

<https://helda.helsinki.fi>

The silenced majority : Academic refugees and the vicissitudes of readaptation

Tuori, Kaius

Taylor and Francis Inc.

2022-01-01

Tuori , K 2022 , The silenced majority : Academic refugees and the vicissitudes of readaptation . in M Kmak & H Björklund (eds) , Refugees and Knowledge Production : Europe's Past and Present . 1 edn , Taylor and Francis Inc. , London , pp. 165-181 . <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003092421-13>

<http://hdl.handle.net/10138/355062>

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003092421-13>

cc_by_nc_nd

publishedVersion

Downloaded from Helda, University of Helsinki institutional repository.

This is an electronic reprint of the original article.

This reprint may differ from the original in pagination and typographic detail.

Please cite the original version.

9 The silenced majority

Academic refugees and the vicissitudes of readaptation

Kaius Tuori

Introduction

In the expanding corpus of literature on scholarship and exile that has been published since the 1960s, there is a distinct bias towards success stories about exiles from Nazi Germany who arrived in the United States (US). Within intellectual history, these success stories follow a similar dramatic arch. In these narratives, a brilliant young scholar in one of the finest universities in Germany ends up persecuted by Nazis and flees to Britain or the US. There, they face further hardship, before their talent and perseverance prevail and they become even greater stars than before. They find a home in some of the best research universities in the US, attracting brilliant students and founding important schools of thought. Their career paths follow a U-shaped trajectory, where early promise is followed by a low point, the exile experience, finally leading to the apotheosis or redemption that success brings. In all of these narratives, the success of the protagonist is shown as unlikely and in contrast to the many others who either die in the war or in the camps or are left in obscurity. Such success stories abound even in the generally nuanced works such as Martin Jay's influential *Permanent Exiles*, about the German scholarly exiles in the US, or more recent massive compilations such as Zimmermann's and Beatson's *Jurists Uprooted* on lawyers exiled in Britain.¹ Few have been talked about as much as the philosophers, social scientists and theorists of the German left, from the Frankfurt School to Hannah Arendt. Seyla Benhabib's excellent recent book *Exile, Statelessness and Migration* brings this issue to the fore: these were a group of very exceptional people whose names now have immediate recognition in the sciences, arts, literature and culture in general. Within this literature, the suicide of Walter Benjamin is frequently brought up, acting as a kind of martyrdom of the cultured.²

This narrative of success is important and hugely influential in the artistic, scientific and political development on both sides of the Atlantic. However, the question that is very rarely asked is: what about the others? What happened to those who were not able to learn the language, whose ideas did not generate interest in their adopted countries, whose persona was not up to the challenges? Who are the lost ones, the forgotten ones?³

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the vast majority of exiled scholars, those for whom the conventional standards of academic success were not fulfilled or were delayed. It seeks to unearth some of the cases of people whose scholarly career could be illustrated not with a U (professional success at home followed by hardship and gradual return to success in exile) but an L (professional success followed by continuing hardship in exile), whose new career never took off, the people who did not fit into the model of the success story. While I must emphasize and reemphasize that there was no magic formula, no *sine qua non* of exile success, there were some traits and circumstances which made people susceptible to continued marginalization. At the same time, I want to emphasize that in no way am I suggesting that these people were failures or failed. Academia is now as it was then a pyramid scam, one in which chance and serendipity are as important as personal talent or initiative. A particular prejudice in the previous literature is to see those who left academia or concentrated on teaching as failures, neglecting the fact that their lives may have been as fulfilling and inspiring or even more so.⁴

The chapter explores mainly cases from the large group of refugees that left Nazi Germany after the Nazi takeover in 1933. This group included a sizable representation of academics, resulting from the dismissal of roughly one-third of German professors and the targeting of leftist and liberal writers and artists. Most of the exiles were of Jewish heritage. I use the term Jewish heritage because many were not religiously observant or who were considered Jewish by the peculiar Nazi criteria of blood purity, even though they observed some other faith. While this group is atypical in comparison to many other groups of refugees and exiles, they too were targets of hate suspicion, marginalization, racism and anti-Semitism while in exile. This focus on Jewish exiles who went to the UK and the US is typical of the works on exile scholarship, mainly for two reasons: first, that the number of scholars heading there was much larger than elsewhere, and second, that, especially in America, the resources and academic networks that were on offer were far greater. Further, while respect for the quality of German scholarship was universal, in American universities there were good chances of gaining a permanent position.⁵

Earlier literature on exiled scholars is not inconsiderable, but within it there are distinct groups. The first wave of studies emerged from direct contact with the exiles themselves, published in part as their memoirs or those of their students or family. These works focused on the exiles' experiences themselves or the impact that they had abroad. The second wave of scholarship could be described as the tallying of the exile, the making of comprehensive catalogues of who was who, and who went where. The third wave, which is only now being researched and published, seeks to focus on the impact of exile and the exile experience as a kind of knowledge production.⁶

The theoretical tools employed here are part of a discussion on trauma, coping and cultural adaptation. Studies on scholarly exile have been notorious in that they suffered from a theory deficit. In one of the rare exceptions to this deficit, Renato Camurri has noted how the earlier studies had an emphasis on two features, the acculturation paradigm and the impact paradigm,

regarding the impact European scholars had on British and American culture. What these studies ignored was the change in the approaches of the migrants, exiles and refugees to their own position, regarding their country of origin, the place where they ended up and where they hoped to move, and the difficult definitional work that it involved regarding issues of belonging and becoming.⁷ Using this observation as a starting point, I seek to investigate what the “failed” exile scholar tells us of the expectations and attitudes directed towards and felt by the exiles. Harlem discusses the notion of the losing of the past self because of exile, resulting in a dissociative state.⁸

The notion of failure and being unsuccessful permeates scholarship, but most often as offhand remarks and general statements about loss of status and marginalization. This was the case in Heilbut’s classic study from 1983: “As they moved to other countries, refugees found no market for their specialties. Lawyers became butlers, journalists became tailors, chemists became baby nurses.”⁹ Of medical scholars, Weindling says that “It is all too easy to overlook the socially marginal: Certain academics came as domestic servants or gardeners, and pursued careers in fringe industrial laboratories or in general practice.”¹⁰ The notion of failure has even been added to whole fields of scholarship which failed to make an impact in the US.¹¹ This dichotomy of success and failure equally perpetuates the notions of marketability as a sign of value and the individualization of the larger issue of precarity, a theme that links the historical and the contemporary approaches.¹²

What this chapter is emphatically not about is the speculative psychology of the individual. What we have are the writings of exiles themselves, their colleagues and family; based on those, we can make deductions about their condition and feelings as they are stated. The emphasis here is on the attitudes, skills and connections that an individual has or acquires and how she or he makes use of those. My examples are to a large degree cases that have come up during my studies on exiled lawyers and legal scholars, but I have attempted to include people from other fields as well. Perhaps because academic refugees were white and mostly¹³ from the socioeconomically privileged echelons, racism and anti-Semitism do not feature strongly in the narratives of exile, or that after the terrifying experiences in Germany, casual microaggressions and exclusions were normalized. Both in Britain and the US, anti-Semitism and anti-German attitudes were common, leading to feelings of alienation especially outside of academic surroundings. Many German refugees such as Franz Neumann even considered American racism and prejudice as being worse than that in Germany.¹⁴

Within the studies on refugee scholars, there has been much variation regarding terminology. Words such as refugee, exile, displaced, emigrant, migrant or émigré each come with connotation and background assumptions. As Camurri has noted, most studies ignore these basic issues that make the multifaceted field so problematic. These range from the conditions of the detachment and the trauma of escape to the political context, often regarding totalitarianism. It also includes the internal dynamics of exiled groups and their social spaces and the ways that certain symbols are reproduced and

even how the experience plays out in creative expression. Finally, Camurri raises the issue of the inevitability of the successful ending in these narratives. A similar point is raised by Fleck, who notes that while “success can be reported and summarized relatively easily, this is not so for the opposite”.¹⁵

What I am attempting in the following is to explore how these issues contributed to the adaptation or mis-adaptation of refugees and migrants. What I am hoping to present is the distinction between structural issues and individual coping strategies, demonstrating how the precariousness of the exiled academic both now and then is foremost a structural issue. The great unstated conclusion of all the success stories is the need for a miracle. This tendency of writing about miracles, exceptions, coincidences and kind acts of strangers masks the inherent structural cruelty of the exile’s condition. Unless one was an exception, with expertise in a field that was in demand, with a suitable personality and language skills and connections, the exile was essentially doomed to a life of poverty, loneliness and hardship.¹⁶

No help from friends

A recurring feature of the success stories of exile is the presence of helpers and aids. These were individuals and organizations who helped both in the act of escape and transfer from the country of origin to the country of refuge. I have written much about these in my recent book, but it bears repeating how much these singular connections made a difference. For instance, professors of Roman law Fritz Schulz (1879–1957) and Fritz Pringsheim (1882–1967) were both quite old when they escaped from Germany, but they were carried along with a veritable network of former associates, students, editors and colleagues, who would organize housing, funding, publishing opportunities and other aid. Both these older men were given an incredible amount of help, which made it possible for them to continue their work.¹⁷ In both cases, it is possible to count five or six dedicated people, some of whom were in good positions such as professors at Oxford and worked tirelessly to help those in need.

What if no such friends are around or can be found? In the aforementioned cases, they were famous professors with wide international networks. What if you had no connections? If you were bad at making friends?

In individual cases it is quite hard to evaluate what the specific reasons for the loss of status were that one experienced, but many of the instances are quite dramatic. Austrian museum director and numismatist Alphons Barb (1901–1979) fled to Britain but was unable to gain academic work. He was interned on the Isle of Man, and upon release he worked at a factory in Leeds.¹⁸ Legal scholar Wilhelm Dickmann had to start his working career in America employed as a bouncer at cheap establishments.¹⁹ Microbiologist and mycologist Richard Klein (1892–1978) worked as a gardener before getting work as a microbiologist.²⁰ There were equally positive turns in which individuals whose fortunes were down were aided by a chance occurrence. For instance, legal scholar Julius Fackenheim (1884–1970) had followed his

son to Aberdeen but, having failed to find other employment, had been stocking shelves at a store. There, he encountered the principal of the university who provided him with a part-time job teaching comparative law.²¹

The turn to manual labour was not necessarily a result of lack of connections, but it could equally be a choice. Author Carl Zuckmayer (1896–1977) was frustrated by what he describes as the superficiality of American culture; after attempting to find a place in Hollywood, he purchased a farm in Vermont, before returning to Germany after the war.²² Even without knowledge of land prices, it is safe to assume that this was not an option open for the indigent.

There were, of course, numerous charitable institutions which sought to aid displaced scholars, from the British Society for the Protection of Science and Learning and the US Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars to others. However, even their resources were stretched thin and it is obvious from the correspondence of the era that such help was frequently concentrated on the more fitting candidates, those who had adapted better to their new surroundings. Thus, Pringsheim managed to frustrate his helpers by his haughty attitude, which angered neighbours and officials alike. Consequently, his quarantine on the Isle of Man lasted much longer.²³

A completely different category of failed support relates to those whose work permits and official documents never materialized. Lawyer Ernst Isay (1880–1943) fled from Germany to Brazil, but never gained a work permit there. However, he was invited to give lectures, meaning that had he lived longer, things might have improved.²⁴ Law professor Franz Haymann (1874–1947) fled to Britain, but was not allowed to work there.²⁵ At the time of emigration, both were old.

In general, to a large degree, the notions of fitting in were dependent on the support one could rely upon. People who would use their contacts for your benefit, who would vouch for you and recommend you, were the ones who mattered. Many other things, such as need for a specific skill or the possibility to obtain permits and official qualifications, mattered a great deal, but within those boundaries the help from friends appears to be pre-eminent.

Did not learn the language

One of the key issues of adaptability is the willingness and the skill to learn new languages. For German and other European exiles in Britain and the US this posed a barrier for entry into academic society, from integration into circles or researchers, gaining employment or places of study or even being understood. This sense of understanding did not limit itself to language but extended to being identified as part of the same scholarly community. While there were exceptional circumstances, such as the German-speaking academic community that formed in New York or some specific laboratories, in general one needed to learn English. Thus, it comes as little surprise that so many of the successful migrants, such as medieval historian Ernst Kantorowicz, already had contacts and knew the language due to prior stays in England. This was possibly the reason such elderly legal exiles such as Schulz or

Pringsheim were able to gain positions. Both had visited Britain before and published in British journals and, in the case of Schulz, even the Oxford University Press. In the same way younger scholars who migrated and entered American or British universities needed to know at least the basics to study. Thus, scholars such as Franz Neumann or David Daube would have the advantage that they simply had to learn to write good English.²⁶

For those to whom learning languages was difficult or who did not have the networks or support, lack of language skills was not only a threshold but also a drawback that sabotaged a promising career. Philosopher Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945) ended up at Oxford, but found lecturing in English hard and tiresome. Having left Germany at an advanced age, Cassirer did not publish much during his time in England.²⁷

One factor in learning languages was age, as ability to learn languages generally decreases with age. For example, pedagogue and philosopher Richard Honigswald (1875–1947) did not adapt to the American way of scientific thinking and did not learn English. The result was invisibility:

He was unable to speak and write English nor to accommodate himself to another type of scientific thinking in the United States. Therefore, his work in exile was produced exclusively for the German context, and he remained unpublished and unnoticed in American pedagogical circles.²⁸

Camurri has noted that language is one of the key cultural resources of the individual and it defines the difficult relationship between the country and culture of origin and the adopted country. Here, Arendt's famous dictum about the mother tongue as a kind of surrogate motherland, the locus of surrogate belonging, is particularly apt. Language is tied in with the notion of national identity and its transformation in exile, and Camurri raises the problematic division used by Laurent Jeanpierre about the three types of exiles: the first is the patriot who defends his national identity, the permanent exile loses it, and the cosmopolitan acquires a twin sense of belonging. There, the patriots tended to return while the others would stay.²⁹ Even though this tripartition may appear to be coarse and unanalytical, it raises an important point and in fact it is possible to a certain degree to distinguish people based on their approaches to language.

Legal scholar Gerhard Leibholz (1901–1982) was a good example of the issues relating to language and culture being compounded. He left Germany late and typical of exiles in Britain, he was unable to get a job, partly due to his poor language skills. Leibholz was also suspected of having Nazi sympathies, perhaps due to his vocal defence of German culture.³⁰ In a similar way, Pringsheim was unpopular at Oxford because of his German patriotism, which manifested not only in a haughty sense of superiority, but also a habit of singing German songs loudly with his five sons with the windows open.³¹

Language skills were vital for academics to gain employment and to be understood. While some could have emigrated to the US and stayed in places with high immigrant populations where language learning was not as important,

working in higher education became virtually impossible unless a modicum of language skill could be acquired. This meant that age differences became crucial.

Did not adapt to life there

In the literature on exiles, adaptation and assimilation are concepts that are strongly interlinked, but not coterminous. As is true now, learning the language, acclimatization to local conditions and getting to know people, acquiring an education and gaining employment were all crucial in the way that exiled scholars began to feel like home or at least did not immediately seek to return. However, the notions of becoming inherent in the language of assimilation are often seen as alternatives of choice to the diasporic long-term communities, making reading the exile narratives written often by local students problematic.

Even in adaptability, age was a factor. Old people with a senior position at home were liable to have difficulties, if only due to the status difference between what they had been accustomed to, and what they had on offer. Thus, cases such as that of Albert Einstein, who received a generous position in the US were utmost rarities. One of the famous German comparative lawyers Ernst Rabel (1874–1955) escaped to the US, but never gained a standing that would have been anything close to what he had enjoyed in Germany. As a result, he returned after the war.³² Hans Kelsen, the drafter of the Austrian constitution and still one of the more famous legal theorists in the world, found that his fame served him little in the US, where his type of legal positivism was little known and appreciated. He would eventually manage to gain a position at Berkeley, but only in the political science department.³³

Gaining academic employment has always been difficult, but there were considerable differences between both fields and countries. As exile Erwin Panofski wrote in his outline of the birth of art history in the US, many German art historians were actively recruited to America. On the other hand, those who arrived with little expertise that would have been in demand, had a tougher time finding a job. A case in point is the numerous experts in German or even Roman law who were unable to find gainful employment in the US. The difference in countries is quite stark. Söllner has estimated that most of the people (85%) he has studied were eventually appointed to professorships in the US, while only one-fifth of those who stayed in Britain did.³⁴

While younger scholars were more adaptable and could more easily retrain, this did not mean that it would have been easy as funding was scarce. Ernst Levy (1881–1968) was ousted from his position at the height of his career. He had already sent his daughter Brigitte and her husband Edgar Bodenheimer to the US, where they had studied law at Columbia. Due to help from law professor and Germanophile Karl Llewellyn, they would venture to the West and gain positions, Levy at the law school in Seattle. However, even in their cases, the positive outcome was long and tenuous and the result of a strong family connection and plenty of assistance. Kirchheimer

settled in the US and Levy considered a return to Germany but never did, perhaps due to the insistence of his family.³⁵ Legal papyrologist Hans Julius Wolff (1902–1983) was an example of one's fate if no such support was forthcoming. Wolff was very talented in the extremely specialized field of legal papyrology, the study of ancient papyrus documents mostly found in the Egyptian desert. He was Jewish and sought to escape Germany after 1933. The NGO *Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland* arranged for a job and he left in 1935 to work at the University of Panama. After a few years in Panama, in 1939 he moved to the US, where he worked and studied at several universities in the Midwestern states from Wisconsin to Tennessee. He published some works in English and gained a permanent position as a law librarian at the University of Tennessee. He returned to Germany for a position as professor in 1955.³⁶

Even in the UK, those who had entered a university and studied, perhaps doing another doctorate or a professional degree, were considerably more likely to gain employment and friends due to the connections that their studying provided. This was in no way a given. For example, commercial law scholar Clive M. Schmitthoff (1903–1990) enrolled to study at the London School of Economics. However, Schmitthoff and his future wife Ilse “had led a very lonely existence at the LSE, apparently making friends with absolutely no one.”³⁷ In their case, this isolation proved to be temporary, and Schmitthoff eventually served for five years in the British army and later had a successful legal career. His former teacher in Germany, Martin Wolff (1872–1953), had a much more difficult experience, suffering from the hostile atmosphere in Britain. Like many other older scholars, he felt isolated at Oxford. This is a recurring theme in these biographies; it appeared that even people who had known each other before in Germany did not interact much socially in Britain. Wolff gained little recognition at Oxford; he was allowed to give only one lecture during his whole time there and he was not given any kind of permanent position.³⁸

The issue of return is one of the clearest division points with regards to what has been described as adaptation and assimilation. In the descriptions of Italian refugees, they were often said to be almost model emigrants. They demonstrated a clear willingness to assimilate, evidenced by the fact that they collaborated with American institutions and participated in political affairs. They also had a low rate of return after the war ended and produced only a limited number of memoirs.³⁹ From this ideal case, we may produce a mirror image, that of the worst-case scenario, the migrant who is aloof and indifferent to what is happening in their adopted country and eschews civil society and contacts. They also return at the earliest possible moment to their country of origin. The writing of memoirs is perhaps the most surprising issue of them all.

The issue of memoirs and adaptability is interesting in the sense that Edgcomb reports about the dozens of German professors in the US who were sent to teach in the traditionally black colleges. She notes that unfortunately none of them described their experience in memoirs.⁴⁰ What for her

was an unfortunate lack of material may thus have been a positive sign that even though the cultural differences between Germany and the American South were considerable, the German academics never found the time to publish memoirs as their energies were devoted to the present.

One of the few people to write memoirs about their period in exile was legal historian Guido Kisch (1889–1985), who left Germany in 1935 and arrived in New York. He spent a long time searching for any position there, but returned to Germany after the war. His extensive memoirs chronicle his time in exile and the highlights of his desperate search for an academic livelihood.⁴¹

A special case among exiles relates to those who ended up somewhere other than the UK or the US. There was a considerable influx of scholars who went to Turkey, lured there by a promise of a slew of new jobs. Many of them returned to Germany after the war. The tendency of return was also noticeable among exiles who went to other countries.⁴²

The issues of assimilation, adaptation and memoirs hide numerous unstated issues, from the idea that to return or not return was primarily an issue of assimilation rather than the opportunity or willingness to return, be it for financial or psychological opportunities. The writing of memoirs also contains an issue of class, since the publication of memoirs tends to be an activity of leisure, requiring a certain degree of financial security to undertake.

There is a widespread tendency in field-specific studies to say that only their field was badly adaptable to life abroad. This is particularly true with regards to lawyers, but also in other fields. In some cases, the whole field of the humanities is presented as underachieving and willing to return to Germany.⁴³

Fitting in and finding a place was a constant challenge, but when successful it brought a new conundrum, that of whether to return. The notion of assimilation and the idea of permanent stay were something that cannot really be discussed as a success issue. For most, the idea of exile was construed as a temporary reprieve, followed by a return home. This was also the idea supported by the British authorities. After the war, some exiles had been away for 12 years and had built new lives abroad. While some of the older exiles such as Schulz and Pringsheim did return, their children opted to stay. For Jewish refugees, the notion of resurgent anti-Semitism did not encourage return.

Victims of sexism and patriarchy

A completely different issue was the position of women with academic training. Despite the considerable obstacles they faced, women were able to have an academic career in Germany. In exile, numerous external issues, ranging from employment options to the limitations faced by women in academia, prevented female scholars from continuing their careers. For example, pharmacist Emmy Zwillinger was initially gained a permit for household work, before getting an academic job in 1939.⁴⁴ Psychiatrist Nelly Wolffheim (1879–1965) was not able to get an academic job due to both language difficulties and adaptation. She worked as a model at an art school and sold handmade toys, continuing a scientific career only after the war.⁴⁵

While all refugee scholars suffered from a loss of status and livelihood and struggled to find work that would have matched their qualifications, the situation was especially difficult for female scholars, who in Britain were often able to get only permits to do domestic work.⁴⁶ Even in the US, women were often the first to get a job, albeit often in domestic work. Heilbut notes that often the women were younger and quicker to learn languages, allowing them to integrate into the society better. However, women with doctoral degrees sought primarily to find a job even if it was non-academic, in order to support their families, while men might sought jobs that would allow them to maintain their academic status. This would lead to situations in which a female medical doctor would support her husband's job search by getting a job peeling potatoes. Quack describes how the role of women in exile followed certain patterns in which they would be instrumental in arranging emigration, getting documents and making travel arrangements. In America, perhaps due to the more patriarchal social arrangements, they would revert to either being stay-at-home mothers or non-academic jobs. Sometimes this was also prompted by the fact that universities simply did not hire women to be professors.⁴⁷

This meant that there were numerous forms of structural sexism, from attitudes about family roles to the place of women in the workplace, which made it difficult for women to continue their scholarly career. These were issues that were independent of the people themselves and often beyond their control. Still, it becomes apparent in many of the narratives that women were conditioned to retreat to maintain the domestic sphere at the expense of their own careers. For example, Brigitte Bodenheimer's own career was sidelined after law school by the needs of her father, Ernst Levy and husband Edgar Bodenheimer, whose academic ambitions were seen as primary.⁴⁸

The depressed and the troubled

The last section of this chapter is also the most dramatic. Many of the scholarly exiles suffered from trauma and mental health issues. This was not uncommon even in the success stories. Schulz was seriously depressed, and his escape was possible only because of the energetic action of his wife Martha.⁴⁹

In other instances, refugee scholars lived a troubled and tragic life in exile. German child psychiatrist Bruno Bettelheim (1903–1990) went to the US, where he gained success as an expert on the psychology of concentration camps, writing many famous articles on the subject. His career was derailed by accusations of multifarious wrongdoing, from plagiarism to fraud. He later committed suicide.⁵⁰

Suicide was already a common response to repression and violence in Germany. This legacy continued in exile. Historian Hedwig Hintze (1884–1942) left Germany in 1939, but stayed in the Netherlands, waiting for a position to open. She was hired as an assistant professor at the New York New School of Social Research in 1941 but failed to get out of Europe. When deportations to camps in the East began in 1942, Hintze committed suicide.⁵¹

Social psychologist Gustav Ichheiser's whole family was killed in the Holocaust. He escaped to Switzerland and from there to London and the US. Despite working in numerous institutions, he found it impossible to obtain a permanent position. He even sought a position as a janitor at the University of Chicago to be able to stay. He fell into poverty and was institutionalized in the 1950s due to mental health problems. He died in hospital in 1969 in a suspected suicide.⁵²

There are numerous other instances of suicide. Hungarian computer scientist Klára Dán von Neumann (1911–1963) migrated with her husband to the US and had a successful career, but drowned herself in 1963.⁵³ Historian Edgar Zilsel (1891–1944) went to the US via Britain, gaining a Rockefeller Fellowship. He appeared to be working and publishing, even gaining a job at Mills College, before committing suicide.⁵⁴ Socio-legal scholar Georg Rusche committed suicide in London in 1950.⁵⁵

In all these cases, the impact of the trauma of exile is difficult to estimate. What the fundamental reasons were for such drastic measures as suicide is hard to evaluate and when the time difference between a trauma and suicide is several decades, that is even harder. Nevertheless, exile caused enormous mental health issues, many compounding with the other factors to complicate the difficult tasks of finding a new life.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have sought to illuminate some of the challenges faced by exiled scholars through the examples of the people who did not make it to the list of the success stories generally recounted in the literature. Familiar factors, from personal flexibility to contacts and language skills, each contributed to people having encountered difficulties in their time in exile/emigration. What appears from these individual cases is a clear picture of the different hurdles which lie ahead for the academic exiles. While none of them were issues that would have led to someone having to abandon their academic career, they could become that when compounded with other factors. Thus, even though someone like Pringsheim was a difficult person, old and a German nationalist to boot, he had still his loyal friends and supporters and his skills, both language skills and academic prowess. At the same time, one should not be judgmental in saying that all moves away from the academic path were failures. For instance, professor of ancient history Richard Lacqueur (1881–1959) spent 12 years in the US working in odd jobs such as packing in a book store.⁵⁶ We may perhaps be allowed to say that this may not have been a turn for the better for him. On the other hand, whether Arnold Ehrhardt's (1903–1965) turn to studying theology after a career in Roman and civil law was a result of working through traumas of exile is possible, but it certainly cannot be considered a failure.⁵⁷

One of the unstated assumptions of the scholarship on refugee academics is precisely the division between success and failure and ascribing it to either chance or personal qualities. Just as the individual does not make history,

neither are the stories of success or failure free from the structural realities that lie behind them. Behind those stories of chance encounters and helpful strangers are innumerable connections and facts that shape the probabilities of them taking place, from the language skills that make them possible or the sense of human similarity that encourages someone to make a connection in the first place. Just like the current language, which ascribes laziness or other personal qualities as reasons for marginalization and poverty among immigrants, the pre-eminence of the character and chance with regards to success is a screen and a sham. Connections, language skills, suitability and demand are all features influenced by structural issues, from racism to economic and educational deprivation. As was mentioned in the introduction to this volume, émigré scholars were evaluated and ranked according to their suitability and chance of success, predetermining some for success, others for obscurity. Individual qualities do matter, but they matter only within the structural and societal context.

This notion of structural marginalization is something that connects the historical and the contemporary worlds of the scholars at risk. In both cases, the refugee scholars enter the world of academic precarity in a structural position of downward mobility, as described by Vatansever. They are the flotsam and jetsam of forced migration, the reserve force of the academic labour market.⁵⁸ What the lionization of the few “success stories” does is to enforce a model in which fate of the individual is seen as his or her fault, as the equivalent of the moral choice of poverty.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the editors and the other collaborators in this project for their insightful comments and suggestions. He also acknowledges a debt of gratitude to Ms Iida Karjalainen and Mr Paul Behne for their invaluable assistance in the collection of material and the final editing of this work. The work has been funded by Academy of Finland-funded Centre of Excellence in Law, Identity and the European Narratives Subproject 1, funding decision numbers 312154 and 336676.

Notes

- 1 Jay 1985; Beatson and Zimmerman 2004; Benhabib 2018.
- 2 Benhabib 2018, 2: “[...] refugees whose names now read like a ‘Who’s Who’ of intellectual Europe: Hannah Arendt, Andr. Breton, Marc Chagall, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Siegfried Kracauer, Alma Maria Mahler Gropius Werfel, and others”.
- 3 Of those who vanish, usually just a casual remark is left, for instance Lehmann and Sheehan 1991, 2–3: “Many other refugees worked in smaller schools, where they carried heavy teaching obligations and had few opportunities for research. And of course, those who suffered most from emigration do not appear in this book: Unable to find an academic job, they simply drop from our view.”
- 4 Referencing silence(s) is quite difficult, in its stead one may refer to the recurring statements below about having to leave academia or ending their scientific career.

- 5 Ash and Söllner 1996, 10, 12. See also the chapter of Söllner in this volume.
- 6 Fermi 1968; Heilbut 1983; Greenberg 1978; Lehmann and Sheehan 1991; Ash and Söllner 1996; Rösch 2014; Jay 1985; Bahr 2007; Kettler 2011; Söllner 2019; the theme issue *Writing History in Exile in Storia della Storiografia* 69 (2016); Crawford et al. 2017; Benhabib 2018; Friedlander 2018. On legal scholars, see Beatson and Zimmerman 2004; see also Kmak 2019; Graham 2002; Lutter et al. 1993; Breunung and Walther 2012.
- 7 Camurri 2014.
- 8 Harlem 2010, 460–474.
- 9 Heilbut 1983, 28. This marginalization was equally a side product of the very strict immigration laws in Britain. They restricted entry and gave access based on labour shortages in specific fields, such as gardeners and housekeepers. A notorious example of marginalization was the tendency of medical associations in countries such as Britain or Sweden to demand restrictions for Jewish doctors who were seen as competition.
- 10 Weindling 1996, 86–88.
- 11 Steinmetz 2010, 1–27.
- 12 See the chapters by Ali Ali and Carol Bohmer in this volume.
- 13 Both popular and institutionalized racism were amply present in both British and American academia, with various quotas and hiring bans against Jewish academics.
- 14 Heilbut 1983, 50; Grenville 2019, 56 et passim.
- 15 Camurri 2014, 3–4, and Fleck 1996, 219.
- 16 See also the chapter by Carol Bohmer in this volume.
- 17 Tuori 2019. Most of these helpers, such as Kenneth Sisam, Francis de Zulueta or F. A. Mann, appear to have been motivated by nothing more than simple kindness and humanity.
- 18 Crawford et al. 2017, 11.
- 19 Stiefel and Mecklenburg, 1991, 4.
- 20 Weindling 1996, 86, footnote 1.
- 21 Stein 2004, 741 and appendix 772. See also Abrams 2009, 30–32, 194. His son Emil Fackenheim wrote his obituary, Fackenheim 2003.
- 22 Heilbut 1983, 54.
- 23 Tuori 2019, 38–39.
- 24 Breunung and Walther 2012, 577.
- 25 Breunung and Walther 2012, 576–7.
- 26 Tuori 2019.
- 27 Whitaker 2019, 343–345, 350.
- 28 Tenorth and Horn 1996, 164.
- 29 Camurri 2014, 5.
- 30 Wiegandt 2004, 536–581
- 31 Honoré 2004.
- 32 Stiefel and Mecklenburg 1991, 54, 56.
- 33 On Kelsen's exile, see Telman 2016 and Dreier 1993, 705–732.
- 34 Panofsky 1954, 7–27 and Söllner 1996, 254.
- 35 Kunkel 1969, 86; Tuori 2020, 78–79.
- 36 Epstein 1991, 125; Tuori 2020, 80.
- 37 Adams 2004, 368.
- 38 Dannermann 2004, 443–461.
- 39 Camurri 2014, 5.

- 40 Edgcomb 1993.
- 41 Kisch 1975.
- 42 On the return rates of exiles, see Krauss 2001.
- 43 Tenorth and Horn 1996, 163–165: “Humanists’ (*Geisteswissenschaftler*), particularly in the the field of education in its German variant, seem to have been confronted with greater problems abroad than natural scientists because of their distinctive way of thinking. For this reason, it may be that they felt more inclined to find their way back to Germany.”
- 44 Fischer 1996, 86, footnote 1.
- 45 Grenville 2019, 57–58, see also <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/wolffheim-nelly>.
- 46 Elsner 2017, 54.
- 47 Heilbut 1983, 69; Quack 1991, 102–108: “In their lives we can observe a development which proved fundamentally different from their former lives in Germany, namely a trend toward nonacademic occupations: from attorney to social worker, from teacher or doctor to nurse, from university-educated housewife to bakery worker, secretary, or masseuse.”
- 48 Bodenheimer 2016.
- 49 Ernst 2004, 105–203, at 140.
- 50 Sutton 1996, 675; Heilbut 1983, 209–211.
- 51 Kater 1991, 92–93.
- 52 Rudmin 1987, 165–80.
- 53 Ulam et al. 1969, 235–269.
- 54 Fleck 1996, 216, see also footnote 52.
- 55 Melossi 1980, 51–63.
- 56 Epstein 1991, 120.
- 57 Breunung and Walther 2012, 576.
- 58 Vatansever 2020, 8: “[...] this study attempts to *de-romanticize the concept of ‘exile’* by revealing the structural precarity underneath the glamorized presentation of the displaced academic labor force as quixotic ‘freedom fighters’.”

Bibliography

- Abrams, Nathan. 2009. *Caledonian Jews: A Study of Seven Small Communities in Scotland*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.
- Adams, John. 2004. “Clive M. Schmitthoff.” In *Jurists Uprooted. German-Speaking Emigré Lawyers in Twentieth-Century Britain*, edited by Jack Beatson, and Reinhard Zimmermann, 367–380. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ash, Mitchell G., and Alfons Söllner, eds. 1996. *Forced Migration and Scientific Change: Émigré German-Speaking Scientists and Scholars after 1933*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bahr, Ehrhard. 2007. *Weimar on the Pacific: German Exile Culture in Los Angeles and the Crisis of Modernism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Beatson, Jack, and Reinhard Zimmerman, eds. 2004. *Jurists Uprooted. German-Speaking Emigré Lawyers in Twentieth-Century Britain*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Benhabib, Seyla. 2018. *Exile, Statelessness and Migration. Playing Chess with History from Hannah Arendt to Isaiah Berlin*. Lawrenceville: Princeton University Press.
- Bodenheimer, Rosemarie. 2016. *Edgar and Brigitte: A German Jewish Passage to America*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

- Breunung, Leonie, and Manfred Walther. 2012. *Die Emigration deutscher Rechtswissenschaftler ab 1933, Ein bio-bibliographisches Handbuch. Band 1, Westeuropäische Staaten, Türkei, Palästina/Israel, lateinamerikanische Staaten, Südafrikanische Union*. Göttingen: De Gruyter.
- Camurri, Renato. 2014. "The Exile Experience Reconsidered: a Comparative Perspective in European Cultural Migration during the Interwar Period." *Transatlantica* 1: 1–17. doi:10.4000/transatlantica.6920
- Crawford, Sally, Katharina Ulmschneider, and Jás Elsner, eds. 2017. *The Ark of Civilization. Refugee Scholars and Oxford University, 1930–1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dannermann, Gerhard. 2004. "Martin Wolff (1872–1953)." In *Jurists Uprooted. German-Speaking Emigré Lawyers in Twentieth-Century Britain*, edited by Jack Beatson, and Reinhard Zimmermann, 443–461. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dreier, Horst. 1993. "Hans Kelsen (1881–1973). "Jurist des Jahrhunderts?" In *Deutsche Juristen Jüdischer Herkunft*, edited by Helmut Heinrichs, Hans-Harald Franzki, Klaus Schmalz, and Michael Stolleis, 705–732. Munich: Beck.
- Edgcomb, Gabrielle Simon. 1993. *From Swastika to Jim Crow: Refugee Scholars at Black Colleges*. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.
- Elsner, Jás. 2017. "Pfeiffer, Fraenkel and Refugee Scholarship in Oxford during and after the Second World War." In *The Ark of Civilization. Refugee Scholars and Oxford University, 1930–1945*, edited by Sally Crawford, Katharina Ulmschneider, and Jás Elsner, 25–49. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Epstein, Catherine. 1991. "Schicksalsgeschichte: Refugee Historians in the United States." In *An Interrupted Past. German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933*, edited by Hartmut Lehmann, and James J. Sheehan, 116–135. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ernst, Wolfgang. 2004. "Fritz Schulz (1879–1957)." In *Jurists Uprooted. German-Speaking Emigré Lawyers in Twentieth-Century Britain*, edited by Jack Beatson, and Reinhard Zimmermann, 105–203. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fackenheim, Emil. 2003. "Addressing Great Philosophical Questions for the Jewish People." *The Guardian*, October 10, 2003. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2003/oct/10/guardianobituaries>.
- Fermi, Laura. 1968. *Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration from Europe 1930–1941*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Fischer, Klaus. 1996. "Identification of Emigration-Induced Scientific Change." In *Forced Migration and Scientific Change. Émigré German-Speaking Scientists and Scholars after 1933*, edited by Mitchell G. Ash, and Alfons Söllner, 23–47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fleck, Christian. 1996. "Emigration of Social Scientists' Schools from Austria." In *Forced Migration and Scientific Change. Émigré German-Speaking Scientists and Scholars after 1933*, edited by Mitchell G. Ash, and Alfons Söllner, 198–223. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Friedlander, Judith. 2018. *A Light in Dark Times: The New School for Social Research and Its University in Exile*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Graham, Kyle. 2002. "The Refugee Jurist and American Law Schools, 1933–1941." *American Journal of Comparative Law* 50, no. 4: 777–818. doi:10.1093/ajcl/50.4.777.
- Greenberg, Karen J. 1978. *The Mentor Within: The German Refugee Scholars of the Nazi Period and Their American Context*. Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Yale University.

- Grenville, Anthony. 2019. "Academic Refugees in Wartime Oxford." In *Ark of Civilization. Refugee Scholars and Oxford University, 1930–1945*, edited by Sally Crawford, Katharina Ulmschneider, and Jaś Elsner, 50–61. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harlem, Andrew. 2010. "Exile as a Dissociative State: When a Self is 'Lost in Transit'." *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 27, no. 4: 460–474. doi:10.1037/a0020755.
- Heilbut, Anthony. 1983. *Exiled in Paradise. German Refugee Artists and Intellectuals in America from the 1930's to the Present*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Honoré, Tony. 2004. "Fritz Pringsheim (1882–1967)." In *Jurists Uprooted. German-Speaking Emigré Lawyers in Twentieth-Century Britain*, edited by Jack Beatson, and Reinhard Zimmermann, 205–232. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jay, Martin. 1985. *Permanent Exiles: Essays On the Intellectual Migration From Germany to America*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kater, Michael. 1991. "Refugee Historians in America: Pre-emigration Germany to 1939." In *An Interrupted Past. German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933*, edited by Harmut Lehmann, and James J. Sheehan, 73–93. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kettler, David. 2011. *The Liquidation of Exile: Studies in the Intellectual Emigration of the 1930s*. London and New York: Anthem Press.
- Kisch, Guido. 1975. *Die Lebensweg eines Rechtshistorikers*. Sigmaringen: Thorbecke.
- Kmak, Magdalena. 2019. "The Impact of Exile on Law and Legal Science 1934–64." In *Roman Law and the Idea of Europe*, edited by Kaius Tuori, and Heta Björklund, 15–34. London: Bloomsbury.
- Krauss, Marita. 2001. *Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land. Geschichte der Remigration nach 1945*. Munich: C. H. Beck Verlag.
- Kunkel, Wolfgang. 1969. "Ernst Levy zum Gedächtnis." *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Romanistische Abteilung* 86, no. 1: xiii–xxxii.
- Lehmann, Hartmut, and James J. Sheehan, eds. 1991. *An Interrupted Past: German-speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lutter, Marcus, Ernst C. Stiefel, and Michael H. Hoeflich, eds. 1993. *Der Einfluß deutscher Emigranten auf die Rechtsentwicklung in den USA und in Deutschland. Vorträge und Referate des Bonner Symposions im September 1991*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.
- Melossi, Dario. 1980. "Georg Rusche: A Biographical Essay." *Crime and Social Justice* 14: 51–63.
- Panofsky, Erwin. 1954. "Three Decades of Art History in the United States: Impressions of a Transplanted European." *College Art Journal* 14, no. 1: 7–27.
- Quack, Sibylle. 1991. "Everyday Life and Emigration: The Role of Women." In *An Interrupted Past. German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933*, edited by Harmut Lehmann, and James J. Sheehan, 102–108. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rösch, Felix. 2014. *Émigré Scholars and the Genesis of International Relations: A European Discipline in America?* London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rudmin, Floyd. 1987. "Gustav Ichheiser in the History of Social Psychology: An Early Phenomenology of Social Attribution." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 26, no. 2: 165–180.
- Söllner, Alfons. 1996. "From Public Law To Political Science? The Emigration of German Scholars after 1933 and Their Influence on the Transformation of a Discipline." In *Forced Migration and Scientific Change: Émigré German-Speaking Scientists and Scholars after 1933*, edited by Mitchell G. Ash, and Alfons Söllner, 246–272. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Söllner, Alfons. 2019. *Political Scholar Zur Intellektuellengeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Hamburg: CEP Europäische Verlagsanstalt.
- Stein, Peter. 2004. "Émigré Legal Scholars in Britain – Personal Recollections." In *Jurists Uprooted. German-Speaking Emigré Lawyers in Twentieth-Century Britain*, edited by Jack Beatson, and Reinhard Zimmermann, 739–742. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Steinmetz, George. 2010. "Ideas in Exile: Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Failure to Transplant Historical Sociology into the United States." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 23, no. 1: 1–27. 10.1007/S10767-009-9062-Z.
- Stiefel, Ernst, and Frank Mecklenburg. 1991. *Deutsche Juristen im amerikanischen Exil: (1933–1950)*. Tübingen: Mohr.
- Sutton, Nina. 1996. *Bettelheim: A Life and a Legacy*. New York: Basic Books cop.
- Telman, Jeremy, ed. 2016. *Hans Kelsen in America – Selective Affinities and the Mysteries of Academic Influence*. Berlin: Springer Verlag.
- Tenorth, Heinz-Elmar, and Klaus Horn. 1996. "Impact of Emigration on German Pedagogy." In *Forced Migration and Scientific Change: Émigré German-Speaking Scientists and Scholars after 1933*, edited by Mitchell G. Ash, and Alfons Söllner, 156–172. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tuori, Kaius. 2019. "Exiled Romanists between Traditions: Pringsheim, Schulz and Daube." In *Roman Law and the Idea of Europe*, edited by Kaius Tuori, and Heta Björklund, 35–52. London: Bloomsbury.
- Tuori, Kaius. 2020. *Empire of Law: Nazi Germany, Exile Scholars and the Battle for the Future of Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ulam, S., H. W. Kuhn, A. W. Tucker, and Claude E. Shannon. 1969. "John von Neumann, 1903–1957." In *Intellectual Migration: Europe and America, 1930–1960*, edited by Donald Fleming, and Bernard Bailyn, 235–268. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vatansever, Aslı. 2020. *At the Margins of Academia: Exile, Precariousness, and Subjectivity*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Weindling, Paul. 1996. "The Impact of German Medical Scientists on British Medicine: A Case Study of Oxford, 1933–45." In *Forced Migration and Scientific Change: Émigré German-Speaking Scientists and Scholars after 1933*, edited by Mitchell G. Ash, and Alfons Söllner, 86–114. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Whitaker, Graham. 2019. "Philosophy in Exile: The Contrasting Experiences of Ernst Cassirer and Raymond Klibansky in Oxford." In *The Ark of Civilization: Refugee Scholars and Oxford University, 1930–1945*, edited by Sally Crawford, Katharina Ulmschneider, and Jás Elsner, 341–358. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wiegandt, Manfred. 2004. "Gerhard Leibholz (1901–1982)." In *Jurists Uprooted: German-Speaking Emigré Lawyers in Twentieth-Century Britain*, edited by Jack Beatson, and Reinhard Zimmermann, 536–581. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.