

HI 440: Refugee Hollywood (1933-1950)

Wednesdays 2:30-5:15 PM
History 304
Office Hours: Monday 3-4:30; Wednesday 12:30-2

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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 site](#), indicating issues or problems to be addressed at the next meeting of the seminar. Comments must be posted by 8 AM on the Tuesday before 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 28 meeting and the second will be due on or before the April 20 meeting. You should make arrangements 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 be presented and discussed during the final class meeting (May 2). A final copy of the paper will be due by 5 PM on Monday, May 7. Prior to beginning work on the paper, students are urged to consult the History department writing guide, which is available on the History department website.

In determining the final grade, the research paper will count for 50% of the final grade, the working papers for 25%, and contributions to the discussion forum for 25%.

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:

The following books should be available at the Boston University Bookstore:

Mark Anderson, editor, *Hitler's Exiles: Personal Stories of the Flight from Nazi Germany to America* (New Press)
Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, translated by John E. Woods (Vintage Press)

If you are purchasing used copies, make sure that you acquire John Woods' translation of *Doctor Faustus*. The book initially 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, Woods' 1999 \ does a better job of conveying the tone that is central to Mann's work and includes portions of the text that were missing from the Lowe-Porter translation.

The other readings for the course will be available either from Mugar or 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 course WordPress site during the week before each meeting.

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 hyperlinks can be downloaded from Mugar.

1/24 Introduction

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

1/31 The Decision to Leave

[Ehrhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific: German Exile Culture in Los Angeles and the Crisis of Modernism*](#) (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007) 301-308

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

Ernst Toller, "An Open Letter to Herr Goebbels," in Mark Anderson, ed. *Hitler's Exiles* 35-38

Alma Mahler-Werfel, *And the Bridge is Love* 214-9, 227-40.*

Lion Feuchtwanger, "The Grandeur and Misery of Exile," in Mark Anderson, ed. *Hitler's Exiles* 169-172.

Ludwig Marcuse, "Resisting America," Mark Anderson, ed. *Hitler's Exiles* 173-176

Bertolt Brecht, "Germany," "When I Was Rich," and "On Reading 'When I Was Rich'" in Brecht, *Poems* 218-221.*

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*

Thomas Mann 205-210.*

Thomas Mann, "An Exchange of Letters" and "Culture and Politics," in Mann, *Order of the Day*, 105- 113 and 228-237.*

[Gosta Werner, "Fritz Lang and Goebbels: Myth and Facts." *Film Quarterly* 43, no. 3 \(1990\): 24-27 \[JSTOR\]](#)

Max Horkheimer, Letter to the Prussian Minister for Science, Art, and People's Education in Berlin, April 21, 1933, in Horkheimer, *A Life in Letters*, pp. 24-27.*

2/7 Exit Routes

[Dorothy Thompson, "Refugees: A World Problem," *Foreign Affairs* 16, no. 3 \(April 1938\): 375-87.](#)

David Josephson, "The Exile of European Music: Documentation of Upheaval and Immigration in the *New York Times*," in *Driven into Paradise*, ed. Reinhold Brinkmann and Christoph Wolff, 92-152.*

Carol Paul-Merritt, "The Reception of German Writers in Exile by the American Liberal Press 1933-1945: Changes and Trends" in John M. Spalek and Robert F. Bell, editors, *Exile: The Writer's Experience* 95-118.*

Max Horkheimer, Letter to Friedrich Pollock, May 27, 1934, in Horkheimer, *A Life in Letters* 29-32*

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"*

Cynthia Jaffee McCabe, "'Wanted by the Gestapo: Saved by America' — Varian Fry and the Emergency Rescue Committee," in Jackman and Borden, editors, *The Muses Flee Hitler* 79-94*

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 Henny Gurland (September 25, 1940) in Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin, *The Complete Correspondence 1928-1940* 339-342.*

Bertolt Brecht, *Journals* 150-152*

Bertolt Brecht, "The Landscape of Exile," "On the Suicide of the Refugee W.B." and "The Typhoon" in Brecht, *Poems*, 363.*

Bertolt Brecht, Letters to Hoffman R. Hays and Erwin Piscator, in Brecht, *Letters* 335-7.*

2/14 Exile Life (Part I)

Erika and Klaus Mann, *Escape to Life* 282-307*

Jarrell C. Jackman, "German Émigrés in Southern California," in Jackman and Borden, editors, *The Muses Flee Hitler* 95-110.*

Hans Wagener, "Winning the Jackpot: German Exile Writers Who Made It Big," *Pacific Coast Philology* 27, no. 1/2 (1992): 3-9.*

Ernst Bloch, "Disrupted Language, Disrupted Culture," *Decision*, December 1939*

Carl Zuckermayer, "A Part of Myself," in Mark Anderson, ed. *Hitler's Exiles* 274-9.*

Thomas Mann, "The Exiled Writers' Relation to his Homeland," in *Proceedings of the Writers' Congress* (Los Angeles, 1943) 339-345*

Lion Feuchtwanger, "The Working Problems of the Writer in Exile," *Proceedings of the Writers' Congress* 345-350*

Janet Flanner, "Goethe in Hollywood," *The New Yorker*, December 13 and 20, 1941 [reprinted in *Janet Flanner's World: Uncollected Writings 1932-1975*,

- ed. Irving Dietman 165-188].*
- 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.
- Friedrich Kohner, *The Magician of Sunset Boulevard: The Improbable Life of Paul Kohner, Hollywood Agent* pp. 109-112.*

2/21 Exile Life (Part II)

- Theodor Adorno, *Letters to his Parents* 68-74, 78-80, 82-88, 94-96, 156-158*
- Hanns Eisler, “Letter to Ernst Hermann Meyer,” and “A Musical Journey Through America,” in *Hanns Eisler: A Rebel in Music*, Manfred Grabs, ed., 74, 82-94*
- Hanns Eisler, “Hollywood Seen from the Left,” in *Hanns Eisler: A Rebel in Music*, Manfred Grabs, ed., 101-105.*
- Bertolt Brecht, “In the Second Year of My Flight,” “Concerning the Label Emigrant,” “Thoughts on the Duration of Exile,” “To A Portable Radio, “I, The Survivor,” *Poems* 251, 301-2, 351, 392.*
- Bertolt Brecht, Letter to Karl Korsch, *Letters*, 338-9.*
- Bertolt Brecht, *Journals* 155-171, 174-177, 181-183, 190-193, 202-203, 212, 214-215, 222-223.*
- Bertolt Brecht, “On Thinking About Hell,” “Hollywood Elegies,” “Hollywood,” *Poems* 367, 380-1, 382.*
- Bertolt Brecht, Letter to Ruth Berlau in Brecht, *Letters* 360.*

2/28 Exile Cinema I: William Dieterle

Film: *The Life of Emile Zola* (1937)

Readings:

- Erika Mann and Klaus Mann, “Hollywood” in *Escape to Life* 265-281.*
- William Dieterle, “Hollywood and the European Crisis,” *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science* IX, no. 1 (1940): 96-103.*
- William Dieterle, “Europeans in Hollywood,” *Sight and Sound*, July 1, 1952, 39-40.*
- Gerd Gemünden, *German Exile Cinema 1933-1951* 1-16, 48-73
- [Felicia Herman, "Hollywood, Nazism, and the Jews, 1933-41." *American Jewish History* 89, no. 1 \(2001\): 61-89](#)
- [Tom Flinn, "Warners Revisited: William Dieterle - the Plutarch of Hollywood." *The Velvet Light Trap - A Critical Journal of Film and Television* 15 \(Fall 1975\): 23-28.](#)*
- [Chris Robé, "Taking Hollywood Back: The Historical Costume Drama, the Biopic, and Popular Front U.S. Film Criticism." *Cinema Journal* 48, no. 2 \(2009\): 70-87.](#)

3/7 No Class (Spring Break)

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

Compositions:

- [Korngold, *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
- Brian Gilliam – “A Viennese opera composer in Hollywood: Korngold’s double exile in America,” in Reinhold Brinkmann and Christoph Wolff, *Driven into Paradise : the Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United*

- States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) 223-242.*
 Schoenberg on America,” in Walter Frisch, ed. *Schoenberg and his World* 288-309.*
 Salka Viertel, *The Kindness of Strangers*, 206 (“Thalberg did not like ...)-209.*
[Sabine M Feisst, “Arnold Schoenberg and the Cinematic Art.” *The Musical Quarterly* 83: 1 \(1999\): 93–113.](#)
[Hanns Eisler, “Document: Film Music--Work in Progress \(1941\).” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 18:4 \(1998\): 591–94.](#)
[Hanns Eisler, “Document: Final Report on the Film Music Project on a Grant by the Rockefeller Foundation \(1942\).” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 18:4 \(1998\): 595–98.](#)

3/21 Exile Cinema II: Fritz Lang

Film: *Hangmen Also Die*

- [Klaus Mann, “What’s Wrong with Anti-Nazi Films?,” *New German Critique*, no. 89 \(2003\): 173–82.](#)
[Gerd Gemunden, “Brecht in Hollywood: ‘Hangmen Also Die’ and the Anti-Nazi Film,” *TDR* 43:4 \(1999\): 65–76.](#)
 Bertolt Brecht, *Journals* 250-263, 274-275*
[Sally Bick, “A Double Life in Hollywood: Hanns Eisler’s Score for the Film *Hangmen Also Die* and the Covert Expressions of a Marxist Composer,” *The Musical Quarterly* 93:1 \(2010\): 90–143.](#)

3/28 Horkheimer & Adorno: The Culture Industry

- Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* 120-167*
[Ulrich Plass, “Dialectic of Regression: Theodor W. Adorno and Fritz Lang,” *Telos* 2009, no. 149 \(2009\): 127–50](#)
[Martin Hufner, “‘Composing for the Films’ \(1947\): Adorno, Eisler and the Sociology of Music,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television* 18, no. 4 \(October 1998\): 535-540.](#)

4/4 Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus I*

- Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus* pp. 1-153
 Thomas Mann, “The War and the Future,” in Mann, *Lectures at the Library of Congress*, 23-43*

4/11 Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*

- Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus* pp. 154-340
 Thomas Mann, “Germany and the Germans,” in Mann, *Lectures at the Library of Congress*, 47-66.*
 Thomas Mann, Letter to Theodor Adorno, December 1945, in *The Letters of Thomas Mann* 361-2*

4/18 Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*

- Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus* pp. 341-534.
 Thomas Mann, “Goethe and Democracy,” in Mann, *Lectures at the Library of Congress* 107-132*

4/25 Surveillance and Interrogation

- [James Wierzbicki, “Hanns Eisler and the FBI.” *Music & Politics* 2, no. 2 \(Summer 2008\): 1–31.](#)
 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.*

5/2 Presentation and Discussion of Final Papers