

# GERMAN JEWISH INTELLECTUALS' DIASPORA IN TURKEY: 1933–55<sup>1</sup>

ARNOLD REISMAN

THE ANTI-SEMITISM OF NAZI GERMANY prompted Jewish people to seek refuge in numerous places. Among the least known was Turkey, which welcomed highly educated émigrés in the hopes of transforming Turkish higher education. These hopes were realized. No other act served republican Turkey's founding fathers' vision of modernizing and westernizing Turkish society more than the development of the country's universities.<sup>2</sup> Without a doubt, the total impact on Turkey's higher education was much greater than the sum of the émigré professors' individual contributions. No other policy served the country's educational reforms more than those invitations that had been extended to Nazi-persecuted German, Austrian, and later German-speaking Czech intelligentsia. No other country had a national policy to salvage so much intellectual capital from elsewhere in order to facilitate the achievement of its own goals and objectives.<sup>3</sup>

The large number of immigrants to Israel from the Soviet Union did include many scientists and engineers, who brought with them much useful knowledge and experience. This, however, did not happen until the late 1980s and peaked

*Arnold Reisman is an independent scholar with an interest in the transfer of technologies.*

1. This article is based on Arnold Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization: Refugees from Nazism and Atatürk's Vision* (Washington, D.C.: New Academia Publishers, 2006). The author wishes to thank the Lilly Library Special Collections, Indiana University; Valley Library, Oregon State University; The University of St. Andrews Library, Scotland; Reference Archives, Harvard University; The Grenander, Department of Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany; The Historical Studies-Social Science Library, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton; The Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University; The Rockefeller Foundation Archive Center; The National (U.S.) Archives and Records Administration (NARA); and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
2. Arguably, changing of the alphabet comes in a close second. That policy presaged the notion that "barriers to riches" in developing countries can be overcome by creating a western knowledge-using society, as discussed by Stephen L. Parented and Edward C. Prescott, *Barriers to Riches* (Cambridge, Mass, and London: MIT Press, 2000), 1–149, for which they received the 2004 Nobel Prize in Economics.
3. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 2.

in 1991. By that time, Israel was much more developed than Turkey had been in the early 1930s. Arguably the Russian migration of highly educated talent to Israel and the “German” émigré professors’ infusion into Turkey were somewhat similar in *scope*, but certainly not in *impact* on the host society. While the Russian migration’s *scale* was two orders of magnitude less, the “German” migration’s impact on Turkey was qualitatively much more significant.<sup>4</sup>

The Turkish nation, including members of its diaspora, continues to acknowledge the émigrés’ multifaceted impact on Turkish society. Several stories documenting the gratitude felt for the émigrés’ contributions have recently been published in the Turkish media.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, a few memoirs have been written by the émigrés themselves and by their progeny who were old enough to remember.<sup>6</sup>

Turkey’s official neutrality before and through most of World War II allowed the émigrés to function as conduits of correspondence between those left behind under Nazi rule and their colleagues and relatives in the free world. This article provides a human face to our knowledge of modern history by quoting and interpreting this correspondence in the sociopolitical context of Europe’s darkest years—1933–45—and America’s widespread and institutionalized lack of interest in saving many of these cutting-edge intellectuals.

Much has been written about the current Turkish diaspora in Germany. However, little exists in the English language to tell us about the German and Austrian Jewish intellectuals’ diaspora in Turkey during the 1930s and 1940s. Most of these deal with either a single individual or a disciplinary group. Until recently, little historical documentation on this subject has been available, particularly in English. The first fairly comprehensive account of this migration was published in German by Widmann in 1973 and was translated into Turkish in 1988, but never into English.<sup>7</sup> In 1980, one of the émigré economists, Fritz Neumark (1900–91), published his memoirs. These were translated into Turkish

4. *Ibid.*, 527.

5. See Cimen Gunay-Erkol and Arnold Reisman, “The Founders of Turkey’s System of Modern Higher Education: An Anthology of Testimonials from First, Second, and Third Generation of Students” (Reisman and Associates working paper, 2007). Available from the authors.

6. Most of these are discussed or fully captured in Reisman, *Turkish Modernization*.

7. H. Widmann, *Exile und Bildungshilfe: Die Deutschsprachige Akademische Emigration in die Türkei nach 1933* (Bern, Switzerland: Lang Verlag, 1973); translated as *Atatürk Üniversite Reformu* (Istanbul, Turkey: 1981).

in 1982, but again not into English.<sup>8</sup> This book provides many notable anecdotes involving his family and his colleagues in Turkey. Neumark concluded that “although in the years following 1933 the number of German-speaking refugees in other countries, especially in the United States, far exceeded those in Turkey, in no other place was the relative significance of German refugees as great as it was in Turkey, and nowhere else did their work leave as permanent an impact.”<sup>9</sup> A rather thoroughly documented exhibition in Berlin’s Vereins Aktives Museum deals with this migration in a well-illustrated catalogue entitled *Haymatloz*, which too was never translated into English.<sup>10</sup>

Stanford J. Shaw was the first to discuss in English Turkey’s larger role in rescuing Jews from the Nazis and to provide biographical details on fifty-four members of this diaspora.<sup>11</sup> Almost a decade after that, Frank Tachau contributed an important chapter discussing these émigrés and their multifaceted impact on Turkish science, medicine, law, and education. Tachau also provided statistics on the émigrés’ distribution by age and their field of specialization.<sup>12</sup> The Andics, a husband and wife team of Fritz Neumark’s students, provided an English language discussion of this migration in a German finance journal.<sup>13</sup> According to the Andics, “[h]istory is replete with fortuitous events, some disastrous, others fortunate. And sometimes one country’s misfortune can turn out to be the fortune of another. It so happened that at the time of the university reform in Turkey, Germany, unfortunately, was firing, jailing, or deporting university professors whose religions, political tendencies, and economic views were deemed undesirable by the regime.”<sup>14</sup> Moreover, according to the Andics, Turkey’s tax reform was the first to be initiated in a developing country after World War II, “and Professor Neumark was involved with the reform efforts from its inception. He submitted

8. F. Neumark, *Zuflucht am Bosphorus: Deutsche Gelehrte, Politiker und Künstler in der Emigration 1933–1953* (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1982); Neumark, *Bo İziğine S İnanlar* [İfîk Alp Bahadır] (Istanbul: Ercivan Matbaası, 1982).

9. Neumark, *Zuflucht am Bosphorus*, 8–9.

10. *Haymatloz*, Schriftenreihe des Vereins Aktives Museum (Berlin: Schriftenreihe des Vereins Aktives Museum, 2000), 8. “Haymatloz” is a Turkish transliteration of the German *heimatlos* (homeless).

11. S. J. Shaw, *Turkey and the Holocaust* (London: Macmillan Press, 1993), 4–14, 353–69.

12. F. Tachau, “German Jewish Émigrés in Turkey,” in *Jews, Turks, Ottomans: A Shared History*, ed. A. Levy (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2002), 233–46.

13. F. M. Andic and S. Andic, “Fritz Neumark, Teacher and Reformer,” *Finanzarchiv* 39.1 (1981): 11–19.

14. *Ibid.*, 12.

several reports to high government officials on the need for reform, participated in endless committee meetings at the ministerial level, and wrote several articles in scientific journals and articles in the newspapers to educate and inform the public." Neumark was also very active in organizing and participating in Turkey's Second Economic Congress, held in 1948, where "all sectors were present: the private, the public, and the academic," and where all these issues were debated.<sup>15</sup>

In 2001, Walter Laqueur and Judith Tydor Baumel coedited *The Holocaust Encyclopedia*. In the chapter titled "Turkey," by Barry Rubin, three paragraphs address this episode in general terms, ignoring individuals.<sup>16</sup> In his *Generation Exodus*, Laqueur dedicated four paragraphs to this refuge.<sup>17</sup> Recently, a list of all the émigré scientists who went to Turkey was published in Germany.<sup>18</sup> Hildegard Müller provided a thorough discussion of the librarians', archivists', and document conservators' contingent among the émigrés.<sup>19</sup> Azade Seyhan, in her incisive analysis of the émigrés' experience, stated, "Turkey placed a significant amount of German intellectual capital in escrow until it could be returned home safely and with interest."<sup>20</sup>

More focused studies have also emerged. Leyla Burk published several papers on fellow chemist Fitz Arndt (1885–1969).<sup>21</sup> Recently both Emily

15. Ibid.

16. W. Z. Laqueur and J. Tydor Baumel, *The Holocaust Encyclopedia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 641–42.

17. W. Laqueur, *Generation Exodus: The Fate of Young Jewish Refugees From Nazi Germany* (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press, 2001), 230–31. However, the statement that "most of those who had lost their German citizenship during the war were deported by the Turkish authorities to deepest Anatolia, where living conditions were just barely tolerable" is only partially correct. "[T]hose who had lost their German citizenship during the war" were those with Jewish familial connections. They were not deported. They were allowed to hold their positions and live as before. The deportees were the pure Aryans like the Ernst Reuter family, whose passports were not withdrawn by the Reich at any time. It was during the waning months of World War II, when Turkey finally decided to sever diplomatic relations, that the deportations of "enemy aliens," Germans and Austrians, took place. See Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 388, 420, 424.

18. *Liste der Emigrantinnen und Emigranten und NS-Verfolgten in der Türkei* (Berlin: Schriftenreihe des Vereins Aktives Museum, 2000).

19. H. Müller, "German Librarians in Exile in Turkey, 1933–1945," *Libraries & Culture* 33.3 (1998): 294–305.

20. Azade Seyhan, "German Academic Exiles in Istanbul," in *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation*, eds. Sandra Bermann and Michael Wood (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005), 274–88.

21. L. A. Burk, "An Open Door: German Refugee Professors in Turkey," in *The Dispossessed—An Anatomy of Exile*, ed. Peter I. Rose (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 235–57.

Apter<sup>22</sup> and Kader Konuk<sup>23</sup> wrote about Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach, who played a leading role in building up the Faculty for Western Languages and Literatures at Istanbul University and had a seminal influence on the formation of German philology, shaping the canons of both disciplines. Gürol Irzik and Güven Güzeldere published an interview with the widow of philosopher Hans Reichenbach.<sup>24</sup> Harry G. Day evaluated the contributions of biochemist Felix Haurowitz (1896–1987) to the development of chemistry at Indiana University. This article includes some material on the time Haurowitz spent in Turkey.<sup>25</sup> Ute Deichmann mentioned chemist Fritz Arndt and biochemist Felix Haurowitz as having emigrated to Turkey.<sup>26</sup> Enrico Fermi's widow, Laura, mentioned at least twelve of the scientists involved and provided a limited discussion of some.<sup>27</sup> In his web-based autobiography, Arthur von Hippel (1898–2003), the father of nanotechnology, dedicated a chapter to his own tragicomic experiences in Turkey, including some anecdotes involving two colleagues—ophthalmologist Joseph Igersheimer (1879–1965) and dentist Alfred Kantorowicz (1880–1962).<sup>28</sup> Erol Guney wrote about his Istanbul professor Erich Auerbach, a philologist, comparative scholar, and critic of literature, whose best-known work, the classic *Mimesis*, provides a history of representation in Western literature from ancient to modern times. The book was written while Auerbach was in Turkey.<sup>29</sup> N. Akar and A. Can offered a bilingual pictorial book fully dedicated to pediatrician Albert Eckstein, who introduced the discipline of public health to Turkey and was a consummate photographer.<sup>30</sup>

22. E. Apter, "Global Translation: The Invention of Comparative Literature, Istanbul," *Critical Inquiry* 29.2 (2003): 253–81.
23. K. Konuk, "Jewish-German Philologists in Turkish Exile: Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach," in *Exile and Otherness: New Approaches to the Experience Nazi Refugees*, ed. A. Stephan (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2005), 31–47.
24. G. Irzik and G. Güzeldere, eds., *Turkish Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science* (Boston: Kluwer, 2005), 7–27.
25. G. H. Day, "The Development of Chemistry at Indiana University 1829–1991," *Biographical Memoirs* (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, National Academy of Sciences, 1994), 64.
26. U. Deichmann, "The Expulsion of Jewish Chemists and Biochemists from Academia in Nazi Germany," *Perspectives on Science* 7.1 (1999): 1–86.
27. Laura Fermi, *Illustrious Immigrants* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1968).
28. Arthur Robert von Hippel, "Adventures in Turkey," *Life in Times of Turbulent Transitions*, chap. 9, 70–82, 23 May 2007, cited at <http://lucy.mrs.org/vonhippel/life/>.
29. See Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 392–96.
30. Nejat Akar and Alp Can, *Anadolu'da 15 yıl/15 years in Anatolia with Ord .Prof .Dr. Albert Eckstein* (Ankara: Ankara University Press, 2005).

Grinstein and Campbell provided an excellent discussion of world-class mathematician-*cum*-probabilist Hilda Geiringer, who had reached the highest academic ranks in Germany and in Turkey, but never obtained an equally prestigious position in the United States because of anti-Semitism and gender bias in hiring at America's premier universities.<sup>31</sup> However, only one English-language book is fully dedicated to the subject at hand.<sup>32</sup>

The émigrés took advantage of Turkey's neutrality before and during World War II to become conduits of communication between those left behind in Nazi-controlled territory and their colleagues and relatives in the free world. This study examines the letters written and received by those individuals who found refuge in Turkey in order to expand what little is known in the English-speaking world about the group of intellectuals whose careers and lives were saved by the Turkish government's invitations. This correspondence also further illuminates the darkest years in modern European history. Fortunately, the émigrés' words were preserved and often treasured by those who received them. That correspondence tells the story of a people in distress.

This diaspora involved only about 1,000 individuals, including families and some staff members, and its duration was brief—for most of the émigrés, under two decades.<sup>33</sup> But its impact on the host society was monumental. This diaspora also gained significance by fostering the survival and development of the émigrés' creativity, knowledge, and intelligence. These would influence other societies and future generations.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

On 30 January 1933, Hitler came to power, and the bill *Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums* (Reestablishment of the Civil Service Law) was passed a few weeks later. By design, this law enabled the rapid dismissal of hundreds of Jewish and politically suspect professors from their positions at all German universities, institutes, and major hospitals.<sup>34</sup> The Jewish community in Germany produced many of the leading scientists, researchers, and academics

31. L. S. Grinstein and P. J. Campbell, *Women of Mathematics* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1987), 41–46.

32. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, passim.

33. Not all had Jewish roots; some were anti-Nazi “full-blooded Aryans,” as was Ernst Reuter, the first postwar mayor of Berlin.

34. Fritz Neumark, *Zuflucht am Bosphorus: Deutsche Gelehrte, Politiker und Künstler in der Emigration 1933–1953* (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1995), 13.

of the time, and the loss of these people constituted a major and irrevocable blow not only to German academe but to that of Austria as well. After the 9 March 1938 *Anschluss*, Austria was absorbed into the Nazi realm and so too was the Sudetenland portion of Czechoslovakia after the 29 September 1938 “Munich Agreement.” Thus “[t]he German-Jewish symbiosis characterized by cultural achievements of the highest caliber and irrevocable in terms of its greatness and singularity came to an end.”<sup>35</sup>

Although America’s restrictive immigration laws were in effect, individual professors could circumvent the quotas if they had a job offer from a university. Many major American universities—the Ivy League in particular—did not hire Jews during the interwar period.<sup>36</sup> The same held true for America’s teaching hospitals. Without question, private universities suffered budgetary constraints during the 1930s as the result of the Great Depression and were gender biased while unabashedly practicing age discrimination. Many of the eminent professors in Germany and Austria were advanced in age and some were women. Although America’s public universities may not have had exclusionary faculty hiring practices written into their charters, a number of them had *de facto* gentlemen’s agreements. Many did not open their doors to Jewish faculty until the late 1940s. A national survey conducted by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in 1969 involved 60,000 faculty respondents and showed that Jews in the upper-age brackets numbered significantly lower (3.8 percent) than Protestants (79.0 percent) or Catholics (13.7 percent) on America’s university campuses.<sup>37</sup> In contrast, prior to 1933, premier German universities such as Heidelberg, Breslau, Frankfurt, Munich, Göttingen, Königsberg, and the University of Prague, Czechoslovakia, individually employed more Jewish professors than did Harvard, Yale, Brown, and Princeton combined, and this persisted for over a decade beyond.<sup>38</sup>

35. Müller, “German Librarians,” 294–305.

36. Historians who specialize in the question of America’s response to the Holocaust are urging the Franklin D. Roosevelt Museum to correct a panel in its exhibit that claims President Roosevelt could have done nothing else to save many more Jews from the Holocaust. “Roosevelt Museum Distorts FDR’s Record on the Holocaust; Historians Protest,” 7 July 2005, cited at <http://www.wymaninstitute.org/bostoncont.php>.

37. Seymour M. Lipset and Everett C. Ladd, Jr., “Jewish Academics in the United States; Their Achievements, Culture and Politics,” *American Jewish Year Book* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1972), 89–128. However, following World War II, America’s campuses were opened to Jewish students and professors alike. D. Brooks, “Getting In: How Three Elite Colleges Protected the Privileged,” *New York Times*, 6 November 2005, 12.

38. Lipset and Ladd, “Jewish Academics in the United States.” However, as is amply documented, these universities did not apply the Nazi definitions as to who was a Jew. Thus,

A decade prior to Hitler's takeover of Germany, the Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 after a prolonged series of wars. Its system of higher education, inherited from the Ottomans, comprised between 300 and 400 Islamic *medreses*, one of which was converted at the turn of the century into the *Dar-ül Fünun* (House of Knowledge), while the rest were closed by government edict soon after the establishment of the Republic. This educational system also included three military academies, one of which had been expanded into a civil engineering school around 1909, and a number of secondary school-level trade schools. In 1933, by government decree, Turkey reformed its higher education using, first German then Austrian and Czech expatriates fleeing the Nazis for whom America was out of reach for numerous reasons.<sup>39</sup>

Increasingly anti-Semitic policies in Germany coincided with the radical social, economic, and educational reforms undertaken by Kemal Atatürk, the first president and founder of modern Turkey. With secularization enshrined in the Republic's constitution, and in line with government policies of modernization and westernization throughout Turkish society, its one university clearly needed modernization in both scope and depth of coverage.<sup>40</sup> Other postsecondary institutions needed to be created from the ground up. The personnel to do this were unavailable indigenously, prompting Atatürk to follow the precedent set by Sultan Bayazid II in 1492.<sup>41</sup> As a matter of government policy, Turkey invited and provided safe haven to over 190 intellectuals and professionals fleeing Austria, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and at least one from France.<sup>42</sup>

in 1938, Harvard offered a position to mathematician Richard von Mises, who had converted to Catholicism as a young man and who was living in Turkey at the time. Applied mathematician William Prager, a "Protestant by persuasion," was taken from Turkey by Brown University in 1939. A third member of that team, mathematician Hilda Geiringer, never did succeed in obtaining a university position in America commensurate to what she had in pre-Hitler Germany and later in Turkey. She had two strikes against her: gender and never having renounced her Jewish faith. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 312.

39. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, passim.

40. This included the creation of a new, Latin-based alphabet and industrial infrastructure. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 19, 43.

41. In 1492, Ferdinand, the king of Spain, issued an edict to expel from Spain all remaining Jews who did not convert to Christianity. In that very same year, Sultan Bayazid II ordered the governors of all Ottoman provinces "not to refuse the Jews entry or cause them difficulties, but to receive them cordially." Naim Guleryuz, "The History of Turkish Jews," 23 May 2007, cited at [http://www.mersina.com/lib/Turkish\\_jews/history/haven.htm](http://www.mersina.com/lib/Turkish_jews/history/haven.htm); Shaw, *Turkey and the Holocaust*, 4–14.

42. Andic and Andic, "Fritz Neumark," 11–19.

### THE INGATHERING

With the passage of the German Civil Service Law and the realization that the worst was yet to come, many looked for ways to leave. Among those fired from their jobs was Dr. Philipp Schwartz, a Hungarian-born Frankfurt pathologist who fled with his family to Switzerland. In March 1933, Schwartz established the *Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland* (Emergency Assistance Organization for German Scientists Abroad) in Zürich to help persecuted Jewish and non-Jewish German scholars secure employment in countries prepared to receive German refugees.<sup>43</sup> Turkey was the *Notgemeinschaft's* success story because Atatürk capitalized on the developments taking place in Germany.<sup>44</sup> A letter to the U.S. Secretary of State from Robert F. Skinner, American Ambassador in Istanbul, dated 10 November 1933, documented the arrival of the first party of exiled professors. In another letter, also dated 10 November 1933, Skinner wrote, "in regard to the difficulties of the Jews in Germany and the engagement of German Jewish professors in this country, I now enclose as of possible interest in this connection a list of the names of foreign professors appointed to the University of Istanbul, all of them, I imagine being of the Jewish race, as indeed the names themselves sufficiently indicate."<sup>45</sup>

The far-reaching effect of the expulsion from Germany under Hitler's regime cannot be accurately measured as yet, but it may take on the importance of the expulsion of the Huguenots from France several centuries before, and may have worked to the advantage of countries like Turkey, which endeavored to make intellectual progress along Western lines. Thirty-five newly employed foreign professors were taken into the University of Istanbul.<sup>46</sup>

43. Philipp Schwartz, *Notgemeinschaft Zur Emigration deutscher Wissenschaftlernach 1933 in die Türkei* (Marburg, Germany: Metropolis-Verlag, 1995), 1–100.

44. Fewer of the academics found their way to Ankara than to Istanbul, because in 1933 Ankara University existed primarily on paper. Unlike those émigrés who came to the University of Istanbul under the auspices of the *Notgemeinschaft*, most of the scientists, architects, and artists who went to Ankara were invited through the German and Austrian legations; the largest share of them went to the state school of music, the faculty of arts, and the medical institutes. The correspondence found in several worldwide archives involves only members of the Istanbul contingent.

45. Document 867.4016 JEWS/6, NARA.

46. These were followed by many others, so that the total number is estimated to be close to 190. Document 867.4016 JEWS/5, NARA.

## CONDUITS FOR COMMUNICATION

Starting in 1933 and spanning the war years, events in Germany were communicated to the free world by and to the émigrés in Turkey. Shortly before emigrating to Turkey, on 10 June 1933, an eminent mathematician and applied scientist, Richard von Mises, wrote to the great Hungarian aerodynamicist Theodore von Kármán, who had emigrated to the United States and founded the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences in California, about a young German, Walter Tollmien, who was looking for a position,

I have to advise you that the irrevocable prerequisite for any kind of employment or scholarship or suchlike is to make a statement on his word of honour that his four grandparents are Aryan and in particular are of non-Jewish descent. . . . I believe that in a favourable case the prospects are not quite so bad as indeed a large part of all the previous candidates can be omitted under the present law.<sup>47</sup>

Von Kármán forwarded the letter to Tollmien, writing on its back, “[i]ndeed a document of our time!”<sup>48</sup>

A year later, Max von Laue, a Nobel laureate and an Aryan who stayed in Germany throughout the war, felt a need to share two communications involving a third party with astronomer E. Finlay Freundlich, who had emigrated to Istanbul. In a 12 December 1934 letter:

Enclosed is a copy of the following letter from J. Stark [to von Laue].

You rejected my proclamation on the grounds that it was a political proclamation by intellectuals. This objection is false. In reality it was meant to show to the entire world the German people’s great recognition of their great leader Adolf Hitler. Thus, you have refuted a public proclamation for Adolf Hitler, yet at the Wurtzburg Physics Congress, you were not embarrassed to make a declaration against the Nazi government and for the benefit of Albert Einstein, the traitor and critic of the Nazi regime and all this to the applause of all present Jews and Jew associates.

47. Courtesy of Andrea B. Goldstein, reference archivist, Harvard University Richard von Mises archives, with permission from Magda (Geirnger-von Mises) Tisza, administrator of the von Mises estate. See also Anonymous, “Richard von Mises Biographical Sketch,” Document HUG 4574.5 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Archives, Pusey Library).

48. “Richard von Mises 1883–1953,” 25 October 2005, cited at <http://www-gap.dcs.st-and.ac.uk/~history/Mathematicians/Mises.html>.

I can not help but to express my deepest sorrow at the disparity between the two events.<sup>49</sup>

Stark had closed that letter with “Heil Hitler” and in effect told von Laue: you had better toe the party line. Von Laue’s response was quick (a week and a half later), short, to the point, and portrayed him as a decent human being. It simply stated: “After the totally untrue recounting and perception on your part as described in your letter of August 21, I would appreciate not to receive any private communications from you in the future. With highest respect, Laue.”<sup>50</sup>

Von Laue did not sign off with the mandatory “Heil Hitler.” By sharing this communication with Freundlich he informed his former colleagues who had escaped the Nazified part of the world about Germany’s prevailing climate in science. Von Laue knew that Freundlich was influential in scientific circles beyond those in Turkey. He knew of Freundlich’s former colleagues, such as Einstein, who had managed to emigrate to the United States, and von Laue assumed correctly that a letter to Turkey with such information would less likely be censored than one to the United States or Great Britain. That it was appended almost without comment is also significant and may have one of three explanations. It may have been a means of buying self-insurance for future eventualities, of preserving his own dignity, or of showing that not all German scientists remaining in Germany had buckled under Nazi pressure.

Although Freundlich himself was effectively on the run, he felt a need to keep this particular correspondence in his possession throughout his stay in Turkey and took it with him on his reemigration to Prague in 1937, as well as his subsequent emigration to Scotland in 1939. This may have been Freundlich’s way of preserving hard factual information for future historians. Evidence suggests that he used such information as a means of urging people of influence in the West to take action.<sup>51</sup> That Johannes Stark had also received the Nobel

49. E. Finlay Freundlich Archives, courtesy of Dr. Norman H. Reid, Head of Special Collections, University of St. Andrews Library, Scotland, 21 August 1934.

50. Freundlich, Von Laue’s response to Stark, 1 September 1934. After the war, von Laue was arrested by the Allied Forces, briefly interned in England, and returned to Germany. In 1951, he became director of the prestigious Max Planck Institute for Research in Physical Chemistry. Max von Laue died in 1960. Stark, too, was arrested and released but spent the last years of his life in his private laboratory on his country estate, Eppenstatt, near Traunstein in Upper Bavaria, investigating the effect of light deflection in an inhomogeneous electric field. Stark died in 1957.

51. Starting in 1933, Freundlich tried to sensitize America’s Jewish establishment to the plight of Jewish intellectuals in Germany. For example, see correspondence between Freundlich and Henry Morgenthau, Sr. Reisman, *Turkey’s Modernization*, 194, 285, 287, 293.

Prize in physics (1919) must have played a significant role in all of these considerations.<sup>52</sup>

With the four-power conference resulting in the 30 September 1938 “Munich Agreement” giving the Czech Sudetenland to Germany, the message regarding the future of the rest of Czechoslovakia was clear. On 5 October, German troops marched through Sudetenland. Physiologist Hans Winterstein, who by then was well established in Istanbul, wrote a letter on 10 October 1938 to Felix Haurowitz, who was well established in Prague: “Are you at all interested in a teaching position in biochemistry at the University of Istanbul? If yes, please send a CV and a list of your publications. This is an unofficial request with no strings attached.”<sup>53</sup>

This inquiry was followed by over a dozen negotiation letters spanning a period of almost five months. On 31 January 1939, Haurowitz wrote to Winterstein: “Thanks for all your efforts. Of course, I am a bit nervous about initiating anything at this end without official documentation to assure me that I will be permitted to enter Istanbul officially. But I am not that impatient because it is pretty quiet here and as far as I can judge it will remain quiet.” However in the very same letter, Haurowitz continued: “It is strange, though, that among my German gentile colleagues, the same denunciation and mean-spirited rage has manifested itself as was evident when the Nazis were victorious in Germany’s Vienna and the Sudetenland.”<sup>54</sup> But the negotiations continued. In his memoirs, Haurowitz stated:

[T]he Sudeten part of Czechoslovakia was abandoned to Hitler—Germany. The German University in Prague became an independent University of the German Reich and was expected to continue accepting German students from the Sudeten. I received at that time the offer of the Chair of Biochemistry at the University of Istanbul, Turkey. I hesitated to abandon my laboratory and my student co-workers. However, when I was informed that I was temporarily deprived of my privilege to teach and to examine, I decided finally to visit Istanbul and to see whether I would be able

52. From 1933 until his retirement from that position in 1939, Stark was the elected President of the Physico-Technical Institute. At the same time, he was also President of the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Association for Research). In 1933, he attempted to become the Führer of German physics through the *Deutsche Physik* or Aryan physics movement against the “Jewish physics” of Einstein, et al. “German Physics,” 20 September 2005, cited at <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/GERstark.htm>.

53. Haurowitz, 10 October 1938.

54. *Ibid.*

to continue doing research there. Since I found favorable conditions there, I accepted the Turkish offer. A few weeks later [5 March 1939] Hitler's troops invaded Prague. With my wife and two children, we left two weeks after by train for Istanbul. Although most of our property was seized by the Gestapo, we were allowed to take along our furniture and my library.<sup>55</sup>

Haurowitz's colleague, biochemist Dr. Professor Carl Oppenheimer, had served for many years prior to the Nazi takeover as editor-in-chief of the international journal *Enzymologia*, and his editorial office had been long situated in Berlin. While he never made it to Turkey, his correspondence with one who did is poignantly apropos. With Poland occupied and Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland in Germany's uncontested control, Felix Haurowitz wrote from Prague, on 22 January 1939, to his colleague Carl Oppenheimer, who was still in Berlin. The letter was mostly about scientific matters of common interest. However, at the very end, almost in passing, he mentioned: "I will have to leave Prague very soon. I will send you my new address as soon as I know what it is."<sup>56</sup> On 26 November 1939, Oppenheimer, who was quite ill in addition to having been displaced to Holland, wrote about his editorial functions at the helm of *Enzymologia*: "it is the only joy in my professional life, since the war has put an end to all my plans and dreams."<sup>57</sup>

In 1939, Oppenheimer moved to The Hague, Holland, to escape the Nazis, or so he thought. The Germans entered Holland on 10 May 1940. On 2 August 1940, less than three months later, on an *Enzymologia* letterhead, Oppenheimer wrote to fellow biochemist Felix Haurowitz in Istanbul about matters involving an upcoming Haurowitz publication in the journal. At the end he stated: "I ask you to write to my son Hans [Hannan] Oppenheimer at the Agricultural Research Station in Rehovot, Palestine, and tell him that we are fine."<sup>58</sup> On 2 September 1940, Oppenheimer thanked Haurowitz for writing to his son and wrote that he "hopes that he will soon get an answer." In the same letter he asked that Haurowitz "write to [his] son again and tell him that his

55. *Ibid.*, October 1975. An extract from the *Autobiography of Felix Haurowitz*, written in October 1975, on request by the Home Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States (Washington, D.C.) upon Haurowitz's being elected to the Academy's membership. Lilly Library, University of Indiana. Supplied with permission to print by Dr Alice (Haurowitz) Sievert, Executrix of the Felix Haurowitz estate, 2 September 2005.

56. *Ibid.*, 22 January 1939.

57. *Ibid.*, 26 November 1939.

58. *Ibid.*, 2 August 1940.

parents are doing fine.”<sup>59</sup> On 22 December 1940, Professor Carl Oppenheimer wrote:

Lieber Herr [Dear Mr.] Haurowitz,

We are doing fine health-wise and our rooms are warm enough, good Dutch landlord takes good care of us at the pension [boarding house] and is very friendly. You are lucky you don't have to be involved in the war. I am worried about the future. We must bear our troubles and destiny with calm and nobility. Money troubles disrupted the publishing house because of the war.

Please write to my son. I have not heard from him. Please tell him at this holiday time, I think of him often. Received indirect news of younger son—but not for a while. You wrote about a teaching position in Turkey. Is it still open? I am now ready to consider it. How much pay? What are the conditions? Please help. . . .<sup>60</sup>

Once established in Istanbul, Felix Haurowitz tried to bring his then still living colleague Carl Oppenheimer from Holland to Turkey. Unfortunately, the only commitment Haurowitz could squeeze out of the university administration was for a one-year contract. This offer was extended to Oppenheimer who, in a letter of 2 September 1940, declined on the grounds of the brevity of the contract and the hopes that the war would soon be over, at which time he would seriously consider the offer. Oppenheimer, however, recommended a “Professor Neuberg who is in Jerusalem and who has no family and no work to consider in such a move.” He also mentioned that the other professors who were still in Germany could not be contacted and those in the United States would not leave. As for himself, he was “66 years old and still can work three more good years and would love to be considered for a more permanent position.”<sup>61</sup>

On 14 April 1941, Haurowitz transmitted the message to Oppenheimer that his son Hannan in Palestine had not heard from his younger brother for over six

59. *Ibid.*, 2 September 1940. In a letter of 5 January 1939, Oppenheimer stated: “Since my resettlement [from Berlin] in Holland, I found out from my publisher, that that you have found a new residence in Istanbul. Congratulations! . . . Let me know how you are faring personally. Would love to hear from you.” Haurowitz, 5 January 1939. Felix Haurowitz was a German-speaking scientist with a senior position at the University of Prague. With his family, he escaped to Turkey in 1939 after the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia.

60. *Ibid.*, 22 December 1940.

61. *Ibid.*, 2 September 1940.

months. On 25 December of the same year, Frau H. Oppenheimer informed Haurowitz of her husband's death and thanked him for all his help.<sup>62</sup> In a letter dated 12 January 1942, Haurowitz informed Dr. Hannan Oppenheimer, in Rehovot, Palestine, that his father, a dear colleague, had passed away in Utrecht, Holland. Haurowitz concluded his letter with "finally there was a letter, intended for you and your brother, I am enclosing it to this letter, hoping that the censor will let it pass as it is the last message from a father to his children."<sup>63</sup>

Another letter to Hannan Oppenheimer, dated 25 April 1942, stated: "I am very sorry that I have to give you sad news again. . . . In the meantime, your mother wrote me . . . I fear, a last letter from her. She asks me to tell to you and your brother that she will find the peace she expects. All will be over, when I get her letter."<sup>64</sup> Her death was confirmed by a third party in Holland. The information was transmitted in a 30 June 1942 letter.<sup>65</sup>

On 28 July of the same year, Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt agreed to open up a second front in Europe. About one month later, on 30 June, the Nazis concluded their conquest of the Crimean peninsula by capturing Sevastopol, a Russian naval seaport across the Black Sea from Turkey. This move brought the Axis within a single night's sea journey of Istanbul and half that from Turkey's northern provinces. Germany's allies, Romania and Bulgaria, provided additional departure points for any and all hostile potentialities. Fewer than eight days earlier, the Nazi leaders had quietly met in Berlin with Reinhard Heydrich, the hangman of Europe, who was in charge of the fate of Jews in Germany and the occupied territories—the "final solution."

During this period, at least one of the émigré professors intervened successfully on behalf of the Jews left behind in occupied lands. According to the memoirs of German Ambassador Franz von Papen:

I learned through one of the German émigré professors that the Secretary of the Jewish Agency had asked for me to intervene in the matter of the threatened deportation to camps in Poland of 10,000 Jews living in Southern France. Most of them were former Turkish citizens of

62. *Ibid.*, 12 January 1942.

63. *Ibid.*, 22 December 1940.

64. *Ibid.*, 25 April 1942.

65. *Ibid.*, 30 June 1942. Additionally, a recently conducted search for Hannan Oppenheimer indicates that he passed away a number of years ago. David Blank, personal communication, Jerusalem, Israel, 20 February 2007.

Levantine origin. I promised my help and discussed the matter with M. Menemencioglu.<sup>66</sup>

The German émigré professor to whom von Papen referred was his own children's pediatrician, Albert Eckstein.<sup>67</sup> Numan Rifat Menemencioglu was Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs. A career diplomat, Menemencioglu was the grandson of Turkish patriot Namik Kemal, poet and man of letters, advocate of freedom, and an opponent of the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamit. Kemal's writings and ideas greatly influenced the intellectuals of the time, including Atatürk. With this kind of heritage, Menemencioglu was a man to be reckoned with. Ambassador von Papen continued: "There was no legal basis to warrant any official action on his part, but he authorized me to inform Hitler that the deportation of these former Turkish citizens would cause a sensation in Turkey and endanger friendly relations between the two countries. This *démarche* succeeded in quashing the whole affair."<sup>68</sup>

### EFFORTS HAD BEEN MADE SINCE 1933

While still in Belgium, Albert Einstein wrote to mathematician Dr. Hilda Geiringer on 25 March 1933. By then, Einstein had a job offer as the first or at least one of the first two academic appointees to the newly formed Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton, funded by Jewish money and independent of Princeton University. Writing to his junior colleague Geiringer in German, Einstein stated, "I am formulating a plan to try to establish a university for refugees, i.e., exiled German Jewish docents and students. . . . This plan would only work if sufficient numbers of prominent educators are willing to try to make this idea a reality."<sup>69</sup>

66. F. von Papen, *Memoirs* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1953), 521–22.

67. Albert Eckstein introduced public health data collection to Turkey. He was part of the University of Ankara contingent. The university was built from the ground up largely because of the émigré professors. Among them were the luminary archeologist Benno Landsberger and Hittite scholar Hans Güterbock, and eight others, including sinologist Wolfram Eberhard and India expert Walter Ruben. In 1948, they all had their contracts terminated with only three months' notice. Most found jobs at prestigious American universities. Landsberger and Güterbock founded the highly acclaimed Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago.

68. Von Papen, *Memoirs*, 521–22.

69. Albert Einstein, courtesy of the Einstein Archives Online Document No. 38-612.00. See also the new evidence—a letter from Einstein to Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü (1884–1973) and İnönü's response to Einstein—in Reisman, "Jewish Refugees from Nazism, Albert Einstein, and the Modernization of Higher Education in Turkey (1933–1945)," *Aleph: Historical Studies in Science & Judaism* 7 (2007):1–29.

He continued that because he was “estranged from Germany, it would be difficult for me to make contact with the appropriate people.” He then asked if she and “Herr [Richard von] Mises [would] be interested in this proposition? If so, you have the opportunity to make contact with the appropriate people so that a prognosis for this plan could be made.” Recognizing that he himself lacked the organizational abilities, Einstein did point out that “with my influence and connections I can facilitate bringing this project to fruition, especially the financing of it.”<sup>70</sup>

In March 1933, concerned about directly contacting Hilda Geiringer as she was still in Germany and living under Nazi rule, Einstein sent this letter to Dr. Ernst Geiringer, Hilda’s brother in Vienna, who replied on a commercial letterhead to Einstein on 2 May 1933. He wrote that the letter had arrived and that he had “carefully sent it to her. When I receive a reply from her, I will take the responsibility of sending it on to you. I would appreciate it if you would send all subsequent correspondence also to this address and not to Berlin.”<sup>71</sup> Both Hilda Geiringer and Richard von Mises were saved by accepting the Turkish government’s invitations.

Drafted in Paris on 16 October 1933, the “Memorandum of Professor L. W. Jones’ [chief of the Rockefeller Foundation’s European office] talk with Professor P. H. Schwarz, secretary of the *Notgemeinschaft der Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland*, Zurich, Switzerland,” stated:

Professor P. H. Schwarz came by appointment to Paris for a conference with LWJ and discussed the recent letter of 6 October 1933, . . . Schwarz raised the question concerning the assistance of the RF [Rockefeller Foundation] to obtain the release of [dentistry] Professor Alfred Kantorowicz, [then] in a concentration camp in Germany, [who had been] appointed to Professorship in Istanbul.

Schwarz was informed that the Rockefeller Foundation “officers in Paris could not approach such a problem.” This documents that Schwartz was trying to secure the release of Kantorowicz from his concentration camp incarceration. The above memorandum concludes with: “Professor Schwarz handed LWJ . . . a contract signed between the Ministry of Public Instruction with the deposed German scholar, Professor Alfred Kantorowicz, now in a concentration camp in

70. Einstein Archives Online Document No. 38-612.00.

71. *Ibid.*, Document 38-613.00.

Germany.<sup>72</sup> The contract was dated 7 October 1933, and the record shows that Kantorowicz was extricated from the camp. With his wife, two sons, and two daughters, he was brought to Istanbul in no small measure because of the efforts of Dr. Philipp Schwarz.<sup>73</sup> In the “confidential” memorandum, Schwarz informed Jones “in strict confidence” that he had “been commissioned by the Turkish Minister of Hygiene to cooperate in the appointments for 5 positions in the newly built city hospital in Ankara, as well as 3 positions in the new Research Institute of Hygiene.”<sup>74</sup>

On 12 April 1936, Albert Einstein was approached by his old colleague Hans Reichenbach:

[Y]ou know that I have always wanted to come to the U.S.A. As long as I was in Germany my efforts in this direction failed. Then came the Hitler mess, and I was happy to get the offer from Istanbul. This thing seemed at the time very promising to me: a professorship and the possibility of independently building the philosophy curriculum from the ground up. Unfortunately the two and half years that I've been here have been a great disappointment to me. It's true that my position here is very independent; I am the only philosopher here.<sup>75</sup>

On 2 May 1936, Albert Einstein recounted the personal experience of philosopher Rudolf Carnap, a mutual friend from their Vienna and Berlin Circle days: “Carnap told me the other day he was told explicitly that they did not want to hire Jews at Princeton.” Einstein goes on to write: “Thus even here not everything is gold, and who knows how it will be here tomorrow. Maybe the ‘barbarians’ are after all, the better people.”<sup>76</sup> The information contained in this letter was

72. Philipp Schwarz, 16 October 1933, courtesy of the Rockefeller [Foundation] Archive Center. Collection RF; Record Group 1.1; Series 717, Box 1, Folder 1.

73. The Rockefeller Foundation sent an emissary to Istanbul during February 1934 to report on the émigré professors' progress in Istanbul. The emissary's diary shows that on 18 February, Schwarz did not miss the opportunity to once again solicit the Foundation's help in extricating additional scientists left behind. Courtesy of the Rockefeller Foundation. Collection RF; Record Group 1.1; Series 717, Box 1, Folder 1.

74. Schwarz, 16 October 1933, Rockefeller Foundation.

75. Albert Einstein Archives, Princeton University, Einstein, The Jewish National and University Library, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel: 12 April 1936, and the National Library of Israel Document No. 20-107, 1 and 2. Courtesy of the Einstein Archives Online.

76. Einstein Document 20-118. Discrimination against Jews at America's East Coast private colleges and universities was not limited to faculty hiring. A small liberal arts women's school in Boston proudly announces on its website “that [John] Simmons created one of the only

apparently circulated among the émigrés in Turkey. Astronomer E. Finlay Freundlich mentions this in his own letter to Einstein from Istanbul dated 3 August 1936.<sup>77</sup>

From his New Jersey home, Albert Einstein wrote to gynecologist W. Liepmann in Istanbul on 6 November 1937:

In today's mail I received the news that Frau Dr. Lisl Katzenstein-Sendlbeck is in a precarious position. She is a physician and midwife and could be very useful as a nurse. She is also the niece of the preeminent surgeon Moritz Katzenstein. She has received an order to leave the Ukraine. Her sister wrote me this and mentions that you need help. I beg of you if at all possible to help her get some work. I hear that Frau Katzenstein is a hard working and dependable person. This is best demonstrated by the fact that the most critical and demanding Professor Katzenstein used her as a co-worker for four years. I know you will find a most helpful assistant in her.<sup>78</sup>

The personnel archives of University of Istanbul's medical school contain no record for a Dr. Lisl Katzenstein-Sendlbeck.

#### ATTEMPTS HAD BEEN MADE TO SEEK OUTSIDE PROTECTION

On 25 February 1934, barely six months after his arrival in Istanbul, E. Finlay Freundlich took the initiative and contacted Sir Herbert Samuel, a London attorney, on behalf of "the 30 or so professors from various disciplines, mostly German Jews or half Jews who were invited by the government of Turkey to reform the university in Istanbul." In the rest of the two-page letter, he told the barrister in German about all the good things the professors were doing for Turkey and then requested that Sir Samuel petition His Majesty's government to provide outside protection to this group of individuals and their families:

We are rebuilding a modern university. After the denunciations I have suffered [in Potsdam, Germany] it was not hard to choose this beautiful city. We have however no protection from the German consulate here, because they are part of the rightlessness for Jews. Would it be possible to protect

private colleges that did not impose admission quotas on Jewish students during the first half of the 1900s." "Simmons History," 7 October 2005, cited at <http://www.simmons.edu>.

77. Freundlich, 3 August 1936.

78. Einstein Document 53–612.

those professors who like it under the care of the British consulate? It is possible that the Turkish government would try to take advantage of our situation of statelessness. The question arises whether we could acquire English statehood [*sic*]. For me, I am half-English. I have a brother and two sisters living in England.<sup>79</sup>

Unfortunately, the Home Office was not responsive, and Britain offered no protection to Freundlich and his colleagues in Istanbul.<sup>80</sup>

### INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

While still in Istanbul, Freundlich received a number of letters from colleagues and friends. The distinguished British astrophysicist Edward Arthur Milne wrote from Oxford, England, on 7 February 1934 to Freundlich:

I am very sorry that you have had such a painful and difficult year. I was afraid to write my sympathy when you were still in Germany, for fear letters would be opened in the post and possibly harm you. I am glad you found support from Rockefeller—this is true, is it not? . . . I do not think it would have been good your coming to England. Schrödinger is here, and some physicists from Leipzig, also other literary people, but in no case with hopes of permanent [job] prospects.

P.S. I don't like the look of things in France at all.<sup>81</sup>

In a letter dated 20 April 1936, Professor Lanczos of Szekesfihvar, Hungary, mentioned hardships, his personal illness and that of his wife, and having had an extremely hard winter. No mention was made, however, of life under a government that had started its anti-Semitic policies as far back as 1932. He also wrote of the possibility of being given a permanent mathematics position at Istanbul's (American) Robert College, but nothing was certain because of the economic crisis in Turkey.<sup>82</sup> On 14 July 1936, he followed up, stating: "Due to the general picture formed after receiving new information from Turkey, I do not believe anymore

79. Freundlich, 25 February 1934.

80. According to a letter from Barrister Samuels to E. F. Freundlich. *Ibid.*, 30 March 1934.

81. The support referred to the Rockefeller Foundation's planned funding of the acquisition of Turkey's first telescope. *Ibid.*, 7 February 1934. Erwin Schrödinger won the 1933 Nobel Prize in Physics.

82. *Ibid.*, 20 April 1936.

that the Turkish plan will succeed.”<sup>83</sup> By mid-September 1936, totally frustrated with the stumbling blocks thrown by the Turkish bureaucracy in his efforts to procure a telescope and design and build the observatory, Freundlich decided to leave Turkey and restart the very same process in Prague. He then resigned from, of all things, the Chamber Music Club, organized and run by the German expatriate community in Istanbul:

Dear Dr. Ritter,

Since I decided, several weeks ago, to leave the University of Istanbul, I think the Chamber Music Club should not count on me any more as a member. I wish therefore that you elect another member who would enjoy the meetings as much as I did. This *Kuratorium* [respite place] was one of my special pleasures. I wish the society the best and a long existence.

With true Greetings,

E. F. Freundlich<sup>84</sup>

Before the war's end, Freundlich had found his way to Scotland as guest professor of Astronomy at the University of St. Andrews. Writing from St. Andrews on 5 August 1940, Freundlich told Albert Einstein: “It was good to hear from you again, in the two months since your last letter some of our common fears and only a few of our common hopes have come to pass.”<sup>85</sup> Among other things, Freundlich referred to what had happened after the occupation of the Channel Islands of Guernsey, Jersey, and Big and Little Sark, all of which had been part of the United Kingdom.

Hitler had proposed a peace pact with Britain on 6 July 1940.<sup>86</sup> The proposed pact was based on the partition of the world. Because Britain refused the offer, Hitler told Britain on the nineteenth of the same month, “if the struggle continues it can only end in annihilation for one of us.” Freundlich continued: “It's been thirty years since we became acquainted and the theory of relativity was born. The integral summation of these years yields a very irrational proposition. Is the end result of yours and other's efforts necessarily such a world?”<sup>87</sup>

83. *Ibid.*, 14 July 1936.

84. *Ibid.*, 27 September 1936.

85. *Ibid.*, 5 August 1940.

86. Cesare Salmaggi and Alfredo Pallavisini, *2194 Days of War* (New York and London: Windward, 1977), 68.

87. Einstein, Document 11, 185–1.

In the week that all of the Warsaw ghetto's resistance collapsed, and the last of the ghetto's Jews were killed, Felix Haurowitz in Istanbul wrote to professor Max Bergmann at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in New York City on 28 May 1943:

I hear nothing about my cousin Leopold Pollak. I know only that he has been deported by the Germans. About ten of my near relatives have been deported; three of them died surely and I am not sure, how many of the others died. I am glad, that my brothers are safely in England and America and that my own parents died before, so that no nearest relatives remained there.<sup>88</sup>

Throughout the war, American ambassadors to Turkey played behind-the-scenes roles in helping to extract as many people as possible from Nazi control. As late as 9 February 1944, Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt, writing to Charles Barlas, stated:

As I explained to you yesterday, while the Vichy Government has as yet given no commitment, there is every evidence that the intervention of the Turkish authorities has caused the Vichy authorities to at least postpone if not altogether abandon their apparent intention to exile these unfortunates to almost certain death by turning them over to the Nazi authorities.<sup>89</sup>

### ÉMIGRÉS' AVERSION TO MAKING RISKY DECISIONS

While it is fair to speculate that some of the émigrés in Turkey were what economists call "risk-averse," dermatologist Berta Ottenstein was different. She left a secure job as a professor of medicine and head of the Skin Clinic in Istanbul for the United States with no job prospect in hand. She never did find one.<sup>90</sup>

In an exchange of correspondence during April 1946 between Haurowitz and Ottenstein, then living in Brookline, Massachusetts, Haurowitz inquired about job opportunities in his profession at American universities. Ottenstein was pessimistic, but did suggest a possible position at the University of Utah and urged him to come. Haurowitz, however, was unwilling to give up a secure position, one that allowed him to transfer some of his salary to the United States to support his

88. Haurowitz, 28 May 1943.

89. Laurence Steinhardt Papers, Library of Congress, container 82, item 17.

90. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 362.

family, before he had secured a position there.<sup>91</sup> Other correspondence to Ottenstein and others made it clear that while he was satisfied with his work in Turkey, his children had no future there. He was more specific in a letter of 6 March 1946 to his colleague E. Finlay Freundlich in Scotland:

It was the only right thing to be done for the children, [sending them to the United States] who had visited [attended] here the English High Schools. There is the question, whether I should follow them. For the moment I prefer to wait, until travelling possibilities to Prague or to the United States will improve. Our fees here have been increased rather considerably and I have the right to transfer 1/5 of my income to USA, so that it is not quite easy to leave this post without having any security about a future appointment.<sup>92</sup>

On 5 September 1948, he informed Berta Ottenstein that he had settled in at Indiana University during the previous July and that his family had joined him in Bloomington. Soon, Haurowitz began to help others in their attempts to secure jobs at American universities.<sup>93</sup>

### SITUATION IN TURKEY

Without question, many Turkish professors resented the émigrés. Not surprisingly, those who had been dismissed as part of the *université reformü* were bitter. Equally resentful were those who retained their jobs but were paid less than a quarter of the newcomers' salaries. In addition, these intrusive newcomers could not only bring assistants with them from Germany but were also given Turkish assistants, something that their Turkish counterparts had never had. Qualified Turkish professors often found the choice positions offered to the guest professors. No wonder that they had little liking for their nominal superiors and often ignored or sabotaged their activities and instructions. No doubt, the *Dar-ül Fünun* had many competent and dedicated faculty members, but "there were also those who showed up at work only to collect their modest paychecks. Like all the fossilized elements at institutions, they were expected to put up a resistance to the reform project and the foreign intruders."<sup>94</sup> In medicine, Turkish professors and private

91. Haurowitz, 6 April 1946 and 14 April 1946.

92. *Ibid.*, 6 March 1946.

93. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 363.

94. Seyhan, *German Academic Exiles*, 274–88. When the *Dar-ül Fünun* was abolished on 31 July 1933 and the Istanbul University was established in its place, major dismissals of aged and incompetent *Dar-ül Fünun* teachers took place.

practice physicians did not want competition from the world-renowned German experts who were building and running the university clinics. While Turkey had no medical infrastructure, those who claimed to be men of medicine in the agrarian areas did not want to lose their living. This *Reformü* directly affected their pocketbooks at a time when money was scarce for all. The émigré professors and their mandate were constantly being undermined by those who had been elbowed aside and their allies. Professor Albert Malche had anticipated such potential problems. He wrote to Lauder W. Jones at the European office of the Rockefeller Foundation, on 16 October 1933: "Dare I suggest that you make a trip. . . . Your visit would be a great encouragement for the foreign professors, and it would be a highly appreciated mark of interest, I am sure, for the Ministry."<sup>95</sup> Later, the Rockefeller Foundation became aware of the various problems through reports received from its own representatives in the field. "There is a strong anti-German feeling among the Turks."<sup>96</sup>

The Third Reich kept watch over those it had allowed out of its jurisdiction. Christian nationalists, one of the loose-knit groups, also undermined émigrés in their work. Such groups included anti-Semitic circles with direct ties to the Third Reich, the old-guard professionals the émigrés had replaced, those not replaced but attempting to preserve vested interests, junior native Turkish academics wanting to take over, Turkish colleagues who were getting paid much less for their work, students hypersensitive to any perceived slights to national pride, and of course, academics involved in the customary gamesmanship still played in most societies.<sup>97</sup> This loose-knit alliance of several disparate subcultures impeded the modernization of Turkish universities.<sup>98</sup> Generally, the émigrés enjoyed ministerial support for their professional aspirations. This fueled individual enthusiasm, as well as *esprit de corps* for the task at hand and the challenges ahead. This did not hold true for all. The intrigues shortened Professor Arthur Robert von Hippel's tenure in Turkey, resulting in a missed opportunity for Turkey of monumental

95. Rockefeller Foundation, Record Group 1.1; Series 717; Box 1; Folder 1.

96. Internal Rockefeller Foundation correspondence, 23 October 1933. From Daniel P. O'Brien, MD Assistant Director, Medical Sciences, to his boss Alan Gregg, M.D., Director in New York. Ibid.

97. Negative attitudes toward perceived capitalist and (western) colonialist influences, fueled by youthful adulation of the communist ideology, persist to this day among some graduate students. Such behavior was indeed witnessed by this author during many lectures, seminars, and libations (1999–2003) at both public and private universities in Turkey. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 506.

98. In an effort to stymie any resistance, the architects of the university reform prepared a law that ordered the *Dar-ül Fünun's* closure on 31 July 1933.

proportions. Based on his work before coming to Turkey and while there, he became the father of what we now know as nanotechnology, a development that continues to reshape industries worldwide.<sup>99</sup>

Von Hippel considered it all as a wonderful test or experiment for psychologists. Reflecting on his relatively short experience as an Istanbul University professor, he described the situation:

There were twenty five to thirty professors with their families—mostly refugees selected by Professor Schwartz and his advisors in Zurich—who formed the nucleus of a modern university. The old Turkish faculty had been dismissed, but was still a powerful adversary with connections in Parliament. Therefore we newcomers, with the shock of exile in our bones, found ourselves surrounded by intrigues in a strange culture. Any success or mishap affected us all. This was a severe testing ground for human qualities. It would have been an exciting experiment for a psychologist.<sup>100</sup>

No doubt the émigrés were aware of events in their homelands. However, the constant attention paid these émigrés by the highest echelons of Turkish government combined with bad news emanating from their homelands and shortages of supplies and equipment to create what appears in retrospect as a new setting for the “Hawthorne effect”—an ever-enhanced productivity. In this case, it occurred at the highest intellectual employee levels.

## DEPARTURES FROM TURKEY

Some of the émigrés were able to leave Turkey prior to the onset of the war. Astronomer E. Findlay Freundlich went to Prague in 1937 and then settled in Scotland in 1939. Because the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) did not discriminate against faculty with Jewish roots, philosopher Hans Reichenbach came to Los Angeles in 1938. After Atatürk’s death in 1938, many in the émigré community feared that their safe haven would cease to exist. A convert to Catholicism, Richard von Mises left Turkey in 1939 for a position at Harvard. Among the fearful was Hilda Geiringer, von Mises’ assistant, colleague, and collaborator. Desperate that she might not obtain a visa to the United States, she

99. Von Hippel, “Adventures in Turkey,” *Life in Times of Turbulent Transitions*, chap. 9, 70–82, 25 July 2006, cited at <http://lucy.mrs.org/vonhippel/life>. See also Mildred S. Dresselhaus, “Obituaries: Arthur Robert von Hippel,” *Physics Today* 58.9 (September 2004): 76–77.

100. 5 July 2007, <http://vonhippel.mrs.org/vonhippel/life/AvHMemoirs9.pdf>.

wrote to von Mises from Istanbul: "Is there no way to marry *pro cura*? Here an emigrant who has a resident's permit has married his 'bride' and she was then allowed to come to him straight from Vienna."<sup>101</sup> Her fears of not receiving an entrance permit proved unfounded. With her daughter, she went to Bryn Mawr College, where she was appointed to a lecturer position.<sup>102</sup> Her struggles in coming to the United States and in finding a permanent professional position are well documented.<sup>103</sup> *Mischling* mathematician William Prager secured a job at Brown and came during the midst of the war in Europe in 1941.<sup>104</sup>

Annual statistics of émigré departures from 1933 through 1960 show two peaks: 1938 and 1948.<sup>105</sup> The first peak doubtless occurred because the initial five-year contracts had run their course, and some were not renewed. The second peak involved those whose contracts were twice renewed but not a third time, as well as the greater options available at war's end. Between those two dates Atatürk died, and Turkish nationalism—with xenophobic overtones—increased. Up to the war's end, the German embassy exerted Nazi influence in both overt and covert ways. By the late 1940s, many Turkish nationals had been trained abroad as well as by the émigrés in Turkey, and Turkey's economic conditions had worsened. Salaries that were very high in 1933 had been eroded by inflation in the absence of compensatory wage adjustments and the lack of pension plans, according to Kathrin Meier-Rust.<sup>106</sup> All of these factors interacted with the fact that university administrators had not renewed contracts and, through various administrative acts, had made it known that the welcome mat was no longer out.<sup>107</sup> Among the many examples of such practices was the case of Viennese radiologist Georg Fuchs. Prior to the expiration of his contract in May 1941, he informed his

101. Courtesy of Andrea B. Goldstein, reference archivist, Harvard University, Richard von Mises Archives, with permission from Magda (Geiringer-von Mises) Tisza, administrator of the von Mises estate. Richard von Mises and Hilda Geiringer married after she and her daughter arrived in the United States.

102. J. J. O'Connor and E. F. Robertson, "Hilda Geiringer von Mises, 1893–1973," 18 October 2005, cited at <http://www-history.mcs.st-andrews.ac.uk/Mathematicians/Geiringer.html>.

103. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 218–364.

104. *Mischling* was a Nazi term for those who had some Jewish blood. See Daniel C. Drucker, "William Prager 1903–1980," *National Academy of Engineering* 2 (1984): 233–34. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 211–227.

105. *Liste der Emigrantinnen und Emigranten*, 111.

106. K. Meier-Rust, *Alexander Rüstow: Geschichtsdeutung und liberales Engagement* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1993), 61–70.

107. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 259–61.

superiors that he was going to go to Palestine. The university was contractually bound to reimburse Dr. Fuchs for repatriation costs to any destination of his choosing. However, on grounds that he did not report for duty during the last two days remaining in his contract, his repatriation travel expenses were forever denied.<sup>108</sup> The émigrés' problems, it seemed, were never going to end.

## CONCLUSION

In 1933, Turkey had only two universities. Both were in Istanbul, and one was a technical university. Today, the Turkish system of higher education is nationwide, and boasts no fewer than seventy-two public and private universities. Significantly, over 40 percent of the professors are women, who have never encountered a glass ceiling in academic administration. Annually, over 1.7 million students sit for the national university admission examination, and the best of these get the widest choices for acceptance.<sup>109</sup>

Currently, mention of Turkey conjures up many thoughts—some positive, others negative. Even among scholars, attitudes toward Turkey's role during the Holocaust are often quite negative. Few realize that Turkey provided a safe haven for over 1,000 individuals. These included some of the most eminent intellectuals and their families—all of whom had nowhere else to go.<sup>110</sup> While most did not consider themselves Jewish, they were so according to Nazi definitions. They were "enlightened." Many were decorated World War I veterans. That, in the end, would not protect them. They had been displaced, and the fortunate ones were invited to Turkey for the knowledge they could bring—knowledge that Turkey needed at the time.

It was not easy for professionals at the height of their careers to relocate themselves and their families and resume their work without proper tools, assistants, equipment, and supplies. This held particularly true for those thrust into a somewhat hostile place with an unfamiliar culture and language. Their correspondence recorded the trials and tribulations of exile experienced by these intellectuals. As one of the émigrés stated:

Leaving everything aside, the magically beautiful Bosphorus bridge opened on the 50th anniversary of the Republic may be regarded as a symbol that

108. Arin Namal, "Prof. Dr. Max Sgalitzer (1884–1974): Ein österreichischer Leiter des Radiologischen Instituts der Universität Istanbul," *Zeitsgeschichte* 1 (2003): 37–49.

109. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 439, 443.

110. It also permitted safe passage to Palestine for over 20,000 refugees from central Europe. *Ibid.*, 305.

Turkey will connect Europe and Asia, East and West, today more than ever. Among those who feel this in admiration and gratitude are German scientists, politicians and artists who looked for and found shelter along the Bosphorus during difficult times.<sup>111</sup>

In retrospect, just a few decades after the Ottoman Empire had taken its last breath, the general exodus of professors had so depleted Germany's premier higher-learning institutions that the University of Istanbul was rightfully considered and sincerely called "the best German University in the world."<sup>112</sup> According to Onur Öymen, the Turkish government's contract with the émigré professors set salaries "well exceeding" those of the Turkish professors. Öymen pointed out that "the purpose of the Turkish government was to upgrade the academic level of Istanbul University to that of Western European universities." A number of German professors had high reputations in their own countries and participated in major reform projects in Turkey besides their teaching activities. For example, Andreas Schwarz from Freiburg made an important contribution to the adoption of western laws in Turkey in the 1930s. Gustav Oelsner from Hamburg, besides teaching architecture and city planning, played an important role in Turkey's city planning programs. Paul Hindemith was instrumental in building the Turkish State Conservatory in Ankara, Carl Ebert from Berlin founded the Turkish State Opera, and conductor Ernst Praetorius founded the President's Philharmonic Orchestra in Ankara.<sup>113</sup> They gave their students the tools, knowledge, and curiosity needed to effect change and to grow. They fulfilled their contractual obligations to the country that provided them a safe haven by helping to establish Istanbul University, Istanbul Technical University, and Ankara University. These three universities give credit to those émigrés who accomplished so much in such a relatively brief time.<sup>114</sup> Their students remember them with honor. Included among those granted honorary degrees over the years from Istanbul University's Academic Senate are Fritz Neumark, Fritz Arndt, Richard von Mises, Curt Kosswig, Felix Hauowitz, and

111. Neumark, *Zuflucht am Bosphorus*, 183.

112. Onur Öymen (a member of Turkey's Parliament) addressing the seminar, "Culture as a Weapon, Academicians in Exile" (Berlin, 29 July 2003), 16 May 2007, cited at <http://www.onuroymen.com/docs/konusma37.doc>.

113. Although Paul Hindemith never settled in Ankara for any duration, he had enormous influence on the establishment of the President's Symphony Orchestra and on academic music in Turkey. Neumark, *Zuflucht am Bosphorus*, 85.

114. Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 471–73.

Gustav Oelsner.<sup>115</sup> All of these intellectuals substantially contributed to the reform programs of the young Turkish Republic.<sup>116</sup>

With Atatürk's death in 1938 came a number of geopolitical, economic, social, and bureaucratic changes. Many of the émigrés were let go to seek employment elsewhere, and much of the momentum created by their presence diminished in the ensuing years.<sup>117</sup> Following the war's end, many of the émigrés came to America, making major impacts on the sciences, humanities, medicine, and the arts. Central Europe's great loss was, at first, Turkey's gain and later America's as well. The displaced assets of a once-humanist culture resulted in a significant contribution to the educational reforms of a new nation. As previously quoted, "Turkey placed a significant amount of German intellectual capital in escrow until it could be returned home safely and with interest."<sup>118</sup> For most of the émigrés, home was no longer the old *Heimat*. It was America and Israel. Princeton, Johns Hopkins, Columbia, Chicago, Indiana, and the Universities of California at Berkeley and Los Angeles numbered among the American beneficiaries. Some of the older émigrés did return to Germany and became instrumental in de-Nazifying German universities. Most were elected to serve as *Rektoren* (presidents) in their respective institutions.<sup>119</sup>

Atatürk's goal that Turkey and its citizens learn and practice "the techniques of the Europeans" has come to pass.<sup>120</sup> Turkey now has innovation centers, technology parks, regional economic development partnerships, and a highly qualified workforce. The opportunity exists for Turkey to be a model of a contemporary secular state, with a dominantly Moslem population—a moderate pivotal government spanning East and West.

115. Cimen Gunay-Erkol and Arnold Reisman, "The Founders of Turkey's System of Modern Higher Education: An Anthology of Testimonials from First, Second, and Third Generation of Students" (Reisman and associates, working paper, 2007). Available from the authors.

116. Öymen, *Turkey's Parliament*.

117. See Reisman, "Why Has Turkey Spawned So Few High-Tech Startup Firms? Or, Why is Turkey So Dependent on Technologic Innovations Created Outside Its Borders?" *Insight Turkey* 8.2 (2006):133–48. See also Reisman, *Turkey's Modernization*, 437–63.

118. Seyhan, *German Academic Exiles*, 274–88.

119. Reisman, "Turkey's Invitations to Nazi Persecuted Intellectuals Circa 1933: A Bibliographic Essay on History's Blind Spot" (Reisman and associates, working paper, 2007). Available upon request from the author.

120. Records of the Research and Analysis Branch. OSS (Regular Series), 1941–1945, Document No. 43906, Entry 16, dated 26 July 1943.

Copyright of *Historian* is the property of Blackwell Publishing Limited and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.