HI 440: Refugee Hollywood (1933-1950)

Mondays 12-3 PM
History 504
Office Hours: Tue. 1-2:30, Thurs. 11-12:30

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This course focuses on the flight of writers, artists, and intellectuals from Europe to the United States in the wake of Adolph Hitler’s rise to power. Through an exploration of accounts offered by the exiles and the works they produced, it seeks both to understand the experiences of this group of individuals and to assess the influence of this event on American culture.

After an initial examination of how individuals made the decision to go into exile and the various routes that they took, we will look more closely at the group of exiles living in Los Angeles — including the novelist Thomas Mann, the philosopher Theodor Adorno, the composers Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Arnold Schoenberg and Hans Eisler, the poet Bertolt Brecht, and the directors William Dieterle and Fritz Lang — and the works they produced. We will conclude with an examination of the factors that drove some of them back to Europe.

Course Requirements:

Regular attendance at — and active participation in — class meetings is expected of all members of the colloquium. Beyond this basic requirement, students will also be asked to submit three types of written assignments during the semester: 1) weekly comments on the reading, 2) two short working papers, and 3) a final research paper.

1) Comments on Readings: After completing the readings for the upcoming meeting, students will post brief (500-750 word) reflections on the readings to the course’s WordPress, indicating issues or problems to be addressed at the next meeting of the seminar. The proposals must be posted by 8 AM on the day of the colloquium meeting.

2) Working Papers: Students are also required to submit two short (i.e., 850-1000 words) working papers focusing on a work (i.e., a text, film, musical composition, etc.) produced by an exile or an issues that we have been discussing in the course. The first paper will be due on or before the February 29 meeting and the second will be due on or before the April 20 meeting. Students are encouraged to meet with me to discuss possible topics and the possible relationship of these papers to the final research paper.

3) Research Paper: The major written assignment for the colloquium will be a 15-20 page research paper exploring some aspect of the exile experience. Students must turn in a 7-10 page preliminary proposal for this paper (consisting of a brief statement of the proposed topic, a tentative outline, and a preliminary bibliography) by March 14. Students should also make arrangements to meet with me to discuss the proposal at some point prior to April 11. A five page summary of the paper should be posted to the course site by 8 AM on Friday, April 22; these papers will by presented and discussed during the final class meeting (April 25). A final copy of the paper will be due by 5 PM on Friday, April 29. Prior to beginning work on the paper, students are urged to review the History department writing guide, which is available on the History department website.

Policies on Academic Conduct, Incompletes, Digital Devices, and other Matters

For the policy regarding plagiarism and other academic conduct matters, please review the University Academic Conduct Code, which is available at: http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/. Please note that these rules apply to all work (including contributions to the discussion forum) done in this course.

The grades on unexcused late submissions will be reduced by a half grade for each day they are delayed.

Incompletes will be given only in cases of serious illness, family emergencies, and other matters of sufficient gravity to render you incapable of finishing the course. CAS rules require that I make arrangements with you for the completion of coursework prior to the issuing of an Incomplete.

Since we will be making use of large quantity of scanned documents, students are welcome to use computers or portable digital devices during class meetings, but please mute any alarms or notification sounds and refrain from using these devices for tasks other than those connected with the course. I may, from time to time, request that you turn off devices in order to facilitate discussions. Mobile phones should, of course, be silenced.
Students with an accommodations letter from the Office of Disability Services should meet with me by the second week of classes to discuss arrangements that would facilitate their participation in the course.

**Course Materials:**

You should acquire the following books:

- Max Horkheimer & Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford University Press)
- Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, translated by John E. Woods (Vintage Press)

Used copies of both titles should be available, but please make sure to get these translations. John Cumming’s translation of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, while an important pioneering effort, is quite misleading and tends to make an already difficult text even more difficult to read. *Doctor Faustus* first appeared in an English translation executed by Mann’s principal American translator, H.T. Lowe-Porter. While it remains in print and used copies are widely available, you should acquire John Woods’ 1999 translation does a better job of conveying the ironic tone that is so central to Mann’s work. It also includes portions of the text that were missing from the Lowe-Porter translation.

The other readings for the course can be accessed via Mugar or will be available from the Google Drive folder that I have set up for this course. Please check to make sure that you are able to access this material at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting and notify me immediately if you are having any difficulties.

Background information about the readings and links to them will be available on the Discussion Forum during the week before each meeting.

A selection of resources that may be of use in conducting research for the final paper will be available on the course website.

Readings may be subject to minor modifications as the semester progresses. My weekly post on the discussion forum will provide the most accurate list of readings and information on where they are located.

**Schedule of Meetings and Weekly Readings**

Items marked with an asterisk are available in the course Google Drive folder. Items with active hyperlinks can be accessed via Mugar Library.

1/25  **Introduction**

Screening and preliminary discussion of *Shadows in Paradise: Hitler’s Exiles in Hollywood* (60 minute video).

2/1  **The Decision to Leave**

- Erika and Klaus Mann, *Escape to Life* 15-57*
- Salka Viertel, *The Kindness of Strangers* 121-138.*
- Alfred Döblin, “The Reichstag is Burning,” in Mark Anderson, ed. *Hitler’s Exiles* 23-7*
- Alma Mahler-Werfel, *And the Bridge is Love* 214-9, 227-40.*
- Thomas Mann, *Diaries 1918-1939* 127-8, 135-7, 152-3, 170-1, 294*
- Thomas Mann, Letter to Eduard Korrodi of February 3, 1936, in *The Letters of*
2/8  Exit Routes

Max Horkheimer, letter to Theodor Adorno, October 25, 1934 in Horkheimer, A Life in Letters 52-53.*
Theodor Adorno, letter to his parents, May 12, 1939, in Adorno, Letters to his Parents 1-4.*
Thomas Mann, Diaries 1918-1939 337-45.*
Thomas Mann, “Speech to the Emergency Rescue Committee”**
Albert O. Hirschman, A Propensity for Self-Subversion pp. 120-126.*
Hans Sahl, “On Varian Fry,” in Mark Anderson, ed. Hitler’s Exiles 154-6* Alma Mahler-Werfel, And the Bridge is Love 241-69 *
Lisa Fittko, Escape through the Pyrenees (selection)*
Terrence Renaud, “‘This Is Our Dunkirk’: Karl B. Frank and the Politics of the Emergency Rescue Committee”**
“Flight Described by Feuchtwanger: Refugees Here from Denmark and Germany”, New York Times of October 6, 1940, p. 38* Walter Benjamin, letters to Theodor Adorno (August 8, 1940) and to Henry Gurland (September 25, 1940) in Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin, The Complete Correspondence 1928-1940 339-342.*
Bertolt Brecht, Journals 150-152*

2/16 (Note: Tuesday Class) Exile Life (Part I)

Erika and Klaus Mann, Escape to Life 282-307*
Thomas Mann, “The Exiled Writers’ Relation to his Homeland,” in Proceedings
of the Writers' Congress (Los Angeles, 1943) 339-345*
Salka Viertel, The Kindness of Strangers 138-147 248 (“After the fall of Paris…”) 251)*
Gottfried Bermann-Fischer and Thomas Mann, “The ‘Enemy Alien’ Question” and “Telegram to President Roosevelt”, in Mark Anderson, ed. Hitler’s Exiles 249-252.*

2/22 Exile Life (Part II)

Erhard Bahr, Weimar on the Pacific 79-104
Theodor Adorno, Letters to his Parents 68-74, 78-80, 82-88, 94-96, 156-158*

2/29 Exile Cinema I: William Dieterle

Film: The Life of Emile Zola (1937)
Gerd Gemünden, German Exile Cinema 1933-1951 1-16, 48-73

3/14 Exile Composers: Korgold, Schoenberg, and Eisler

Compositions:
Korgold, Concerto for Violin in D Major (25 minutes)
Schoenberg, A Survivor from Warsaw (7 minutes)
Eisler, Hollywood Songbook (Selections)*
Readings:
Dorothy Lamb Crawford, *A Windfall of Musicians*, 162-197
Schoenberg on America,” in Walter Frisch, ed. *Schoenberg and his World* 288-309.*
Erhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific* 265-288

3/21 Exile Cinema II: Fritz Lang

Film: *Hangmen Also Die*

Erhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific* 129-147
Bertolt Brecht, *Journals* 250-263, 274-275*

3/28 Horkheimer & Adorno I: Myth as Enlightenment & Enlightenment as Myth

Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* xiv-xix, 1-62
Erhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific*, 30-78

4/4 Horkheimer & Adorno II: The Culture Industry

Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* 120-167

4/11 Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*

Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*
Erhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific* 242-264
Thomas Mann, Letter to Theodor Adorno, December 1945, in *The Letters of Thomas Mann* 361-2*
Thomas Mann, “Germany and the Germans,” in Mann, Lectures at the Library of Congress, 47-66.*

4/20 (Note: Wednesday Class)  Surveillance and Interrogation

Andrew Rubin, “The Adorno Files,” in Nigel Gibson and Andrew Rubin, Adorno: A Critical Reader 172-190*
Bertolt Brecht, Testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee [mp3 audio file].*
Bertolt Brecht, Journals 372.*
Thomas Mann, Letter to Theodor Adorno, in The Letters of Thomas Mann 423-4. *
Salka Viertel, The Kindness of Strangers 300-4.*

4/25 Presentation and Discussion of Final Papers