increasingly dominated by analytical frameworks derived from literature. The current shift from theory to history is a proof of the reactive nature of progress in the academic world; the pendulum is now leaning towards the factual interpretation of the past, yet such interpretation often seems sought after as the result of some sort of disappointment with theory, rather than a straightforward approach to history itself.

Each of the essays collected for this issue represents an answer to the above contradiction. An attempt has been made at gathering examples drawn from international scholarship as much as from topics addressed from a cross-national perspective. This approach is perhaps exemplified by the dyptich on the Lumière Brothers, as seen by a key figure in French film studies (Jacques-Kramon) and a relentless partisan of empirical research (Hiroshi Komatsu). The radical contrast between their approaches is the most eloquent indicator of a debate whose implications are bound to shape the way we are going to perceive film history at the outset of the third millennium.

Paolo Cherchi Usai

Note
1. The anecdote has been brought to my attention by Stephen Bottonore, whom I thank for the documentation provided on the subject.

UPCOMING ISSUES/CALL FOR PAPERS

International Cinema of the 1910s
edited by Kristin Thompson
(deadline for submissions
1 June 1997)

Cinema Pioneers
edited by Stephen Bottonore
(deadline for submissions
1 September 1997)

The First Avant-Garde
edited by Paolo Cherchi Usai
(deadline for submissions
1 December 1997)

Film and Television
edited by Richard Koszarski
(deadline for submissions
1 March 1998)

Arte
edited by Mark Langer
(deadline for submissions
1 June 1998)

The editors of FILM HISTORY encourage the submission of manuscripts within the overall scope of the journal. These may correspond to the announced themes of future issues above, but may equally be on any topic relevant to film history.

German exile cinema, 1933-1950

Jan-Christopher Horak

On the road

In Carrefour (1938), a successful businessman is suffering from amnesia when his repressed criminal past catches up with him. As his former criminal persona resurfaces, he is increasingly torn between his bourgeois and underworld life. Acquitted in a court of law, the protagonist manages to protect his family, but the truth of his real history is quietly suppressed. The motif of the Doppelgänger or split personality in Carrefour is reminiscent of German expressionist films of the 1920s, and simultaneously anticipates American film noirs of the 1940s.

However, this melancholy film is a French melodrama, then again, it isn’t. Until his emigration in 1933, Eugene Tuscherer, who produced Carrefour, had worked in Germany as a production supervisor. Tuscherer’s brother-in-law, Kurt (Curz) Berhardt, directed the film. Before the National Socialists came to power, Berhardt had successfully directed films in Berlin, making several with Tuscherer. The émigré journalist Hans Kafka was responsible for Carrefour’s screenplay, along with experienced screenwriter Robert Liebmann. Another German Jew from Berlin, Adolf Lantz, edited the film. All of them had worked in the Weimar film industry, before their emigration in 1933. Thus, all the main participants in the production of Carrefour were, in fact, German-speaking Jews in exile.

The first obstacle in writing a history of German exile cinema, therefore, involves clear definitions. German exile films are not merely produced in exile by Germans, they are also necessarily the product of a national cinema. Carrefour, for example, has...
German exile cinema should not be seen as a marginal phenomenon in a host country's national production, but rather should be read as German cinema history, parallel to a film history of the Third Reich. It is, in this sense, a piece of anti-fascist culture, produced by the 'other Germany', to employ the terminology of German exiles. For its practitioners, German exile cinema was much like exile literature and the exile press, a continuation of the democratic principles of German cultural life, as it had developed before Hitler's rise to power. This remained the case even when émigré directors, producers and scriptwriters were not primarily politically-minded, but rather interested merely in continuing their film careers in a new country. For many young German filmmakers of the 1960s, the true history of German cinema began in the Weimar Republic and led to New German Cinema via such German émigrés as Fritz Lang and Lotte Eisner, in effect side-stepping the generation of the fathers who had morally compromised themselves in the film industry of the Third Reich.

The concept of exile cinema cannot be equated with filmmakers in exile, because exile cinema was only a necessary reality as long as there was no free permits and therefore remained unannounced in the credits. For example, the Czechoslovakian film Kisses in the Snow (1935) was produced, directed and written by German émigrés, yet only the film's author was officially mentioned. 7 As a result of such factors, the number of German exile films actually produced between 1933 and 1950 cannot be exactly ascertained. Despite the film's production, German filmmakers in exile managed to collectively produce more than 220 films in Austria, Hungary, France, England, Holland, Italy, Switzerland and the United States. Even if this number appears slight in comparison to an annual production of over 100 films in Nazi Germany, it nevertheless documents a considerable accomplishment. Exile cinema encompassed almost all contemporary film genres: musicals, comedies, melodramas, costume films and historical dramas, crime films and a new genre, the anti-Nazi film. At best, German exile films were reminiscent of the great productions of the Weimar Republic. Generally, though, they managed at least to achieve the level of commercial entertainment films.

German exile cinema will be defined here as including all those films produced after 1933 outside Germany by a team made up of a German émigré producer, screenwriter and director. It was indeed uncommon to have all three positions held by émigrés. In many cases, films can be considered to be the product of exile when only the participating director and author or producer and director or producer and writer were in exile. Other émigrés often worked behind the scenes in technical positions, e.g. as cameramen or set designers. Often times, émigrés had to work without labour

German cinema, as it was not possible for émigrés to return to Germany, i.e. in the period of the Third Reich and shortly thereafter (1933–50). 8 Exile, on the other hand, was for most German Jewish filmmakers a permanent state of affairs, continuing much longer than the years of National Socialism. Indeed, for many it lasted a lifetime. The study of the biographies of individual émigré directors, scriptwriters, producers and technicians belongs, therefore, to a history of filmmakers in exile, and only partially to a history of exile cinema.

On 28 March 1933, roughly two months after Hitler's assumption of power, the Propaganda Ministry Joseph Goebbels spoke to the Association of German Film Producers (DAFHO) at a now notorious meeting at the Berlin Kaiserhof Hotel. Despite clearly articulated propagandistic intentions, Goebbels' speech did not convey the far-reaching structural and personnel changes that were to come. The trade press played down the Minister's bilking commentary, aimed at 'economic exploiters' (Konjunkturjäger) in the film industry. In point of fact, such terminology was deeply anti-Semitic, since the term was consistently attached to the adjective 'Jewish'.

The first step towards reorganising the film industry occurred when the Propaganda Ministry founded a temporary Film Guild (Filmkammern).
in the summer of 1933 involving Jewish filmmakers. In mid-May 1933 a French film magazine noted: 'The cleansing encountered virtually no opposition and many of our film colleagues have become victims.' Nowhere in Germany, nowhere in the German film industry, was there resistance or protest against such anti-Semitic measures; rather, there was only the personal decision to be made, whether to emigrate or to collaborate with the German Fascists. In fact, a mere 5 per cent of all German 'Aryans' who were not in danger politically chose to emigrate. Given the common language, it seemed obvious that emigre filmmakers would first choose to find employment opportunities in the Austrian film industry. However, because the Austrian film industry was almost totally dependent on the German market, German emigre producers were only able to find investors in the first years of exile. In fact, a Jewish boycott was more or less in place in Austria as early as 1934. Soon after, only emigre film producers such as Erich Marwsky, Samuel Spiegel or Jakob Fleck employed German-Jewish film technicians who had been expelled from the Fatherland. Producer Joseph Pasternak, who had worked in Berlin for the German Universal, commuted back and forth between Vienna and Budapest, producing Austro-Hungarian films, funded by American capital and employing a host of German emigres. Hermann Kosteritz (Henry Koster), Max Neufeld, Richard Oswald, Walter Reisch, Carl Lamor, Felix Joachimson, Ernst Neubach, Karl Natl and Franz Schultz were among the most active directors and scriptwriters. In the 1930s these filmmakers contributed significantly to the creation of the genre of the Wienerfilm, melancholy comedies and operettas. For political and economic reasons, Austrian film producers asserted a Jewish blacklist on April 20, 1936, when they signed a film convention with the Third Reich. As a result, the annual production of German exile films in Austria declined dramatically from ten films in 1935 to four films in 1936. With a single film being produced in 1937. Nevertheless, thirty-two exile films were produced in these few short years, which accounted for 15 per cent of all exile cinema. Among the exile films produced were: Abenteuer im Lando (1933), Frischschenke (1934), Wenn Du jung bist, gehörst Dir die Welt (1934), Kleine Mutti (1935), Episode (1935) and Fraulein Ulli (1936).

In Hungary it was possible to produce German exile cinema a bit longer. In 1933, Hungarian cinema theatre owners had even organised a boycott against German films produced in the Third Reich. Given such a friendly atmosphere, it is not surprising that a series of exile films shot in Germany and Hungarian language versions were produced, including Peter (1934), Die Viererhahls Musketeer (1935) and Ball im Savoy (1936). Further exile films were made by Hungarians, returning home after having worked in Berlin in the late 1920s and early 1930s, eg Istvan Szekely (Steve Sekely), Karl Natl, Andre Martin and Eugen Szatmari. Unfortunately, the Fascist Hungarian government under Mihklos von Horty introduced anti-Semitic film legislation in 1936, a year after the boycott on Nazi films had been forcefully lifted.

Many German Jewish filmmakers relocated to France in 1933. Since the French film industry was willing to employ suitable and successful German filmmakers, the production situation was relatively favourable for emigres, at least until the war broke out. One major obstacle for stateless Germans was the acquisition of legal work permits. As the German exile newspaper, Der Pariser Tagblatt, noted: 'The main force of aesthetically serious German film production has now probably been transferred to Paris. Anyone and everyone who had a name in the German cinema of the past several years are now producing films in Paris, thanks to Dr. Goebbels. Without exaggeration one can assert that from now on, the truly representative German cinema will be produced in France.'

Six famous German film producers from the Weimar Republic succeeded in establishing independent film companies in Paris, thereby guaranteeing a relatively continuous exile film production: Max Glass, Herman Millakovsky, Seymour Nebenzahl, Arnold Pressburger, Gregor Rabowitsch and Eugane Tuscher. They and other emigre film producers accounted for at least 40 exile films (ie. 21 per cent of all exile cinema), produced between the years 1933 and 1940, in which not only emigre directors and scriptwriters, but also expatriate technicians found work. Among the most important emigre film directors and scriptwriters in France were: Robert Siodmak, G.W. Pabst, Max Ophuls, Kurt Bernhardt, Hans Wilhelm, Max Kolpe, Arnold Lippens and Imgard von Cube. Some of their films were among the most popular French films of the pre-World War II period: Le Roi de Champs-Elysees (1934), Mademoiselle docteur (1935), Yoshiwara (1936), Prison sans barreaux (1937), Corset (1938) and Le Moyerling a Sarajevo (1940).

In England, two emigre film producers had the greatest influence on the employment situation in the London colony of German emigres. Alexander Korda and Max Schach. Korda, who had worked extensively in Vienna, Berlin and Hollywood and Schach, the former head of the Munich-based Emelka Film Combine, specialised in producing extravagant historical costume dramas, suitable for the international market. Other emigre producers working in England included: Herman Fellner, Isidor Goldschmidt, Joseph Than, Joseph Sarno and Marcel Helman; while Paul Guerner, Alfred Zeisler, Karl Grune, Ernst Vintel, Friedrich Zelnik, Ludwig Biro, Leo Lania, Carl Mayer and Wolfgang Wilhelm were among the emigre directors and scriptwriters who established themselves in the British film industry. Together, they accounted for a total of 38 exile films (ie. 18 per cent of exile cinema), including: Moscow Nights (1935), Storm in a Teacup (1936), Ulac Davina (1937), Prison without Bars (1938) and Give Me the Stars (1945).

Thanks to the influence of German emigres and Dutch-Jewish filmmakers returning home from Berlin, Holland's film industry experienced an astounding boom in the 1930s. Producers Gabriel Levy, Josef Jocobi, Leo Mayer and Rudolf Meyer, directors Jaap Speyer, Ludwig Berger, Max Nosseck, Friedrich Zelnik and Kurt Gerran, as well as screenwriters Walter Schlee and Alexander Alexander, contributed decisively to this development. Due to the limitations of the domestic market and the lack of a structure for the export of homegrown product, Dutch film production remained relatively unknown. Nevertheless, it is impressive that 23 of the 31 Dutch films produced between 1933 and 1940 can be considered exile films, including: Breeke Bill (1934), De Kribbebltje (1935), Grygamon (1937), Venderje Langbeen (1938) and Baede (1939).

The reality of emigre life was that most exiled filmmakers had to migrate from country to country in order to find employment in Europe's various film industries. Other countries accepting German Jewish refugees Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Egypt and Czechoslovakia could in fact only offer very temporary employment. Many emigre filmmakers were constantly in danger of being deported to Nazi Germany by indigenous, often aggressively anti-Semitic government officials, due to minor passport, labour or residence permit infractions. Curt Siodmak, for example, spent several weeks riding the English Channel ferry from Dover to Calais and back, because neither the French nor the British would let him disembark without a residency permit. In fleeing Germany, whether legally or illegally, nearly all belongings a refugee possessed were confiscated by the Nazis, thanks to the ingenious creation of a 'Reich's emigration tax' (Reichsfluchtmater). As a result, many emigres arrived in foreign countries penniless and faced a daily battle for bare survival. For many filmmakers from Berlin, Munich and Vienna who enjoyed an upper-middle-class standard of living in their native country, life without a home, a passport, residency papers or the prospect of a steady job, was a major shock. Due to these uncertainties, and the proximity to Nazi Germany, most emigre filmmakers remained transient in the capitals of the European film industry, choosing sooner or later to make their way to Hollywood, provided they possessed a sought-after American "affidavit" and entry visa. After World War II began, many refugees waited in European and North African ports of departure or were incarcerated in French internment camps. Some were saved at the last minute with visas arranged by Jewish refugee organisations in America. Others, like Rudolf Bamberger, Hans Behrendt, Max Ehrlich, Kurt Gerra, Fritz Grunbaum, Paul Morgan, Willy Rosen and Otto Walburg were murdered by the Germans in Nazi death camps. The reason for the mass Exodus from Berlin to Hollywood is obvious: Hollywood constituted the core of a centrally organised American film business, which controlled the largest functioning film industry in the world. In America, the film emigres were confronted with a situation in which they enjoyed the private sympathy of American film workers, but, on the other hand, had to be active in a fiercely competitive employment market. Two factors positively influenced the emigres' situation.
First, Hollywood produced films for a world market so that the skills offered by émigrés satisfied, within certain parameters, an existing market. Secondly, business connections between Berlin and Hollywood were so well developed before 1933 that American working methods were not entirely unknown in Germany and many German filmmakers had already been brought to Hollywood with studio contracts in the 1920s and early 1930s. Until War broke out in Europe in 1939, emigres could still find work relatively easily in many areas of film production. A mass emigration to Hollywood of Jewish refugees, as a result of the war in Europe, brought an increase in competition among the émigrés. However, a new job market for émigrés opened up simultaneously; the result of Hollywood’s production of anti-Nazi propaganda films. But not everyone managed to find appropriate work in the film industry even if they got to Hollywood. Many remained unemployed or had to change professions, e.g., Richard Edberg, Henrik Galeen, Robert Liebmann, Max Reischmann, Hans Janowitz, Carl Junghans, Emmerich Bernauer and Max Hansen.

More than 500 German-speaking film emigres who lived in Hollywood found work in American film and television studios, either temporarily or long term. In contrast to Europe, however, where film producers could often set up film companies independently, the American film industry, which was organised as a cartel of seven majors and a number of smaller studios, was fairly well protected against competition from independents. This structure defined the market so that while a total production of sixty German exile films represented a mere fraction of all American films produced in these years, screenwriters, producers and directors theoretically had the possibility of integrating themselves relatively quickly into a stable employment market. Of the independent émigré film producers who came to Hollywood, Joseph Pasternak, Seymour Nebenzahl, Arnold Pressburger, Hermann Milchakowsky and Samuel Speigel successfully continued their careers. The number of German Jewish directors and writers who worked in Hollywood is too great to mention here; the most successful included Fritz Lang, Robert Siodmak, Otto Preminger, Billy Wilder, Walter Reisch, Georg Frenschel, Felix Jackson (Jock Gibson) and Curt Siodmak. A small sample of exile films, produced in the United States includes: Music in the Air (1934), The Life of Emile Zola (1937), Three Smart Girls (1937), My Love Came Back (1940), Enemy of Women (1944), Summer Storm (1944), Devil Bat’s Daughter (1946) and The Vicious Circle (1947).

Bertolt Brecht wrote in Fluchtlingsgesprächen that emigres were the best dialecticians, because their homeless situation demanded that they come to terms with continuous change. Many emigres assumed that they would eventually return to Germany, once Nazism had been defeated. However, once the opportunity to “re-emigrate” to post-War Germany arose, few did. The Holocaust with its six million victims constituted an insurmountable barrier to a return, destroying for all time the traditional symbiosis between Christian and Jewish Germans. The few German Jews who did return to Germany after 1950 soon recognised that the film industry was dominated by filmmakers who had come into prominence during the Nazi period. These UFA Germans had after their defeat miraculously metamorphosed themselves from perpetrators into victims of the war, and now viewed the returning emigres as Faschisten who enjoyed an easy life abroad, while they had suffered a hail of bombs.

Exile film genres

Exile cinema cannot be understood as a genre in and of itself, because its conceptual and stylistic features are not conventionalised. Rather, it must be viewed as a cinema of genres, governed by particular political and economic conditions of production. Exile cinema was seen by its makers as a commercial product, conceived for a film market, structured by certain preferred genres in France, England and the United States.

While film historians have focused on German expressionist and new realist cinema, i.e., on art cinema, the German film industry, as well as its audience, had been partial to a variety of film genres: adventure films, comedies, detective films, mountain films and costume dramas. German émigré filmmakers were therefore already well versed in the production of genre cinema; even though the German and European film businesses were not subject to the rigorous standardisation of the American film industry. In general, émigré chose film genres that were under-represented in the film industries of host countries, and in which they could demonstrate their special talents. If one lists German exile film productions, according to genre, independent of country of origin, the percentages break down as follows: comedies (23 per cent), musicals (20 per cent), melodramas (16 per cent), costume dramas (14 per cent), crime dramas (8 per cent), literary adaptations (6 per cent) and fantasy films (5 per cent).
German exile cinema, 1933–1950

Jan Christopher Horak

wrote the screenplay, and the sets were designed by former UFA architect, Rudi Feld, whose design recalled the best expressionist films of the 1920s. Franz Lederer played the hero, while Alexander Granach, Olga Fabian, Hans Schmid, Rudolf Myrzel, Fred Gunney, Omo Reichow, and Martin Berliner appeared in supporting roles. 22

American anti-Nazi films mediated their anti-Fascist message within the narrative conventions and stereotypes of Hollywood genres. In particular, narratives were devised which focused the audience’s attention on moral, rather than political, issues. Still, the German émigrés managed to communicate successfully a wide variety of information about the National Socialist state by inserting explicit details into the narrative. Such anecdotals information increased a sense of reality, even when characters were stereotyped. Important anti-Nazi exile films included: To Be or Not To Be (1942), The Cross of Lorraine (1943), and Song of Russia (1943), as well as Three Russian Girls (1943), Women in Bondage (1943), The Seventh Cross (1944), and None Shall Escape (1944).

While émigré filmmakers during the 1930s could not risk making overtly anti-Nazi films in Europe, political themes were occasionally addressed. Both exile cinema and exile literature adopted the strategy of using historical narratives and costume dramas as a covert format for dealing with contemporary anti-Fascist themes and issues. 21

On of the most successful costume melodramas of the 1930s was the French film, Mayerling (1936), which related the well-known, tragic and romantic love story of an Austrian crown prince, bathed in a nostalgic fin de siècle atmosphere. The authentic melodrama of Herzog Rudolf and the Baroness Vetsera’s double suicide in 1889 had been adapted to film in Austria in the 1920s and 1930s. 24 In Mayerling, the successor to the throne of Austria and his common lover together commit suicide in the Mayerling hunting lodge near Vienna, because the Emperor has refused to accede to their marriage. While the film intonates a political allegory, it concentrates on the melodrama of tragically terminated love. History becomes a backdrop for melodrama.

German émigré film producer Seymour
Third Reich underscored heroic legends which metaphorically supported the cult of the Führer. Strangely distorted mirror images between German and German exile cinema characterised the genre. 

William Dieterle’s The Story of Louis Pasteur (1940) was the other Germany’s answer to the Nazi-fied Robert Koch (1939). The Story of Dr. Ehrlich’s Magic Bullet (1940) found a counterpart in Paracelsus (1942). While the exile cinema argued scientifically and rationally that the hero is plagued by human weakness, that science is a matter of trial and error, the Nazi-Reich-produced biographical films advocated a faith in the irrational, in the absolute infallibility of genius.

The Story of Dr. Ehrlich’s Magic Bullet introduces Robert Koch’s assistant, Dr. Paul Ehrlich. Ehrlich developed treatments to fight diphtheria and syphilis, and conducted further research in the field of chemotherapy. However, as a German Jew, working in the conservative atmosphere of nineteenth century German universities, Ehrlich was ostracised and persecuted. Modelled on previous biographical films, the film presents the difficult struggle for scientific freedom, bound to an explicitly anti-authoritarian message, and pleading for democratic freedom. Although the problem of anti-Semitism is hardly emphasised, the film does have an anti-Nazi subtext which was specifically intended by the original author. The German émigré, Wolfgang Reinhardt, who co-wrote Dieterle’s Juez, functioned as associate producer. William Dieterle, who became a biographical film specialist par excellence at Warner Bros., directed the film; he also happened to be a leader in the German émigré community. Heinz Herald, a former dramaturge for Max Reinhardt and co-author of The Life of Emile Zola (1937), wrote the screenplay. Contrary to studio expectations, Dr. Ehrlich’s Magic Bullet proved to be one of the most successful films of 1940.

Related to the costume picture, but with a light musical touch instead of a heavy historical hand, was the musical and film operetta genre. No less than fourteen exile films were produced in Austria and Hungary prior to 1936, which resurrected the monarchy with plenty of Viennese charm and music. Nine more films in this genre were produced by émigrés in France and England, they featured such émigré opera stars as Joseph Schmidt, Martha Eggert and Jarmila Novotná. Among the most musical films of the exile cinema were: La crise est fini (1933), Karneval und Liebe (1934), La dernière valse (1935), The Robber Symphony (1936), 100 Men and a Girl (1937) and Seven Sweethearts (1942).

In F Paglioni (1936), the jealous itinerant actor, Canio, murders his wife and her lover on stage. Leoncavallo’s opera was adopted for this English film by Bertolt Brecht, who increased the opera’s self-reflexivity to obsessive levels by continually retelling the story: in the prologue, in the narrative proper and in the stage play. The husband, wounded in his pride, homeless, constantly on the move, his emotional life lacking all fixed points, cannot come to terms with the pain of rejection. In the prologue, shot in an experimental colour process, the famous German opera tenor, Richard Tauber, sings an aria from a stage, but stores out in the reverse shot onto a real ocean, as if his unfaithful wife were Nazi Germany and he a stateless émigré. F Paglioni was the brainchild of German émigré film producer, Max Schach, who paid no less than £15,000 for the screen rights, making the film one of the most expensive musicals in British history. The film was directed by Karl Grune, who had made Die Straße (1923) in Germany with Schach as his producer, and who had been hired by Schach in 1931 to become film production chief of the Emelka Film Studios in Munich. Fritz Kortner and Brecht wrote the script, however, without being named in the credits, because they lacked work permits for Great Britain. Other German émigrés involved in the production were Hanns Eisler (musical arrangements), Otto Kanturek (cinematography), O.W. Wendhoff (sets) and Fritz Brunn (production manager). Co-starring with Tauber was the Hungarian operetta star, Steffi Duna. The film earned respectable box office in England, but the hopes of the producers that it would achieve a breakthrough in the giant American film market failed to materialise.

A chance meeting during a Schubert concert at Carnegie Hall between two persons who have been disappointed by love acts as a frame-story for New Wine (1941). The film relates a fictional episode in the life of 31-year-old Franz Schubert: the composer flees from Vienna to the Hungarian countryside to escape military conscription, and falls in love with a young girl. He returns to Vienna.
with the girl in tow, but she eventually leaves him in order not to hinder his budding career. The daily compromises of life, the desire to live only for the sake of art, the incompatibility of a bourgeois existence and art, were the themes of New Wine, but it was also the intention of the producers to transmit a bit of old European culture to an average American audience. Naturally, the historical reality of a homosexual composer who died of syphilis was not addressed. Despite compromises, the film was a dud at the box office, possibly because it failed to deliver a happy end. It was, in fact, still too European. The producer of the film, William Siezely, had been a specialist in musical and operetta films in Berlin and Vienna before attempting to establish himself in Hollywood. It was also the final directorial assignment for Reinhold Schünzel who had gone to MGM with high hopes after a brilliant career in Germany, but who was subsequently offered roles as an actor in anti-Nazi films. Other émigrés involved in the production were Ernö Metzner (sets), Rene Hubert (costumes), and Arthur Guttmann (music). The female lead was played by émigré singer Ilona Massey, while Albert B Casser, Sig Arno and Erna Veberes played supporting roles.

Comedies were the most frequent genre chosen by film émigrés, probably due to the fact that investors were most willing to finance them. Few comedies had ambitions beyond pure entertainment and, as a rule, they were not intended for export. In some countries, like Holland or Hungary, it seems that émigrés made comedies exclusively. While in the 1930s comedies constituted 25 per cent of German exile cinema, only a handful were produced after 1939. The course for this drop was not only the world war and the Holocaust, but also the rather changed situation in America. Comedies were in demand in most European countries of exile, but Hollywood was of the opinion that only Americans could make Americans laugh. Among the comedies produced by German émigrés were: Du Haut en Bas (1933), Peter (1934), Harom es Fel Musketas (Viererehnhalb Musketeiere) (1935), Orange Hein (1936), Three Smart Girls (1937), Place de la Concorde (1938) and A Royal Scandal (1945).

Fig. 5 Walter Reisch's Episode, produced in 1935, hardly needed to exaggerate the power of fate, il loro del destino. whose experience of daily life had itself been transmogrified into a melodrama, the conventions of melodrama hardly seemed exaggerated. German exile melodramas included: La Signora di Tutta (1934), Episode (1935), Dreaming Lips (1937), Prison sans barreaux (1938), Sans Lendemain (1939) and The Shanghai Gesture (1941).

In Le Drame de Shanghai (1938), produced in France and Spain, a nightclub singer tries to protect her daughter from the vices of the city, while the city is being undermined by a fifth column. Working for the Japanese from inside the city, the imperialistic occupation of Shanghai by the Japanese, and the fate of Russian and German émigrés in the city — in fact, Shanghai had a large German-Jewish émigré community — were important themes in the film. Shanghai, thus, functioned as an exotic locale, as a gathering point for stateless

Producers in the middle of a world-wide Depression, Komedie om Geld (1936) satirises the obsessive struggle for material wealth. The story is introduced by a narrator who periodically makes comments, as if life were really a cabaret: a small-time bank messenger loses a large sum of cash and, after he is acquitted of embezzlement, is offered the directorship of an international financial institute. There, he goes on to lose even greater sums of money through risky currency transfers and considers suicide. However, everything works out in the end, so that his daughter can marry her poor boy- friend. Komedie om Geld is a so-called Jordanian film, a typical Dutch comedy, situated in Amsterdam's working-class district; yet, at the same time, the film conveys a certain international ambience, perhaps due to its extraordinary technical qualities and its cubist design with art deco overtones. The Dutch cinema owner, Willi Tuschinsky, brought Max Ophuls and Eugen Schuffan from Paris for directing and camera assignments. To work on the script with Ophuls, Tuschinsky hired Walter Schlee, who in Berlin had written no less than 24 screenplays. German émigrés, Heinz Schussch (rehearsal), and Heinz Lachmann (composers), also worked on the film. Although Komedie om Geld was the most expensive Dutch production in the 1930s Ophuls allegedly lost interest in the project, despite its 'rags to riches to rags' storyline, which resembled the fate of many of his fellow émigrés. Tales of Manhattan (1942) was a completely different kind of comedy, mixing irony and pathos in a fashion that bordered on melodrama. The story is of a supposedly bewitched tailorcoat which brings either sorrow or good fortune to its various owners. At the beginning of the film, the tale belongs to a successful actor who is shot by hislover's husband and, at the end of the film, they adorn the back of a black farmer's scarecrow. The fate of many penniless exiles is reflected in the fate of a social climber, a former lawyer, who descends into the life of a homeless man. Interestingly, the film's morality ran counter to that of most Americans, especially its more European attitude towards open marriages, and its decided anti-puritanical position regarding guilt and punishment. Tales of Manhattan was the first exile film production in Hollywood for Samuel Spiegel, who had formerly worked for the German Universal in Berlin. Arriving in Los Angeles in 1939 as an illegal and destitute émigré, Spiegel was given the rights to a film script, 'The Tailcoat', by Walter Reisch and Billy Wilder, who had jointly written the comedy in Berlin for the UFA. No less than six émigrés screenwriters worked on the project: Ferenc Molnár, László Gorog, Ladislaus Fodor and László Vadbay, as well as Robert Katscher and Walter Reisch, who remained uncredited. Wilder, on the other hand, tormented the producer from mentioning his name in the credits. Julien Duvivier, who had fled France after the Nazis occupied the country, directed the picture. While the film achieved a modest success, American audiences had difficulties categorising the film, which was more European than American. Melodramas were only slightly less popular as an exile cinema genre than comedies. A number of émigré directors, in fact, established themselves as specialists in melodrama, including Douglas Sirk, Max Ophuls and Curtis Bernhardt. German émigrés, who had been unwittingly exposed to
émigrés, as a fantastical space, metaphorically embodying conflicting emotions, and as a symbol for Europe's political realities at the end of the 1930s. The film was directed by O.W. Pabst, who had spent years in exile in France and America, but who would return to Nazi Germany in late 1939. A whole group of White Russian émigrés who had spent time in both Berlin and Paris worked on the film, including the producers Romain Pinès and Konstantin Gegenhau, the set designer Andrei Andrejew, the costume designer, Georges Annenkov, German émigrés involved in the production included Mark Sarkin (assistant director), Leo Lania (scenpic), Eugen Schuffan and Curt Courant (camera), Hans Oser (editor), Ralph Erwin (composer) and the actors Christl Mardayn and Edgar Adolf Lhu.

Her Sister's Secret (1946) was a completely different kind of melodrama. During Mård Gras, the heroine spends a night with a soldier who is going off to war and becomes pregnant. Instead of getting an abortion, she gives the baby to her childless sister, but loneliness drives her several years later to return and demand her birthright. The adoptive mother relinquishes the child, and a reconciliation with the birth father, who returns from the war in the last shot of the film, guarantees the required happy ending. For a B-picture, the film demonstrated an unusual sensitivity for the complexity of human emotions, for the greatness of good love affairs, for the difficulty of motherhood, and for the barely repressed jealousy between siblings. It also ran counter to the unwritten moral laws of Hollywood, which would have required the unwed mother to be punished for her sins, rather than awarded with a nuclear family. The film was produced for Monogram by Arnold Pressburger's brother-in-law, the former Berlin businessman, Heinz Brasc. It was directed by Edgar G. Ulmer, another Austrian, and based on a novel by Gina Kaus who had written Pressburger's Pre-War hit, Prison sans barreaux. At that time, Pressburger had bought the rights to Kaus' novel, Die Schwarzen Kleeblätter, which he later adapted to Brasc for his first Hollywood project. The émigrés Franz Planer (camera), Hans Sommer (composer) and actors Felix Bressart, Fritz Feld and Rudolf Anders, were also involved in the film.

The crime drama, especially in its American form as film noir, gained its individual profile in no small measure thanks to the influence of émigrés directors, Fritz Lang, Robert Siodmak, Billy Wilder and Otto Preminger contributed fundamentally to the development of film noir. They gave crime dramas their dark side, a pessimistic view of modern city life, which was originally missing from the genre in its more optimistic, 1930s phase. It was a European Weltanschauung, born out of war and economic chaos that defined exile films, like Maureen O'Sullivan's The Woman in the Window (1935), Unsichtbare Gegner (1934), Het Mysterie Van de Mondscheinsneeuw (1933), Crime Over London (1936), Piege (1939), Whispering City (1947) and Parole, Inc (1948) Jealousy (1945), which mixed elements of melodrama with a film noir, tells the story of a suicidally depressed émigré writer. His lack of success in exile causes him to become more and more jealous and violent; yet, in the end it is he who becomes the victim of a murder of jealousy, not his wife, who had increasingly been the object of his emotional outbursts. The film is about the loss of one's home, one's success, one's self-esteem, one's lover and one's freedom. The atmosphere of schizophrenia is underlined by strongly radical compositional structures and strengthened through the typical chiaroscuro lighting, which harks back to German expressionism. Produced independently by émigré director Gustav Machaty, the film was distributed by Republic Pictures. Dr. Eduard Frischknecht, an émigré lawyer, as well as Gina Kaus' husband, was production manager. The screenplay was written by Machaty and Arnold Phillips, formerly known in Berlin as Lipschitz. The music was composed by German émigrés Alexander Lasko and Hanns Eisler, while an important supporting role was played by Hugo Haas, a Czech émigré actor and director who would found his own production company in Hollywood a few years later, before retiring to Vienna.

In the Weimar Republic, the fantasy film was considered to be one of Germany's most important contributions to international art cinema, e.g. Fritz Lang's Destiny (1921) and Metropolis (1927) or F.W. Murnau's Nosferatu (1922), but the genre was not represented in German exile cinema. Apart from Fritz Lang's Lifilm (1935) and Max Ophüls' La tenue enemie (1935), émigrés produced only a few horror films in the 1940s. Had fantasy become an impossibility in a world in which all suggestions of utopia were demolished by the dystopia of German Fascism? Or was it only the banal fact that fantasy films were considered to be the lowest rung of the genre ladder in France and America that made émigrés avoid producing them? One exception was The Man Who Could Make Miracles (1936), a British A-film, which was both a political allegory about the competing ideologies of Fascism and Communism, and a profoundly anti-political work, which ultimately pleased for the common sense of the individual.

Even in Weimar Germany literary adaptations were produced to attract an educated audience to the cinema, even if they were seldom box office hits. As a result, literary adaptations were considered by film companies to be prestige projects, without expectations of great profit. Certainly, such notions also played a role in exile cinema, so that only a limited number of literary classics were filmed by German émigrés. It was a matter of prestige for Warner Bros. to offer Max Reinhardt's walks blanche, in order to create his version of A Midsummer Night's Dream (1935), but shortly before shooting began, they got cold feet and brought in William Dieterle as Reinhardt's advisor and co-director. Other literary adaptations by émigrés included: Aufstand der Fischer von St. Barbara (1934), as You Like It (1936), Pygmalion (1937), Le Roman de Werther (1938), Die Brauchbarkeit Liebesbraut (1940) and Summer Storm (1944)

Wholly forgotten today is the exile production of Carl Zuckmayer's 'Der Hauptmann von Köpenick', Passport to Heaven (1941). Initially without a distributor, without an official opening, without a single review in the national press, the film was eventually released in 1945 as I Was a Criminal by a non-commercial 16 mm film distributor. Yet, the film is a considerable directorial accomplishment. The architecture of Berlin is patchy together out of documentary footage and studio sets. Through the camera's emphasis of light and shadow, the symbols of power are continually moved to the centre of the composition. In one scene, the ubiquitous image of Kaiser Wilhelm is transformed through shadows into a portrait of the Führer. However, the story of a simple shoemaker, symbolically named Volck (Volk meaning the people), the Prussian mentality of authoritarian militarism and bureaucratic obedience, and the desperation of an unemployed and stateless person who is repeatedly deported, must have seemed exceedingly foreign to American audiences in 1941. Paul Gordon who had made two films in Berlin in the early 1930s, worked as production manager. Richard Oswald directed, hoping to match the success of his 1931 version with the remake. Albrecht Joseph, who with Zuckmayer had co-written the screenplay for the first version, wrote the script with Ivan Goff. Further émigrés on the production were: Gerda Oswald, working as production assistant, and Rudolf Feld as a technical advisor. Albert Bassermann played the protagonist and Hermann Bing, Walter O. Stahl and Max Willenz acted in supporting roles. In contrast to Max Adalbert (1931) and Heinz Rühmann (1956), who portrayed the shoemaker in other film versions as a 'little guy'. Bassermann plays the role, despite a heavy German accent, with the consciousness of an émigré, exiled by the Nazis: he is rebellious, spiteful and angry, continually questioning the power of the state. It is an extremely emotional portrayal, which characterises the film as perhaps the most German of all exile films.

In whose cinema history does Passport to Heaven, which was shot in English in America, but is in its character deeply beholden to German culture, belong? In the context of a national cinema such films remain invisible, forgotten as of inferior quality. Many of the films mentioned here were such unlucky hybrids, staged and acted by German émigrés who moved about uncertainly in cultures essentially foreign to them. Can a history of German exile cinema be integrated into German film history? Only to a certain extent: many exile films have never been shown on television or in theatres in Germany, and still await discovery by German audiences. However, a re-release today would only partially redress past wrongs. Just as the Holocaust created an irreparable rift in the symbiotic relationship between Germans and Jews, so, too, will German exile cinema and German émigré filmmakers remain at the edges of the German scene. Ironically, this holds most true for works by those filmmakers who successfully established themselves outside Germany. Their oeuvre is influenced by the experiences of exile, and some of their early films may indeed be considered exile films, but their mature work is certainly more appropriately attached to the national cinema of their adopted country, whether Ernst Lubitsch or Billy Wilder, Fritz Lang or Otto
German exile cinema, 1933–1950

Some emigre film projects were, however, announced in the trade press: e.g. Portrait of Hope (1939), Gina Kaus and Ladislav Fodor, Refugees (no date, Paul Frank and Felix Bosh).


23. Historical novels with an anti-Fascist subtext include: Lion Feuchtwanger's Der falsche Nero (1935), Bruno Frank's Cervantes (1934); Heinrich Mann's Die Jugend des Konigs Henri Quatre (1935), Alfred Neumann's Der Neue Caesar (1934). These historical novels actually dealt with homelessness, the German exile situation, and the autocracy of the state. Compare Hans Dahlist: Geschichtsrnmen und Literaturkritik im Exil (Berlin/GDR, Aufbau Verlag, 1976).

24. Two Austrian adaptations were: Mayerling (1919), Leibnitzer Brosnich (1923).

25. In 1937, Mayerling was voted the best French film of all time by Variety (25 September 1937). Based on the international success of Mayerling, Anatole Litvak and the actors Charles Boyer and Danielle Darrieux received contracts to Hollywood.


27. A colour print is archived at the British Film Institute, in which portions of reels 1, 9 and 10 are in colour. The author was only able to view a black-and-white print.

28. Brecht's unpleasant experiences during the production of this and other films are related in Wolfgang Gersch, Film bei Brecht (Munich: Hanser Verlag, 1972), 184.

29. Taugb was paid £60,000, and insisted on acting in a legitimate opera, since his previous film work in England and Germany had only consisted of operettas and single arias in musical films. Compare Rachel Low, The History of the British Film, 1929–39: Filmmaking in 1920s Britain (London: British Film Institute, 1985), 203.

30. Indeed, the film was distributed under the title, The Great Awakening, also known as Schuberg, the Melody Master.


32. Max Ophuls, Spiel im Dasein—Ein Rückblende (Munich: Droemer Knorr, 1989), 152.

33. The film was also attacked by Paul Robeson for the alleged racism of the last episode. See Martin Duberman, Paul Robeson (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1988), 250.


35. Laredon returned to Germany before World War II, just as Pabst did in 1939, but her career went nowhere.

36. Preuss-Burger produced an adaptation in France in 1938, Confit. See Gina Kaus, Und war für ein Leben... (Munich: Knorr, 1979), 215.

37. Frischauer and his brother, journalist Willy Frischauer, published the story of Hitler's illegitimacy and origins in the Schickelgruber family. As an unsuccessful emigre in Los Angeles, Frischauer's biography had similarities with the murdered writer in the film.

38. Film Classics, founded by the emigre film producer, Joseph Auerbach, distributed the film. In re-release the film was called Passport to Heaven.

Notes


4. For example, John Russell Taylor's book discusses German, French, Russian and English filmmakers, and even throws in a few New York intellectuals, like Albert Levin, for good measure, thereby ignoring the political and economic realities of German exile. See Strangers in Paradise. The Hollywood Emigres 1923–1950 (London: Faber & Faber, 1983).


7. According to Hans Feld, a man by the name of Alexander Jetsky produced Polizei Ve Snahu (1934). Robert Kotscher directed the film and Feld co-wrote it with Fritz-Max Cohen. However, only Vaclav Binovec is named in the credits as director. See Hans Feld: Exil in Prag 1933–35: Ein Aide-mmoire, in SND Newsletter, no. 2 (January 1992), 22–23.

8. Until approximately 1950, German emigres were prohibited from returning to Germany, at least in the western zone of Allied occupation.