D. thesis, Vienna,
1934, n.p.

108. ...damit das Königreich oder wenigstens
ein großer Teil davon nach und nach

109. Hans Rothfels (hrsg.), "Das Auslandsdeutschturn des Ostens",
Auslandsstudien, 7 Band, (Königsberg), i. Pr.,
1932, 122.

110. See: Erster Brief Kaiser Karls VI. an den
Landgrafen Ernst Ludwig von Hessn-
Darmstadt um eine weitherzige Erleichterung
der hessischen Auswanderung in das
Erbkönigreich Ungarn (20.iv.1722), printed
in full in: Anton Tafferner, Quellenbuch zur
Donauwürttembischen Geschichte, (München,
1974), nr. 47, 75.

111. That is, settlement carried out under
Maria Theresia, Co-regent of Francis of
Lorraine, Holy Roman Emperor. Karl Freiherr
von Czoernig, Ethnographie der
österreichischen Monarchie, Wien, 1857, Bd.
II, 15.

112. Horst Glassl, Das österreichische
Einrichtungswerk in Galizien (1772-1790),
(Wiesbaden, 1975), 220-228.

113. Van Zandt, 18.

114. Not merely information concerning
advertising was carried across the seas; so, too,
was revolution. For a sample of the
wide-ranging information concerning the
American Revolution and central and eastern
Europe, see: Andrej Pantev, "The American
Revolution and the Slavs", Bulgarian Historical
Review, 1 (1977), 21-33; Daniel Stone,
"Poland and the Lessons of the American
Revolution", 3-10, in Bela K. Király (ed.),
War and Society in East Central Europe,

115. William T. Parsons, "The Pennsylfunisch
Deitsch Community for Independence,
1758-1783", 73-88, in Hans L. Trefousse,
Germany and America: Essays on Problems of
International Relations and Immigration, (New
York, 1980), here: 73.