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The Project

«Mapping German Film Exile»

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«Mapping German Film Exile» is based on a research project that uses computer-based methods to study historical film exiles.¹ The starting point of the project are the personal files compiled by Günter Peter Straschek (in collaboration with Karin Rausch) between 1976 and 2009, which are now held as the **Archiv Günter Peter Straschek** at the Exile Archive of the German National Library in Frankfurt.² Our project highlights the important role of film professionals who fled abroad to escape the Nazi regime and their impact on the development of international film cultures. A particular focus is placed on the cinematography and screenwriting departments.

Chapter «1. A Decentralized History of Historical Film Exile» situates the project within the field of film history. Chapter «2. The Günter Peter Straschek Archive» presents Straschek's estate, and chapter «3. The Dataset» explains the provenance of the data and how we work with it. Chapter «4. Charts» presents selected aspects of the Straschek estate through computer-based film-historical analysis, illustrated by visualizations.

¹ Mapping German Film Migration 1930–1950. A graph-based data perspective on the emigration of filmmakers from Nazi Germany. In Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft [<https://gepris.dfg.de/gepris/projekt/444817764>] (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

² Günter Peter Straschek Archive. [<https://d-nb.info/1031107916>] (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

1. A Decentralized History of Historical Film Exile

«Mapping German Film Exile» aims to contribute to the study of film exile and transnational film history. The project also reflects sociohistorical production research using computer-based methods. Rather than arguing from a supposed center or a universalizing position, the project is inspired by Saidiya Hartman's concept of «speculative historiography».³ This approach involves challenging established canonizations, highlighting presumed margins, and taking an error-conscious stance. As the project contributes to the de-centering of film history, it explicitly addresses gaps and absences.

The Historical Film Exile

The historical film exile resulted from the political situation in Germany in 1933, which particularly affected Jewish film professionals, many of whom did not identify as Jewish, but were <defined> as such by the Nazi regime. Although anti-Jewish legislation did not become legally binding until the Nuremberg Laws were enacted in 1935, the film industry, particularly Universum Film AG (UFA), played an active role in dismissing and excluding Jewish employees as early as 1933. The National Socialists seized power on January 30, 1933. Following Goebbels' appointment as Reich Minister of Propaganda⁴ on March 13, the UFA board decided on March 29, 1933, that contracts «with Jewish employees should be terminated».⁵ The systematic exclusion of Jewish employees from the film industry took effect immediately. In July 1933, Goebbels founded the Reich Film Chamber as Minister of Propaganda. Anyone working in the film business had to be a member; only those of «Aryan» descent and considered politically unproblematic according to Nazi ideology were accepted.⁶ Those who conformed to the «national upheaval in Germany»⁷ were allowed to stay.

³ Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives. Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women, and Queer Radicals* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2019). For more on a speculative approach to film and media history, see the two issues of *Feminist Media Histories*, vol. 8, nos. 2 & 3 (2022).

⁴ Goebbels took immediate measures to expel Jews from the German film industry; film censorship was used to prevent Jewish producers from working. «Goebbels transformed the quota regulation for the protection of the German film industry, which originated in the Weimar Republic and provided for special import licenses for foreign films, into a tool for his racist agenda and decreed that films with Jewish employees were not German films and therefore required special production licenses». Helmut G. Asper, ««Etwas Besseres als den Tod»... Filmexil in Hollywood. Porträts, Filme, Dokumente». *Edition Film-Dienst*, vol. 2 (Marburg: Schüren, 2002), p. 18.

⁵ Bundesarchiv Protokoll der Ufa Vorstandssitzung, 29.3.1933. Akten der Universum Film AG. R_109_I_1029_a_0431-0439, S. 2.

⁶ Asper, 2002, p. 18.

⁷ Bundesarchiv *ibid.*

Over the next years, the film industry became the Nazi leadership's most important propaganda tool.⁸ Screenings of films made by Jewish employees were boycotted, and the press waged a smear campaign against films shot abroad by émigrés or with émigré filmmakers. The names of Jewish filmmakers were swiftly removed from their films. These anti-Semitic campaigns isolated German-Jewish artists. They were publicly discredited, and their professional and social lives changed overnight. «Their non-Jewish colleagues avoided them like the plague, former friends no longer greeted them and distanced themselves for fear of jeopardizing their own careers, conforming to the Nazi regime out of opportunism and, in some cases, conviction».⁹

The term «film exiles» refers not only to filmmakers, technicians, and movie theatre personnel who were forced to flee after 1933, but also to those who had previously emigrated and could no longer return to their families and friends in Germany after that year, as they would have faced death there. Many persecuted Jews, as well as political activists and communists, were unable to flee the country. Among them were Alice Dorell, Eugen Burg, and Herta Felden, all of whom were murdered in Nazi concentration camps. Kurt Gerron, Paul Morgan, and Otto Wallburg were captured by the Nazis while trying to flee into exile. They were all deported and murdered. The exact number of people in the film industry who were killed during the Nazi regime remains unknown. Their biographies should also be included in comprehensive film exile research.

The terms Film Exile - Film Emigration - Exile Film

The term «film exile» refers to the forced emigration of individuals employed in the German film industry following the Nazi takeover. Both terms, «exile» und «emigration», are appropriate in a sense: «emigration» has often been used by exiles themselves. However, in his 1937 poem «Über die Bezeichnung Emigranten» («On the Term Emigrants»), written while in exile in Sweden, Bertolt Brecht criticized the notion.¹⁰ The term «film exile» emphasizes the forced nature of emigration and underscores the impossibility of returning between 1933 and 1945.

⁸ Kreimeier, Klaus (1992) *Die Ufa-Story. Geschichte eines Filmkonzerns*. München/Wien: C. Hanser; Spiker, Jürgen (1975) *Film und Kapital. Der Weg der deutschen Filmwirtschaft zum nationalsozialistischen Einheitskonzern*. Bd. 2. Veröffentlichung des Instituts für Filmgestaltung Ulm/Berlin: Spiess; Moeller, Felix (1998) *Der Filmminister. Goebbels und der Film im Dritten Reich*. Berlin: Henschel.

⁹ Asper, 2002, 20 (trans. by the authors).

¹⁰ «I always thought the name given to us was wrong: Emigrants. It means those who leave their country. But we didn't leave of our own free will, choosing another country. We didn't immigrate to a country to stay there forever - we fled. We are displaced persons, exiles. The country that took us in is not home; it is exile». Bertolt Brecht (1937) «Über die Bezeichnung Emigranten,» in *Die Gedichte*. ed. Bertolt Brecht and Jan Knopf (Frankfurt am Main/Leipzig: Insel Taschenbuch, 2008), 350–351 (transl. by the authors).

Various definitions of the term <film exile> have been used in existing research thus far: Günter Peter Straschek defines film exiles as all individuals involved in film production in the German film industry between 1920 and 1933 who were employed in the film and cinema sector and forced into exile before 1945.¹¹ Straschek also collected information about individuals who went into exile as children and only later became involved in the film business. He published a first list of 1,532 names in an exhibition catalog in 1987.¹² Ronny Loewy wrote about the list:

[It] includes filmmakers who left Germany around 1930, primarily for professional reasons, preemptively emigrating because they would most likely have been persecuted on racial or political grounds after 1933. They are included because they almost always considered themselves as part of the film emigration from Nazi Germany. Strictly speaking, some names should be followed by question marks, as the criteria for determining who qualifies as a film emigrant from Nazi Germany are somewhat uncertain. In cases of doubt, inclusion in the list was favored. This list is not a complete directory of film emigrants from Nazi Germany.¹³

This estimate also applies to the extensive list of over 4,000 names that Straschek had researched by 2009. The 2009 list also includes relatives who were not involved in the film industry. Additionally, some individuals' files only contain records of searches conducted with no information confirming their involvement in the film industry.

In her 1982 dissertation, Maria Hilchenbach defines the period of film exile as spanning from 1933 to 1945. She focuses primarily on actors and directors, though she also mentions a few producers and writers. However, she does not mention any technicians.¹⁴

In his dissertation on *Anti-Nazi-Filme der deutschsprachigen Emigration von Hollywood 1939–1945* (Anti-Nazi Films by German-Speaking Émigrés), Jan-Christopher Horak focuses on German-language film exile in Hollywood. His approach encompasses film exiles from Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia as well. The list of individuals, initially researched for his dissertation, was first published in 1986 as a revised book containing a directory of 250 names and short biographies.¹⁵ Horak defines exile films as those shot in exile

¹¹ The list of 3,548 names, now available as a register file in the Exile Archive of the German National Library, reflects Straschek's selection and the state of his research until 2009.

¹² Loewy, Ronny (Hg.) (1987) *Von Babelsberg nach Hollywood. Filmemigranten aus Nazideutschland: Exponatenverzeichnis*. Schriftenreihe des Deutschen Filmmuseums. Frankfurt am Main: Deutsches Filmmuseum (transl. by the authors).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 7 (trans. by the authors).

¹⁴ Hilchenbach, Maria (1982) *Kino im Exil. Die Emigration deutscher Filmkünstler 1933–1945*. Bd. 14. 1. Aufl. Kommunikation und Politik. München/New York/London: Saur.

¹⁵ Horak, Jan-Christopher (1986) *Fluchtpunkt Hollywood. Eine Dokumentation zur Filmemigration nach 1933*. 2., ext. and corr. Ed. Münster: MAKS.

between 1933 and 1950 in which exiles held at least two of the following key positions: production, direction, or scriptwriting. Thus, exile films belong to various national cinematographies, including German film history and the film history of the countries to which the filmmakers fled.

Michael Omasta and Christian Cargnelli use a definition similar to Straschek's, but they focus on «(Old) Austria».¹⁶ Their proposed concept of film exile is more precise and based on a thorough examination of individual film biographies. Thus, «child emigrants» and individuals for whom no film work can be documented prior to 1945, or whose «film careers began only after the end of World War II,» are not included in their lexicon.¹⁷ They also excluded «people who were not active in film during exile, but only after their return,» as well as «emigrants such as G. W. Pabst and Rudolf Forster, who returned during the war for various reasons.»¹⁸

Helmut G. Asper defines film exiles as individuals who are actively involved in the film industry and are named in the opening or closing credits of multiple films. However, he also researched and published information about individuals who were removed from these credits. According to Asper, film emigration is part of Jewish emigration, and very few non-Jewish filmmakers went into exile after 1933. «Film emigration is international; it includes the many German-speaking filmmakers from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, as well as refugees from the Soviet Union who had worked in the German film industry for years».¹⁹

Thomas Elsaesser situates the historical exile of filmmakers from Nazi Germany within a series of preceding labor migrations between Germany and Hollywood. These migrations began in the mid-1920s, driven by attractive job prospects in the U.S. A larger wave followed later, prompted by persecution and exclusion.²⁰

¹⁶ Christian Cargnelli and Michael Omasta, *Aufbruch ins Ungewisse. Lexikon, Tributes, Selbstzeugnisse, Wespennest-Film*, vol. 2 (Vienna: Wespennest, 1993b), 6; (trans. by the authors).

¹⁷ *Ibid.* (trans. by the authors).

¹⁸ *Ibid.* (trans. by the authors).

¹⁹ Asper, 2002, 20–23; Helmut G. Asper, *Film*, in *Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration 1933–1945*, ed. Claus-Dieter Krohn (Darmstadt: Primus, 1998a), 957–969 (trans. by the authors).

²⁰ Thomas Elsaesser, «Heavy Traffic. Perspektive Hollywood. Emigranten oder Vagabunden?», in *London Calling. Deutsche im britischen Film der dreissiger Jahre*, ed. Jörg Schöning, *A CineGraph book* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1993), p. 21–41.

The History of Film Exile Research

The MGFE brings together a scattered body of knowledge on film exile research. Since its inception, this research has been driven by the commitment of individual researchers,²¹ as well as institutional collections such as those of the Akademie der Künste, the Deutsche Kinemathek, the Max Kade Institute for Austrian-German-Swiss Studies, the Feuchtwanger Memorial Library at the University of Southern California, the Margaret Herrick Library estate collection, the DFF – Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum, and the German Exile Archive 1933–1945 in Frankfurt am Main, and many more, as well as registered associations (CineGraph e.V. and Society for Exile Research e.V.) and university research in film, theater, music, and literary studies.

The first list of around 100 names of film exiles who worked in various capacities in Hollywood was published by Hans Kafka in 1944 in the German-Jewish exile magazine **Aufbau**.²² Research on exile began in Germany after World War II. Initially, the focus was on exile literature through non-university initiatives in the late 1940s. John M. Spalek began systematically collecting and transferring the estates and sources of exiles to Frankfurt am Main. In 1965, the German National Library presented the Exile Archive to the public for the first time in an exhibition titled «Exile Literature 1933–1945».²³

Similar efforts to collect materials have been undertaken by the Akademie der Künste and the Deutsche Kinemathek. The first symposium and retrospective took place in the 1960s. One focused on Max Ophüls in 1966.

After moving to Hollywood in 1966, cultural sociologist and exile research pioneer Marta Mierendorff started gathering biographical information about the Hollywood exile community through her own connections and those of her partner, exiled actor and theater director Walter Wicclair (born Weinlaub). She published a radio broadcast about the local «German-Jewish Club of 1933»²⁴ and began her journalistic and academic work

²¹ Taped interview recordings from the early 1970s made with Marta Mierendorff, Jan Christopher Horak, Helmut G. Asper, Günter Peter Straschek, and Cornelius Schnauber to document their work, for what later became the Max Kade Institute for Austrian-German-Swiss Studies at USC; Max Kade Institute for Austrian-German-Swiss Studies [<https://dornsife.usc.edu/max-kade/about/history/>] (last accessed March 1, 2024)].

²² Hans Kafka, «What our Immigration did for Hollywood – and vice versa», *Aufbau*, December 22, 1944; John Kafka, *Hollywood Calling. The Aufbau Column on Film Exile/Hans Kafka*, chosen and introduced by Roland Jaeger (Hamburg: ConferencePoint, 2002).

²³ Helke Rausch, *Sammeln als politischer Akt*, 2022 [<https://blog.dnb.de/sammeln-als-politischer-akt/>] (last accessed 01.03.2024)]. On the history of the Exile Archive, see: Sylvia Asmus, ed., *Exil. Erfahrung und Zeugnis/Exile. Experience and Testimony. Deutsches Exilarchiv 1933–1945 der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2019).

²⁴ Marta Mierendorff, *German-Jewish Club of 1933, Los Angeles. Ein vergessenes Kapitel der Emigration*, radio essay, *Süddeutscher Rundfunk* (Stuttgart, 1966).

on film exile at the «First International Symposium on Exile Literature» in Stockholm in 1969.²⁵ Her estate is housed at the University of Southern California's Feuchtwanger Memorial Library.²⁶

Walter Huder, one of the founders of German exile research, inaugurated the «Theater in Exile» exhibition at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin in 1973; many of the exiled actors had worked both on stage and in front of the camera.²⁷

In 1975, Günter Peter Straschek's extensive journalistic research was broadcast on German television in the five-part WDR series FILM EMIGRATION AUS NAZI DEUTSCHLAND (FILM EMIGRATION FROM NAZI GERMANY, Günter Peter Straschek, Germany 1975).

Research findings on film exile became widely accessible following Straschek's 1975 television broadcast and Ronny Loewy's extensive 1987 exhibition, «Von Babelsberg nach Hollywood: Filmemigranten aus Nazideutschland», which was held at the Filmmuseum Frankfurt am Main.²⁸

The Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933 (International Biographical Dictionary of Central European Emigrés 1933-1945) was published in 1980 (Volume 2 and 3 in 1983) under the general direction of Werner Röder and Herbert A. Strauss. Vol. II contains numerous references to film exile and to Günter Peter Straschek's project, which was intended to be published as a reference work, but this never happened.²⁹

The first overview publication on the topic are **Kino im Exil. Die Emigration deutscher Filmkünstler 1933–1945** (1982) by Maria Hilchenbach and **Fluchtpunkt Hollywood** (1984) by Jan-Christopher Horak, who, for his dissertation on anti-Nazi films, researched the professional biographies of 250 exiles; these were published separately in 1984.³⁰ In 1975, Horak interviewed exiles in Hollywood. These interviews formed the basis of his 1984 publication. A copy of the unpublished minutes and transcripts is held by the American Film Institute in Los Angeles.

²⁵ Ernst Loewy, «Zu diesem Buch», in Wenn wir von gestern reden, sprechen wir über heute und morgen. Commemorative publication for Marta Mierendorff' 80th Birthday, vol. 9., ed. Helmut G. Asper. (Berlin: Edition Sigma, 1991), p. 9–10.

²⁶ Marta Mierendorff papers [<https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt787037nh/> (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

²⁷ Huder Walter, Theater im Exil 1933–1945 (Berlin: Akademie der Künste, 1973).

²⁸ Loewy, 1987.

²⁹ Werner Röde, et al., eds., Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933 (Munich: Saur, 1999), unchanged reprint of the edition from 1980.

³⁰ Maria Hilchenbach, «Kino im Exil», 1982; Jan-Christopher Horak, Fluchtpunkt Hollywood. Eine Dokumentation zur Filmemigration nach 1933 (Münster: MAKS, 1984a).

Through its acquisition of the Paul Kohner Agency files in Hollywood in 1989, the Deutsche Kinemathek amassed an important collection of source material on the subject.³¹ In 1938, Paul Kohner founded a talent agency in Los Angeles. He saved the lives of many film exiles by providing them with an affidavit, which guaranteed them entry into the U.S., as well as a short-term employment contract. This agency organized the European Film Fund,³² which supported impoverished exiles during their first years in the U.S. Higher earners donated part of their fees to the fund, which distributed the money to people who were "between film projects" and unemployed.³³ The Kohner collection at the Deutsche Kinemathek formed the basis for numerous publications in **Filmexil**, the Deutsche Kinemathek's magazine that was published from 1992 to 2004 by Wolfgang Jacobsen, Heike Klapdor, Ronny Loewy, and Werner Sudendorf.³⁴

In 1993, Christian Cargnelli and Michael Omasta published the lexicon **Aufbruch ins Ungewisse**, containing 550 biographies of individuals from former Austria-Hungary.³⁵ In 1993, Jan-Christopher Horak also published an overview of exile films in **Geschichte des Deutschen Films**.³⁶ Helmut G. Asper wrote an overview of film exile up to 1998 for **Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration 1933–1945**.³⁷

In 2011, Kay Weniger published an encyclopedia containing 575 biographical entries on historical film exiles. However, the work lacked references to the sources used.³⁸ These entries are gradually being made available on Wikipedia. By contrast, the biographical

³¹ Inc. Paul Kohner [<https://www.deutsche-kinemathek.de/de/sammlungen-archiv/sammlung-digital/personenarchiv/paul-kohner-0> (last accessed March 1, 2024)]. Paul Kohner's estate was catalogued and inventoried as part of a DFG project under the direction of Werner Sudendorf, Günter Agde, Gero Gandert, Heike Klapdor, and Gerrit Thies. Heike Klapdor, «Das Archiv lesen. Die Bedeutung der Sammlung Paul Kohner Agency für die Exilforschung», in *Archive und Museen des Exils*, eds. Sylvia Asmus, Doerte Bischoff & Burcu Dogramaci (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2019), p. 253–271. The Kinemathek also holds the complete or partial estates of other exiled filmmakers.

³² Martin Sauter, «Der European Film Fund (EFF) – Gründung und Geschichte», in *Deutschsprachige Exilliteratur seit 1933*, vol. 3, USA: Supplement 1, eds. John M. Spalek, Konrad Feilchenfeldt & Sandra H. Hawrylchak (Berlin: De Gruyter/Saur, 2010), p. 449–480.

³³ Paul Kohner Agency [<https://kuenste-im-exil.de/KIE/Content/DE/Themen/paul-kohner-agency.html> (last accessed 01.03.2024)]; Frederick Kohner, *Der Zauberer vom Sunset Boulevard. Ein Leben zwischen Film und Wirklichkeit*, 1st-10th thousand (Munich/Zürich: Droemer-Knauer, 1974).

³⁴ Hans Helmut Prinzler, «Wenn und Aber...», in *FilmExil*, vol. 1 (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1992).

³⁵ Cargnelli and Omasta, 1993b.

³⁶ Jan-Christopher Horak, «Exilfilm 1933–1945. In der Fremde,“ in *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, eds. Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes & Hans Helmut Prinzler (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993), p. 101–118.

³⁷ Asper, 1998a, 957–969.

³⁸ Kay Weniger, «Es wird im Leben dir mehr genommen als gegeben...» *Lexikon der aus Deutschland und Österreich emigrierten Filmschaffenden 1933 bis 1945. Eine Gesamtübersicht*, 1st ed. (Hamburg: Acabus Biografie, 2011); Kay Weniger, «Zwischen Bühne und Baracke», *Lexikon der verfolgten Theater-, Film- und Musikkünstler 1933–1945*, 1st ed. (Berlin: Metropol, 2008).

essays on film exiles in the **CineGraph Lexikon**, which has been published as a loose-leaf edition since 1980, are based on reliable sources.³⁹

Important contributions to the study of German film exile include the yearbooks of the Gesellschaft für Exilforschung, the CineGraph Hamburg anthologies, and the work of film exile researchers in Vienna, particularly that of Synema.⁴⁰ The Akademie der Künste's publications and exhibition catalogs, as well as the Deutsche Kinemathek's retrospectives and related publications, have repeatedly addressed film exile over the years.

Representatives of film, media, and German literary studies in the U.S. have also contributed to film exile research. Notable contributors include Lutz Koepnick, Edward Dimendberg, Noah Isenberg, and Gerd Gemünden, as well as the works of Miriam Hansen, who further developed the ideas of exiled film theorists and critics.⁴¹ Over time, more studies have emerged focusing on individual countries of exile and transit, such as Austria,⁴² Great Britain,⁴³ France,⁴⁴ the Netherlands,⁴⁵ Spain,⁴⁶ and North America.⁴⁷ There is

³⁹ Hans-Michael Bock, ed., *CineGraph: Lexikon zum deutschsprachigen Film* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1984).

⁴⁰ Christian Cargnelli, Brigitte Mayr, and Michael Omasta, eds., «Carl Mayer, Scenar(t)ist. «A script by Carl Mayer was already a film», (Vienna: Synema, 2003); Frederik Lang, Brigitte Mayr, and Michael Omasta, *Das Gesicht hinter der Maske: Hommage an den Schauspieler Peter Lorre* (Vienna: Synema, 2018); Michael Omasta and Brigitte Mayr, *Script: Anna Gmeyner. Eine Wiener Drehbuchautorin im Exil* (Vienna: Synema, 2009).

⁴¹ Lutz P Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror. German Cinema between Hitler and Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Gerd Gemünden, «Continental Strangers. German Exile Cinema, 1933–1951», *Film and Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); Edward Dimendberg, «Down These Seen Streets a Man Must Go: Siegfried Kracauer, «Hollywood's Terror Films, and the Spatiality of Film Noir», in *New German Critique*, no. 89, 2003, p. 113–143; Miriam Hansen, «Cinema and Experience. Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, and Theodor W. Adorno», in *Weimar and Now: German Cultural Criticism*, vol. 44 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

⁴² Rudolf Ulrich, *Österreicher in Hollywood* (Vienna: Filmarchiv Austria, 2004); Cargnelli and Omasta, 1993a; Cargnelli and Omasta, 1993b; Amin Loacker, *Unerwünschtes Kino. Deutschsprachige Emigrantenfilme 1934 bis 1937* (Vienna: Filmarchiv Austria, 2019).

⁴³ Jörg Schöning, ed., *London Calling. Deutsche im britischen Film der dreissiger Jahre, A CineGraph book* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1993); Tim Bergfelder and Christian Cargnelli, ed., «Destination London. German-speaking emigrés and British cinema, 1925–1950», *Film Europa*, vol. 6 (New York [and others]: Berghahn Books, 2008); Tobias Hochscherf, *The Continental Connection. German-Speaking Émigrés and British Cinema, 1927–1945* (Manchester: University Press, 2011).

⁴⁴ Sibylle M. Sturm and Arthur Wohlgemuth, ed., *Hallo? Berlin? Ici Paris! Deutsch-französische Filmbeziehungen 1918–1939, A CineGraph book* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1996).

⁴⁵ Kathinka Dittrich van Weringh, *Der niederländische Spielfilm der dreißiger Jahre und die deutsche Filmemigration* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987).

⁴⁶ Fernando González García and Valeria Camporesi, «¿Un «progreso en el arte nacional»? Ibérica Films en España, 1933–1936 (Universidad de Valladolid: Servicio de Publicaciones, 2011); Fernando González García, «Exiliados judíos del Tercer Reich en el cine español. 1933–1936/Jews in Exile from the 3rd Reich in the Spanish Cinema: 1933–1936», in *Secuencias*, 37, 2013, p. 9–33.

⁴⁷ Asper, 2002.

also a range of studies on institutional history,⁴⁸ genre theory,⁴⁹ and individual biographies.⁵⁰

Transnational Film Historiography

The film biographies of exiled filmmakers span various countries, with some having more than five production countries. Because of this, their film biographies can hardly be adequately reflected in national film historiography: «international expansion and migration [...] are understood as one-way streets rather than complex cultural spaces of movement and transit».⁵¹ Furthermore, national film histories tend to overlook the diverse political, economic, social, and cultural entanglements of a film industry that has always been international and transnational. Therefore, our project should also be regarded as a contribution to a transnational history of interconnection, an «Histoire croisée».⁵²

Countries of Refuge and Time Corridors

Previous research has described the phases of film exile as follows: While job opportunities in Austria were still available after 1933, they became increasingly difficult to find by 1936 when Germany began boycotting films with «Jewish involvement». Filmmakers sometimes used pseudonyms or named an «Aryan collaborator» in the credits to circumvent censorship. Josef Than discusses this situation in a television interview with

⁴⁸ Helmut G. Asper, *Filmexilanten im Universal Studio: 1933–1960* (Berlin: Bertz + Fischer, 2005).

⁴⁹ Barbara Steinbauer-Grötsch, *Die lange Nacht der Schatten: Film noir und Filmexil*, 2nd revised ed. (Berlin: Bertz, 2000); Jan-Christopher Horak, *Anti-Nazi-Filme der deutschsprachigen Emigration von Hollywood 1939–1945*, 2nd ed. (Münster: MAKS, 1984b).

⁵⁰ Marta Mierendorff, *William Dieterle. Der Plutarch von Hollywood*, 1st ed. (Berlin: Henschel, 1993); Helmut G. Asper, «Max Ophüls. Eine Biographie», *Arte-Edition* (Berlin: Bertz, 1998b); Stefan Grisseemann, *Mann im Schatten. Der Filmemacher Edgar G. Ulmer* (Vienna: Zsolnay, 2003); Noah Isenberg, *Edgar G. Ulmer. A Filmmaker at the Margins* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Larissa Schütze et al., eds., «William Dieterle und die deutschsprachige Emigration in Hollywood. Antifaschistische Filmarbeit bei Warner Bros. Pictures, 1930–1940», *Transatlantische historische Studien*, vol. 55 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2015).

⁵¹ Ralf Heiner Heinke and Christoph Ziener, «Globale Kinoexpansionen: Transnationale Filmgeschichte der Zwischenkriegszeit», in *MEDIENwissenschaft: Rezensionen | Reviews*, no. 4, 2016, p. 409–424, 413 (trans. by the authors).

⁵² Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, «Vergleich, Transfer, Verflechtung. Der Ansatz der Histoire croisée und die Herausforderung des Transnationalen», in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 28, no. 4, 2002, p. 607–636.

Straschek.⁵³ After 1936, however, there were no longer any job opportunities for Jewish filmmakers in Austria.⁵⁴

Hostility and public protests against German immigration increased massively in France from 1933 onwards, prompting the introduction of state regulations for job seekers from abroad. German film producers Erich Pommer, Seymour Nebenzahl, Max Gläß, Hermann Millakowsky, Arnold Pressburger, Gregor Rabinowitsch, and Eugen Tuscherer fled to France and employed many emigrants. Since they created jobs and brought foreign currency into the country through exports, they encountered fewer issues with the authorities than other film industry professionals, such as directors and actors.⁵⁵ However, when the war broke out in 1939, it became impossible to work in France and, in the early 1940s, many of the refugees who had fled to France were deported to concentration camps and killed.⁵⁶

Starting in 1933, Alexander Korda and Max Schach created conditions in Great Britain that allowed many exiled filmmakers to earn a living in various sectors.⁵⁷

The exodus from Hitler's Europe from 1933 onwards included many well-known filmmakers and Michael Bacon and the Ostrers, among others, with their experience of Anglo-European co-production, were glad to take advantage of the presence of experienced directors, cameramen and designers.⁵⁸

However, as it was the case in France,⁵⁹ the trade unions stipulated that an applicant from their own country be hired first.⁶⁰

The film industry of the 1930s was particularly influenced by film exiles in the Netherlands.⁶¹ Exile films such as KOMEDIE OM GELD (Max Ophüls, Netherlands, 1936) and PYGMALION (Ludwig Berger, Netherlands, 1937) are examples of this influence, as are the German filmmakers' experience with the then – comparatively – new sound film technology.⁶²

⁵³ Josef Than in an interview with Straschek. «Wir waren aufgeschreckt und vogelfrei», in FILMEMIGRATION AUS NAZI DEUTSCHLAND, Günter Peter Straschek, Germany, 1975, WDR.

⁵⁴ Asper, 2002, 22; Loacker, 2019.

⁵⁵ Asper, 2002, p. 23.

⁵⁶ Sturm and Wohlgemuth, 1996; Helmut G. Asper, «Ungeliebte Gäste. Filmemigranten in Paris 1933–1940», in Film und Fotografie 21, ed. Claus-Dieter Krohn et al. (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2003), p. 40–61.

⁵⁷ Bergfelder and Cargnelli, 2008; Hochscherf, 2011.

⁵⁸ Rachael Low, The History of the British Film 1929–1939: Film Making in 1930s Britain (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985), 27 (trans. by the authors).

⁵⁹ Asper, 2003.

⁶⁰ Low, 1985, 27.

⁶¹ Dittrich van Weringh, 1987.

⁶² Asper, 2002, 24.

In Italy, exiles also continued to find work in the film industry until 1938; whereas in Spain, employment was available⁶³ and people could enter the country without a work visa.⁶⁴ However, the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 – in which many Jewish volunteers fought on the Republican side⁶⁵ – brought the film industry to a standstill. Up until mid-1938, Portugal was a safe refuge where a valid passport was all one needed to start a new life.⁶⁶ However, conditions changed abruptly in October 1938 when tourist visas were issued for only one month. The outbreak of war in 1939, coupled with Portugal's neutrality, resulted in the country becoming a transit hub, with its ports serving as one of the most important transit points.

The USSR, on the other hand, became a refuge for political refugees, offering asylum almost exclusively to communist filmmakers. However, only a few were able to earn a living from Soviet cinema.⁶⁷

More than 10,000 persecuted Jews fled to Denmark, Sweden,⁶⁸ and Lithuania.⁶⁹ The few filmmakers among them, such as cameraman Willy Goldberger, worked in Sweden from 1936 to 1937. However, these countries were often just transit countries that became dangerous again when the war broke out.

Although Palestine did not have a film industry in the 1930s, exiled filmmakers still shared their knowledge and participated in film projects.⁷⁰ During this time, cities

⁶³ González García, 2013.

⁶⁴ Patrik von Zur Mühlen, *Fluchtweg Spanien-Portugal. Die deutsche Emigration und der Exodus aus Europa 1933–1945*, Research Institute of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Bonn: Dietz, 1992).

⁶⁵ Gerben Zaagsma, *Jewish Volunteers. The International Brigades and the Spanish Civil War, Culture and Society* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018); *Exil und spanischer Bürgerkrieg* [<https://kuenste-im-exil.de/KIE/Content/DE/Themen/spanischer-buergerkrieg.html>] (last accessed 01.03.2024)]; *Spanienarchiv online* [<https://www.doew.at/erinnern/biographien/spanienarchiv-online>] (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

⁶⁶ Christa Heinrich and Irene Flunser Pimentel, *Zuflucht am Rande Europas. Portugal 1933–1945*, 1st ed. (Leipzig: Hentrich und Hentrich, 2022); Gero Gandert and Malte Hagener, *Exil in Portugal* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2002).

⁶⁷ Michael Omasta, *Regie. Rappaport – Ein sowjetischer Filmemacher aus Wien* (Vienna: Synema, 2008); Christoph Hesse, *Filmexil Sowjetunion. Deutsche Emigranten in der sowjetischen Filmproduktion der 1930er und 1940er Jahre* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2017). (For Günter Peter Straschek, the archives only opened up after German reunification in the early 1990s.)

⁶⁸ Irene Nawrocka and Simon Usaty, eds., «Im Exil in Schweden. Österreichische Erfahrungen und Perspektiven in den 1930er und 1940er Jahren», *Exilforschung heute*, vol. 3 (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2013).

⁶⁹ Kim Wünschmann, «Exilländer jüdischer Flüchtlinge aus dem Deutschen Reich ab 1933», in *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, 2014 [https://www.bpb.de/fsd/centropa/exillaender_europa.php] (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

⁷⁰ Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek und Filmmuseum Berlin, «Filmexil – Schwerpunkt: Palästina», in *FilmExil*, vol. 11 (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2005).

overseas, in Latin America⁷¹ and Asia, among them Manila, Shanghai,⁷² Calcutta (Kolkata), and Bombay (Mumbai),⁷³ as well as in Australia and New Zealand, also became safe havens for film exiles.⁷⁴

The first hurdle to staying and potentially starting over was obtaining valid visas. Technicians and musicians often found employment more easily. Those in the performing arts or writing professions often faced the additional challenge of a language barrier that prevented them from continuing to work in their fields.

Film History from a Production Studies Perspective

The MGFE' focus is on individuals who worked in the film and movie theatre industry in Germany and were forced to flee. By examining production history, we can study not only the prominent figures of historical film exile,⁷⁵ but also the individuals rarely associated with it by name because they do not appear in the opening or closing credits. Additionally, it sheds light on all activities related to film culture and the film industry that have long been overlooked in film studies: distribution, film projection, film criticism, and all trades involved in film production, including agencies, production offices,

⁷¹ Albrecht Viktor Blum, «Warum ich in Mexiko nicht sterben durfte,» in idem.: Heines Geist in Mexico (Mexico City: Heinrich-Heine-Klub, 1946); Wolfgang Kießling, «Es begann mit der <Galgentoni> – Theater im Heinrich-Heine-Klub (Mexiko),» in *Verfolgung und Exil deutschsprachiger Theaterkünstler*, vol. 1, eds. Frithjof Trapp, Ingrid Maaß & Michael Philipp (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter/Saur, 1998), 423–436; Christine Fischer-Defoy and Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin, eds., «Letzte Zuflucht Mexiko. Gilberto Bosques und das deutschsprachige Exil nach 1939. » An exhibition of the Aktiven Museums Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin e. V., 2.12.2012–14.4.2013; Oliver Kühschelm, *Geflohen und geliebt. Jüdische Österreicher*innen in Uruguay*, 1st ed., (Göttingen: Böhlau Vienna, 2023).

⁷² Uli Jürgens, *Louise, Licht und Schatten. Die Filmpionierin Louise Kolm-Fleck* (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2019); Uli Jürgens, *Der Fädenzieher. Das ungewöhnliche Leben des Arthur Gottlein oder: Wie Raimund und Nestroy nach Shanghai kamen* (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2021); Frank Ephraim, *Escape to Manila. From Nazi Tyranny to Japanese Terror* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

⁷³ Christoph von Ungern-Sternberg, ««Der Kampf um ein <Happy End> hatte wochenlang getobt». Willy Haas als Drehbuchautor im indischen Exil. Drehbuchautoren im Exil», in *FilmExil 18* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2003), 26–46; Jyoti Sabharwal, «Memories of Life and Cultural Production in Exile. Colonial India in the Autobiography, Essays and Film Scripts of Willy Haas, » in *Refugees from Nazi-Occupied Europe in British Overseas Territories. Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies*, vol. 20, eds. Swen Steinberg & Anthony Grenville (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020), 246–261.

⁷⁴ University of London Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, Swen Steinberg & Anthony Grenville, «Refugees from Nazi-Occupied Europe in British Overseas Territories,» in *Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies*, vol. 20, eds. Swen Steinberg & Anthony Grenville (Leiden: Brill Rodopi, 2020); «Jewish Refugees in Australia,» in Shoa Resource Center, *The International School for Holocaust Studies* [https://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%205787.pdf (last accessed 01.03.2024)]; Karl Wolfskehl, *Karl Wolfskehls Briefwechsel aus Neuseeland 1938–1948* (Darmstadt: Wallstein, 1988).

⁷⁵ Exiles in lesser-known professions in the film industry were first introduced by Helmut G. Asper, 2002. For more on exile in the context of studio work and production history, see also: Marta Mierendorff, William Dieterle. *Der Plutarch von Hollywood*, 1st ed. (Berlin: Henschel, 1993); Asper, 2005; Schütze et al. 2015; Christine Ann Colgan, *Warner Bros. Crusade Against the Third Reich. A Study of Anti-Nazi Activism and Film Production, 1933 to 1941*. PhD Thesis (California: University of Southern California, 1985).

and sales. The MGFE draws on the findings of production research (following the work of Hortense Powdermaker, John T. Caldwell, and Vicky Meyer).⁷⁶

Social groups, professional communities, and individuals are elements of an industrial rhizome that includes training associations, industry organizations, and industry representatives, as well as underemployed professionals, «below the line» unpaid workers, career aspirants, the completely unemployed, and victims of age discrimination.⁷⁷

Computer-Based Methods of Film Historiography

Three areas of computer-based film history research can be easily distinguished. The first is the digitization and provision of sources, such as films or paper documents. The second is the analysis of media content using computer-based methods, such as digital audio-visual annotation and automated film analysis. The third area consists of projects dealing with the social and cultural history of film production, distribution, and reception.⁷⁸ MGFE fits into this classification.

Digital history does not occupy a singular position between the digital and the historical.⁷⁹ Rather, it acts as a mediator, offering new perspectives. For the Straschek estate, productive computer-based methods, from database creation to evaluation, were developed for MGFE through engagement with Digital Humanities.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Hortense Powdermaker, *Hollywood, the Dream Factory. An Anthropologist Looks at the Movie-Makers* (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Publishing, 2013); John Thornton Caldwell, *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); Miranda J. Banks, Bridget Conor and Vicki Mayer, eds., *Production Studies, the Sequel! Cultural Studies of Global Media Industries* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

⁷⁷ John Thornton Caldwell, «Zehn Thesen zur Produktionsforschung», Translation in German by Carsten Nitsch and Patrick Vonderau, in *montage AV*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2013, p. 33–47 (trans. by the authors).

⁷⁸ Charles R. Acland and Eric Hoyt, eds., *The Arclight Guidebook to Media History and the Digital Humanities* (Falmer: REFRAME Books, 2016); Julia Noordegraaf, «Computational research in media studies: Methodological implications», in *KWALON*, 21, 1, 2016, 52–59; Christian Olesen et al., «Data-Driven Research for Film History. Exploring the Jean Desmet Collection», in *The Moving Image. The Journal of the Association of Moving Image Archivists* 16, 2016, p. 82–105.

⁷⁹ May Kemman, *Trading Zones of Digital History* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenburg, 2021).

⁸⁰ Acland and Hoyt, 2016.

2. The Günter Peter Straschek Archive

The MGFE is based on personal dossiers from the Straschek estate. Since 2012, the collection has been archived at the German Exile Archive 1933–1945 at the German National Library in Frankfurt am Main.⁸¹

Filmmaker and film exile researcher Günter Peter Straschek was born in Graz in 1942 and died in Vienna in 2009. He devoted over 40 years to studying German-language film exile. After producing the five-hour television program *FILMEMIGRATION AUS NAZIDEUTSCHLAND* (West Germany, 1975, WDR), he continued his research on the topic with film scholar Thomas Koebner. This project was funded by a multi-year grant from the German Research Foundation (DFG) from 1976 to 1982. Starting in 1983, Karin Rausch, Straschek's partner, financed most of the project and contributed to its content. Straschek moved with the collection several times: first to England in the 1970s, then from Vienna to Shanghai in the 1980s, and later to Delhi. Research increasingly became his life's work, and the opening of archives in Eastern Europe after 1989 enabled him to expand his archival research. According to Karin Rausch, vacation destinations were sometimes chosen based on where exiles lived.⁸²

In 2018, the Museum Ludwig in Cologne held an exhibition titled «Emigration – Film – Politik» dedicated to Günther Peter Straschek.⁸³ The comprehensive catalog illuminates not only his film-historical research on film exile but also his other film and television works, as well as his (film-) political engagement. Straschek was among the first generation of students at the newly founded German Film and Television Academy (DFFB) in Berlin in 1966, though he did not complete his studies there.⁸⁴

Among film exile researchers, Günter Peter Straschek is viewed critically, primarily because he never published his research despite receiving years of funding from the DFG. This research could have been valuable to other scholars, but Straschek insisted on completeness, a goal that proved unattainable, especially in the field of exile research. Straschek was committed to scientific quality, but he could not achieve it alone and became overwhelmed. His project would have required a larger group of researchers and an openness to collaborating with other exiled researchers.

⁸¹ [<https://d-nb.info/1031107916> (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

⁸² Imme Klages, ««Abgemeldet nach Theresienstadt». Karin Rausch über die Zusammenarbeit mit Günter Peter Straschek», in *Hier und Jetzt. Günter Peter Straschek. Emigration – Film – Politik*, ed. Julia Friedrich (Cologne: Museum Ludwig, 2018), p. 262–267.

⁸³ Günter Peter Straschek and Museum Ludwig, *Hier und Jetzt. Emigration – Film – Politik*, ed. Julia Friedrich (Cologne: Walther König, 2018).

⁸⁴ DFFB Alumni, «Peter Straschek», 1996 [<https://www.dffb.de/akademie/dffb-alumni/> (last accessed 01.03.2024)]; *Vorgeschichte der der dffb 1962–66* [<https://dffb-archiv.de/> (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

The Estate

In 1976, Straschek was successful in applying for funding for a research project through the Department of German Studies at the University of Wuppertal under the leadership of Thomas Koebner. Entitled «Geschichte der deutschsprachigen Filmemigration 1933–1945 (bis Gegenwart), dargestellt am Werk und Schicksal der (rund 900) exilierten Filmschaffenden»,⁸⁵ the project was submitted to the DFG. Since the early 1970s, the DFG had supported exile research; thus, Straschek and Koebner's project received financial support several times between 1976 and 1982.

For his project, Straschek employed the snowball effect, writing to individuals and distributing detailed questionnaires. The questionnaires requested personal information, details about family members, résumés, stories about fleeing, and information about professional activities during exile. The detailed questions focused on topics such as work permits abroad, trade union membership, agencies, experience with aid organizations, and difficulties encountered during hearings by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC was originally initiated against National Socialists, but was then primarily used against communists in the U.S.).

Straschek's original project expanded to include the persecution and extermination of entire family branches and became the subject of interviews, personal letters, and correspondence. He meticulously searched for and collected material on individuals, first noting the information on index cards and later filing the documents in personal dossiers. With a few exiles, this evolved into years of correspondence and even friendships.

Over the years, Straschek compiled the names of more than four thousand individuals. However, many of the surviving personal dossiers document initial searches for individuals for whom only distant relatives could provide information, or individuals who were never found. The connection to the film industry remains unclear for some individuals.

The project was to culminate in the publication of a three-volume lexicon: Volume I was to cover all topics related to exile («Flight, Life, Work»), such as the various countries of exile, fields of occupation, and also the return and planned «reparations» after 1945. One section was to be devoted to the topic of «Fascism and Film». Volumes II and III were planned as biographical lexicons with detailed filmographies. However, the book project was never completed.

⁸⁵ History of German-Language Film Emigration 1933–1945 (to the Present), as Illustrated by the Work and Fate of (Approximately 900) Exiled Filmmakers (trans. by the authors).

The only publication that remains is a list of names of 1,532 film exiles, which was published in connection with the exhibition conceived by Ronny Loewy, «Von Babelsberg nach Hollywood. Filmemigranten aus Nazideutschland».⁸⁶

3. The Dataset

Günter Peter Straschek's analog file collection consists of paper files that are not yet available in digital form. This collection lies at the heart of the MGFE and was used to compile the project's core data.⁸⁷

The incomplete data and numerous gaps in the Straschek collection present a challenge. However, historical research is always confronted with gaps and works around them by asking, for example, how they came about. We address these challenges using a data-critical approach that considers the local context of the data.⁸⁸

Provenance of the Data

Until the late 1970s, Straschek took notes on slips of paper during telephone conversations, sometimes even using shorthand during long personal conversations to record the life stories of exiles. Until the late 1990s, he compiled information from detailed correspondence, supplementing it with data from questionnaires, birth and death certificates, marriage certificates, and data he painstakingly researched in archives. He also systematically searched reference works and magazines from the 1930s and 1940s, often adding copies to the files. Occasionally, exiles provided him with personal materials, such as photographs, certificates, and files, to support his work.

Many of the questionnaires Straschek sent out were either returned incomplete or not at all. Many of the people he was looking for had died in the 1970s and 1980s, leaving no surviving relatives who could verify the information. Therefore, the information on the cover sheets was incomplete. In his correspondence with film exiles, Straschek sent initial drafts of lexicon entries with blank spaces for his correspondents to fill in. Since the questions were very detailed, the answers were incomplete as well. Many of those contacted could no longer remember their experiences, or could only recall parts of

⁸⁶ Loewy, *Von Babelsberg nach Hollywood*, 1987.

⁸⁷ [<https://d-nb.info/1031107916> (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

⁸⁸ See: Yanni Alexander Loukissas, *All Data Are Local: Thinking Critically in a Data-Driven Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019); Karin van Es and Nanna Verhoeff, eds., *Situating Data. Inquiries in Algorithmic Culture* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023).

them. These blank spaces remained as question marks until the final drafts of the lexicon entries.

Straschek's documentation on exiled filmmakers became increasingly extensive. This led to a rift in the 1980s regarding his contributions to the **Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933**,⁸⁹ as there were strict formal requirements for each person's data entry, and Straschek was unable to comply because many of the individuals could not be verified. Straschek was asked to «part ways» with some individuals. He fell behind schedule and felt that his selection was not adequately represented. Therefore, he decided to publish his own independent three-volume lexicon on film exiles, which, however, was never completed.

Straschek created so-called cover sheets for personal dossiers, on which he gathered sufficient information initially by hand and later using a typewriter. He did not note the specific sources of the information on each cover sheet. These cover sheets initially formed the basis for recording personal data in the MGFE project.

From 2019 to 2022, the German National Library recorded Straschek's personal dossiers in its cataloging system using standardized data from the Integrated Authority File (GND) or linked them to existing names.⁹⁰

Data Reliability

Due to the history of the collection, the dataset is incomplete in some cases and cannot be conclusively verified. It is a collection of «local data», a term coined by Yanni Alexander Loukissas. By referring to the indissoluble locality of data, Loukissas attempts to confront the «myth of digital universalism».⁹¹ Problematic universalization can arise when incomplete data in tables and visualizations is rendered invisible. The MGFE highlights these gaps and incomplete data. Below are some key figures from the processed dataset.

An obvious question related to the Straschek collection is how many exiles were re-searched. However, this question is difficult to answer for various reasons. For instance, not all researchers have the same understanding of film exile. Straschek included a

⁸⁹ Werner Röder et al., *Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933*, 1999.

⁹⁰ Portal of the German National Library with the Straschek files [<https://d-nb.info/1031107916> (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

⁹¹ Loukissas, 2019.

large number of people in his research and ultimately created a dossier for each one. Taking a broad view of the film and cinema industry, he also included the children and relatives of individuals employed in it. For the MGFE, the question is how to address these ambiguities. During the project, a set of criteria was developed to determine which individuals should be included on the platform.

Since the MGFE focuses on employment in the film industry from 1930 to 1950, the database the project created does not include children (born after 1919). Similarly, some individuals without a migration background were not included in the core database. The MGFE database published here lists a total of 3,864 individuals by name. These individuals were either included in Strasczek's personal dossiers or mentioned therein.

The following table provides an overview of the different information available in the various collections.

Table 1: MGFE data compared to other Strasczek datasets

	Persons	male %	female %
MGFE	3.864	80	20
Strasczek 1987 list	1.371	83	17
Strasczek files	3.112	84	16
Strasczek total	4.458	80	20

- MGFE = Selection of people for the project
- Strasczek 1987 list = First published list by Strasczek in: Loewy, Ronny (Hg.) (1987) Von Babelsberg nach Hollywood. Filmemigranten aus Nazideutschland: Exponatenverzeichnis. Schriftenreihe des Deutschen Filmmuseums. Frankfurt am Main: Deutsches Filmmuseum, S. 8-22.
- Strasczek gesamt = Total number of persons with children, non-exiles, and persons who can be associated with the Strasczek estate in the broadest sense (= 4,458 persons, of whom m = 3,555 and w = 903; of whom 303 were children born after 1919).

Where possible, the dataset from Strasczek's cover sheets was compared with information from other sources and supplemented with additional details. Three datasets proved particularly helpful:

1) The Integrated Authority File (GND) is a service «for the cooperative use and management of standardized data. This standardized data represents and describes entities [...] related to cultural and scientific collections. [...] Each entity is assigned a unique,

stable identifier (GND ID) within the GND. This allows the standardized data to link to each other, as well as to external datasets and web resources. The result is a cross-organizational, machine-readable data network».⁹²

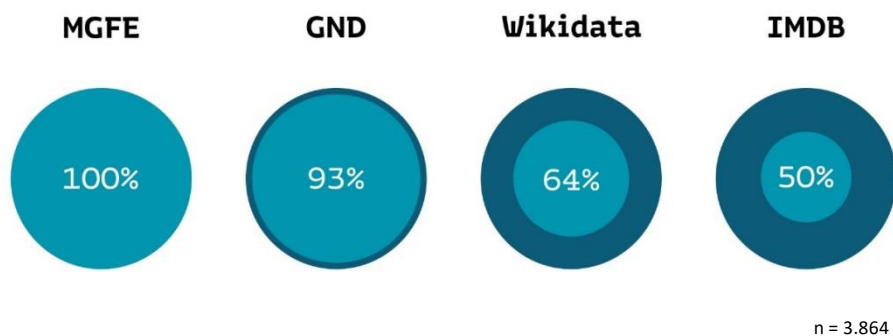
Even those film exiles who do not have their own personal dossiers with Straschek, but whose names appear in his dossiers, possess a GND ID.⁹³

Wikidata is Wikipedia's centralization project for data, based on a freely editable knowledge database that provides certain types of data, such as birthdates. Kay Weniger (2011) is often cited as the source of data regarding film exiles in the German-language Wikipedia.⁹⁴

The Internet Movie Database (IMDb) lists several individuals from the MGFE dataset who have appeared in at least one film. IMDb entries are based on mentions in the opening or closing credits, or are posthumously honored with the reference «uncredited». IMDb's film information for exiles is complete up to the production year 1997.⁹⁵

Of the MGFE individuals, 93% can be found in the GND, 64% on Wikipedia, and only half can be linked to IMDb.

Chart 1: MGFE data compared to other datasets



⁹² Gemeinsame Normdatei (GND) [https://www.dnb.de/DE/Professionell/Standardisierung/GND/gnd_node.html] (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

⁹³ Gemeinsame Normdatei (GND) [https://www.dnb.de/DE/Professionell/Standardisierung/GND/gnd_node.html] (last accessed 01.03.2024)].

⁹⁴ Kay Weniger, «Es wird im Leben dir mehr genommen als gegeben ... » Lexikon der aus Deutschland und Österreich emigrierten Filmschaffenden 1933 bis 1945. Eine Gesamtübersicht, 1st ed. (Hamburg: Acabus Biografie, 2011). The publication does not provide any references, making it difficult to verify personal data.

⁹⁵ The filmographic data on IMDb is subject to the rules of the database.

In absolute terms and by gender, it is clear that a slightly higher percentage of women have IMDb entries.

Table 2: MGFE dataset compared to other datasets

	persons	male %	female %
MGFE	3.864	80	20
GND	3.609	81	19
Wikidata	2.465	80	20
IMDb	1.926	78	22

The following table provides key insights into the varying degrees of completeness and gaps in the different datasets.

Table 3: Completeness of personal data in various databases

	Persons	Year of birth %	Place of birth %	Year of death%	Place of death%
MGFE	3.864	93	91	86	82
GND	3.609	95	91	86	79
Wikidata	2.465	99	89	96	85
IMDb	1.926	72	69	69	67

Although only 64% of the individuals in our core database have corresponding entries in Wikidata, it is the source with the fewest gaps overall. However, the GND data is generally more reliable because its inclusion process requires verification by at least two sources.

Information on Professional Activities

Straschek listed the various professions and occupations that the exiles pursued throughout their lives on the respective cover sheets of their personal dossiers. No distinction was made between occupations pursued before, during, or after their flight. The information is usually based on self-reported data or information provided by relatives.

A professional activity is listed in 91% of the dossiers. However, a significantly higher proportion of women (35%) had no activity specified, compared to 20% of women in the MGFE.

Table 4: Dataset on professions

	Personen	männlich %	weiblich %
Professions in the film & cinema sector	3.535	82	18
No profession mentioned	329	65	35

n = 3.864

To gain a better understanding of the occupations, we divided the activities into three groups: those clearly related to work in the film and cinema industry, those clearly unrelated to it, and a third category of activities that are not clearly related to the industry. The third category includes activities pursued in film, theater, or orchestras, such as musicians. For instance, law firms and medical practices were not part of the film and cinema industry. The following table provides insight into the division in the aforementioned three categories.

Table 5: Percentages of activities by sector

	Nennungen %
Professions in the film and cinema industry	56
Film, cinema, and other artistic fields (polyvalent)	20
Other sectors	24

n = 14.293

Countries of Exile

For the MGFE, it is interesting to know which countries the exiles could flee to. Some countries were merely transit points, and the journey often involved passing through several countries. Straschek attempted to research the complete escape routes of all the individuals in his files, but the large number of people made this nearly impossible. Unlike the GND, which records countries of exile independently of escape routes, Straschek attempted to recreate escape routes by recording countries of exile in chronological

order. Combining information from Straschek and the GND yields data on the escape routes of approximately 82% of individuals (3,168 out of 3,864).

Table 6: Country of exile in the MGFE data

	% total population	Persons with country of exile mentioned
Straschek	69	2.668
GND	76	2.925
GND and Straschek together	82	3.168

n = 3.864

As the following two tables show, more people reported having been in three or more exile or transit countries in the Straschek data than in the GND data.

Table 7: Countries of exile in the Straschek collection

	Persons with information on country of exile	%
Straschek in total	2.668	100
1 country	1.414	53
2 countries	656	25
3	314	12
4	170	6
5	96	3,6
6	15	<1
7	2	-
8	1	-

n = 2.668

Table 8: GND data on countries of exile

	Persons with information	
	on country of exile	%
GND in total	2.925	100
1 country	1.941	66
2 countries	693	24
3	233	8
4	42	1,4
5	12	<1
6	3	-
7	1	-

n = 2.925

4. Charts

Selected aspects of the Straschek estate are presented below based on film-historical considerations and aided by charts. These visualizations are based on various data sets compiled in a database for the project. The database's core consists of information from the Straschek estate's cover sheets, combined with data from the Gemeinsame Normdatei (GND), Wikidata, and film directories of exiles accessed via IMDb. The charts address questions about the significance and consequences of the involuntary emigration of more than 4,000 individuals from Germany's film and cinema industry. Five chapters focus on the life paths of the film exiles.

The cartographic visualization in «4.1. Birthplaces» locates people through space and time, emphasizing that behind the data are individual biographies and lives lived. The birthplaces also hint at the diverse origins from across Europe of those who sought their fortune in the vibrant film and cinema industry of the early twentieth century. Chapter «4.2. Work in the Film Industry» provides insight into the varied professional activities that exiles engaged in throughout their careers. It demonstrates that prominent directors and actors were not the only ones who lost their jobs in Germany's film and cinema industry. Secretaries, extras, and film technicians also had to go into exile for their own protection. Chapter «4.3. Fleeing into Exile» examines the places and networks of exile.

4.1. Birthplaces

The Straschek dossiers contain carefully compiled biographical data; occasionally birth certificates were requested, and copies, as well as sometimes the originals, were kept on file.

After World War I in 1918, Europe's borders shifted significantly, causing many exiles born in Austria-Hungary before 1914 to have birthplaces that are now located in entirely different countries. Borders changed again before, during, and after World War II, so that contemporary maps would indicate different countries of origin. In the following illustrations, we omit the depiction of historical national borders and focus on towns and cities. The widely scattered birthplaces provide an initial indication of the strong appeal of the German film and cinema industry for artistic creativity at the time.

Working in film brought together people from a wide range of family, regional, and national backgrounds. Until the early 1930s, the film industry offered a generation the opportunity to discover new things, engage in self-reflection, and gain insight into others – an experience that was both possible and highly valued. Social constraints, including the military and stereotypical expectations and assignments of gender roles, could be challenged. The film world promised a way to break free from these limitations.

The following table and the chart list the birthplaces in the order of their occurrence. The overview in Table 1 only includes places with more than fifteen individuals.

Table 1 shows several urban areas, including Berlin (547 people) and Vienna (694 people). This clearly demonstrates the significant presence of Austrian film exiles⁹⁶ in Straschek's dossiers. The two cities of Berlin and Vienna account for one-third of all birthplaces. However, more exiles were born in Budapest than in Munich or Prague.

⁹⁶ Also see the overlaps in the Straschek dossiers and the persons in Cargnellis und Omasta's, *Aufbruch ins Ungewisse*, 1993.

Table 9: Birthplaces of film exiles

Birthplaces	Number of persons
Vienna	694
Berlin	547
Budapest	87
Hamburg	60
Munich	56
Prague	54
Breslau/Вроцлав	50
Frankfurt am Main	46
Brünn/Brno	39
Cologne	31
St. Petersburg, Königsberg/Калининград	26
Dresden, Leipzig	25
Mannheim	24
Lemberg/Львів	22
Hannover	20
Czernowitz/Чернівці	19
Stuttgart	18
Posen/Poznań	17
Nuremberg	16
Stettin/Szczecin, Moskau, Elberfeld	15

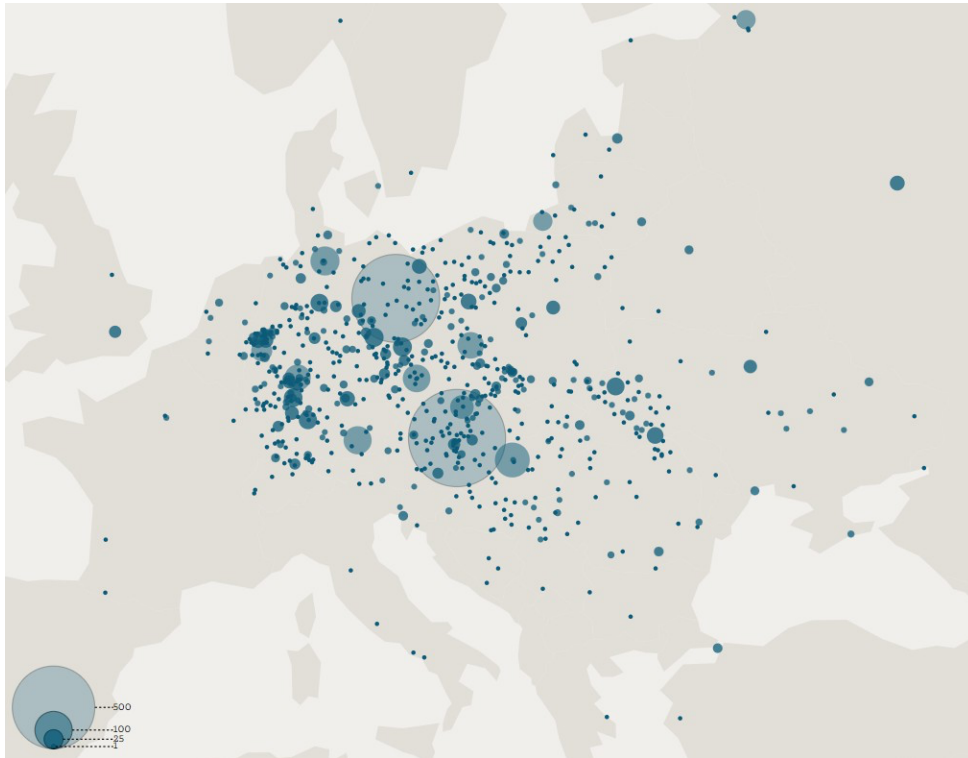
n = 1.947 (Sum of all birthplaces with more than fifteen people)

Source: GND

The following interactive visualization shows the location of each birthplace as a dot on a map of Europe; the size of each dot corresponds to the frequency of births at that location. As you navigate the chart with your computer mouse, the names of the places and the number of exiles born there are displayed.

Chart 2: Cartographic visualization of birthplaces in Europe

Link to the chart: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/geburtsorte/>



n = 3,256

Data source: GND, visualization taking into account the frequency

Enlarging the map section in Chart 2 reveals the many small towns where the exiles were born. These towns are scattered throughout Eastern Europe, including the urban areas of Breslau/Wrocław, Warsaw/Warszawa, Lemberg/Lviv/Львів, Kalinin-grad/Калининград, and St. Petersburg, which appear as frequently as those in the Rhine-Main region or in the Ruhr area.

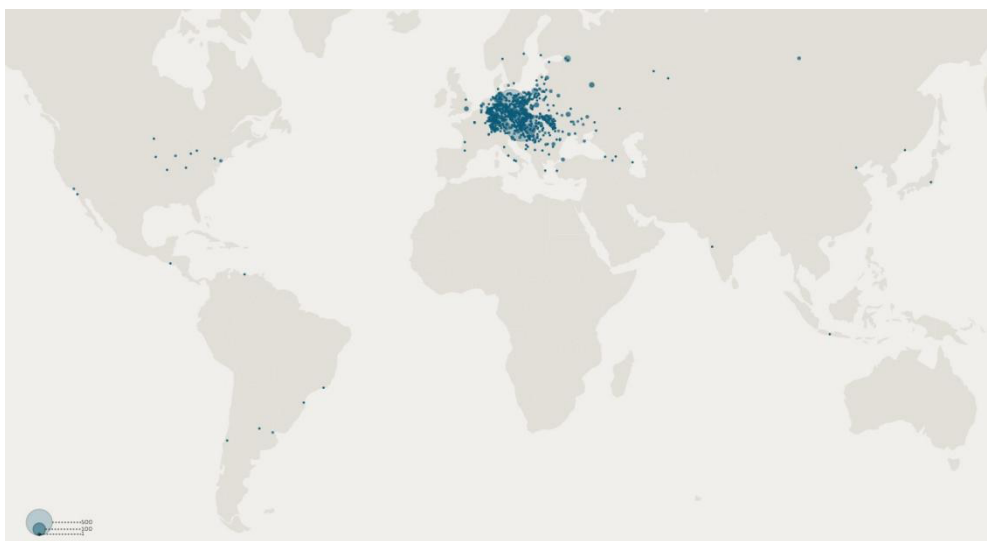
Zooming out provides a global perspective. Looking beyond Europe's borders, we find several birthplaces of exiles in Canada, India, and even in South America. The map illustrates the transcultural nature of the film industry in years before the war, as emphasized in Thomas Elsaesser's essay *Heavy traffic*⁹⁷ and in the Cinegraph books on the

⁹⁷ Thomas Elsaesser, «Heavy Traffic: Perspektive Hollywood. Emigranten oder Vagabunden?», in *London Calling. Deutsche im britischen Film der dreissiger Jahre*, A CineGraph book, ed. Jörg Schöning (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1993), p. 21–41.

European⁹⁸ and transatlantic exchanges⁹⁹ of Universum Film AG (UFA) and other German film production companies. Before the National Socialists seized power, Germany – and Berlin in particular – was an attractive place for film professionals, especially those from Vienna¹⁰⁰ and elsewhere in Europe.¹⁰¹

Chart 3: Cartographic visualization of birthplaces of all exiles worldwide

Link to the chart: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/geburtsorte/>



n = 3.256

Data source: GND, visualization taking into account the frequency

⁹⁸ Swenja Schiemann and Erika Wottrich, *Grenzüberschreitende Licht-Spiele. Deutsch-niederländische Filmbeziehungen*, A CineGraph book (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2021); Sturm and Wohlgemuth, 1996; Chris Wahl, *Sprachversionsfilme aus Babelsberg. Die internationale Strategie der Ufa 1929–1939* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2009).

⁹⁹ Jan Distelmeyer, ed., *Alliierte für den Film. Arnold Pressburger, Gregor Rabinowitsch und die Cine-Allianz. 20 Jahre*, A CineGraph book (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2010); Erika Wottrich, ed., *M wie Nebenzahl. Nero-Filmproduktion zwischen Europa und Hollywood*, A CineGraph book (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2002); Erika Wottrich, ed., *Deutsche Universal. Transatlantische Verleih- und Produktionsstrategien eines Hollywood-Studios in den 20er und 30er Jahren*, A CineGraph Book (Munich: edition text und kritik, 2001).

¹⁰⁰ On the exchange between Vienna and Berlin, see Hermann Schlösser, *Die Wiener in Berlin. Ein Künstlermilieu der 20er Jahre*, (Vienna: Edition Steinbauer, 2011); Christian Cargnelli, ed., *Gustav Machaty* (Vienna: Synema, 2005); Bernhard Fetz and Hermann Schlösser, ed., «Vienna, Berlin. With a dossier on Stefan Großmann», in *Profile. Magazin des österreichischen Literaturarchivs* 7, 4 (Vienna: Paul Zsolnay, 2001); Daniela Sannwald, «Metropolis. Die Wien-Berlin-Achse im deutschen Film der 10er und 20er Jahre», in *Elektrische Schatten. Beiträge zur österreichischen Stummfilmgeschichte*, eds. Francesco Bono, Paolo Caneppele & Günter Krenn (Vienna: Filmarchiv Austria, 1999).

¹⁰¹ Klaus Kreimeier, «Die Ufa-Story: Geschichte eines Filmkonzerns». Licensed ed. Heyne Filmbibliothek Vol. 32/230 (Munich: W. Heyne, 1995)

4.2. Work in the Film Industry

During his extensive research, Günter Peter Straschek identified more than 4,000 people he considers to be historical film exiles. Many worked in the film industry, while others were employed in cultural and related sectors. Some were threatened with persecution by the National Socialists due to their family ties. The ban on working and the Nuremberg racial laws affected not only directors, film technicians, and production staff, but also secretaries, movie theatre staff, and costume designers. Many of these individuals lost their jobs and career prospects.

The section «Working in the Film Business» contains various details about the professional activities of the film exiles. The section «Working in the Film Industry in Germany from 1920-1950» illustrates, among other things, how National Socialism marked a turning point for later film exiles.

Working in the Film Business

The information on professional activities found in Straschek's personal files is generally based on self-reported data. It can come from telephone conversations Straschek had with exiles. Sometimes, he supplemented this information with his own research. The designations found in the files are diverse and extensive. Of the 1,167 professional activities compiled from the Straschek dossiers, the GND, and IMDb and ranging from «2nd Unit Director» to «newspaper publisher», only 25% are strictly film business-related professions.

The large number of activities in the Straschek dossiers can be explained by the various jobs that exiles had to take on throughout their lives to support themselves and their families. Often, they had to change professions or take on menial jobs; many had to give up their work in films and their film careers in exile.¹⁰² To this day, the professional biographies of exiled filmmakers are characterized by changes, breaks, and gaps.

The many changes also refer to the unique situation of exiles from 1930 to 1950. For instance, Edgar G. Ulmer worked in 21 different roles, such as film producer, director, film

¹⁰² The television documentary DIE VERGESSENEN (Peter Dreessen and Peter Adler, SWR 1956) explores the plight of exiles from Germany, including doctors and individuals from non-film professions, who, impoverished, lived in Paris during the early 1950s. Helmut G. Asper, ««Die Vergessenen.» Eine Fernsehdokumentation aus dem Jahre 1956, «die etwas bewirkt hat», in *Kometen des Geldes*, ed. Ursula Seener (Munich: Edition text und kritik, 2015), 246–263.

architect, scriptwriter, author, film director, and many others.¹⁰³ A renowned photographer, Gisèle Freund worked not only as a photographer but also as a photojournalist and documentary filmmaker.

The subsequent table sorts the activities into four categories. The first category comprises film professions in the strict sense – activities that can only be pursued in the film and movie theatre industry. The second category clusters activities that for example, musicians could perform in film as well as in other fields. The third group consists of non-film professions, while the last category comprises mentions that do not strictly describe professional activities, such as <anarchist,> <amateur,> <refugee,> <collector,> or <patron>.

The table shows that over half of the professions mentioned in the Straschek files are in the film industry, even though fewer types of work are listed there than in other sectors. Many people pursued professions in various fields, for example, Julius Altmann (pseudonym Robert Gilbert), who, according to the Straschek dossier, was an extra, an amateur actor, and a knitwear manufacturer, thus working in both the film industry and other fields.

Table 10: Number of professions by sector

	Opening and closing credits IMDb	in %	GND and Stra- schek	in %
Film industry	7.958	56	296	25
Polyvalent artistic practices	2.799	20	230	20
Other sectors	3.502	24	617	53
Other	34	>1	25	2

n = 14.293

Source: Straschek, GND, IMDb

When the same information is disaggregated by persons and gender, the following pattern emerges: the overall gender ratio in the dataset mirrors that of film and cinema

¹⁰³ Cf. Noah William Isenberg, «Edgar G. Ulmer. A Filmmaker at the Margins», in *Weimar and Now: German Cultural Criticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

professions. However, the proportion of men is significantly higher than that of women only in the <other sectors>. Moreover, for a much higher proportion of women there is no additional information available (35%).

Table 11: Professions cumulated by gender

	No of persons*	Male in %	Female in %
Film industry	2.524	80	20
Polyvalent artistic practices	1.591	83	17
Other sectors	1.908	88	12
Other	33	82	18

Quellen: Straschek-Akten, GND, IMDb

The following visualization is a dendrogram that provides an overview of the manifold professions of the film exiles. The format of the dendrogram is typically used to illustrate a hierarchical cluster analysis, which was not the objective here. Here the dendrogram was intentionally used against its original purpose to highlight specific challenges we face with visualizations.

In addition to the designations used in the Straschek files, the dendrogram incorporates the controlled vocabularies of IMDb and the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) as corresponding elements. The visualization shows that the historical self-designations chosen by exiles are far more comprehensive and diverse than the activities listed in these vocabularies. The designation of jobs changed over time. However, the diversity of items also illustrates the wide range of fields in which the film exiles worked.

Chart 4: Dendrogram of professions in the film and cinema industry

Link to the dendrogram: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/arbeit-in-der-film-und-kinoindustrie/dendrogramm/>

Although film activities can be grouped into different departments and arranged hierarchically (between «above» and «below the line»), the dendrogram was used differently here. Apart from the missing correspondences between the three directories

(where no connecting line exists), it includes a long list of activities below the line that are part of the broadly understood film and cinema culture, but which cannot be attributed to opening or closing film credits (IMDb's logic) or individual film titles (FIAF's logic). The <others> category contains professions not found in the FIAF vocabulary or on IMDb: film agents, film scholars, journalists, media lawyers, comedians, audiobook authors, broadcasting directors, and cultural policymakers.

Working in the Film Industry in Germany from 1920–1950

The following chart illustrates the number of exiles involved in film production in Germany or in German co-production between 1920 and 1950. To emphasize their significance to the German film industry, IMDb data was consulted in addition to the Straschek information. The chart below displays films that list <Germany> as the country of production or co-production.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, the number of exiles involved was recorded. In 1931, 500 individuals, who later went into exile, were still working in the German film industry and were listed in the opening and closing credits of films. As the persecution began in 1933, the number dropped to 130 the following year. With the start of the war in 1939, the number fell to an all-time low of 41 and continued to decrease until only four remained by the war's end in 1946. The dark blue numbers indicate the proportion of films listed on IMDb from that year that were produced by Universum Film (UFA). A comparable figure for German film production per year could not be clearly identified for each respective year. **Alfred Bauer's Deutscher Spielfilm - Almanach** mentions 135 German feature films for the year 1933.¹⁰⁵ However, Eric Rentschler lists over 107 German titles for the same year.¹⁰⁶ Sabine Hake refers to 114 German films that were released in 1933: «Of the 206 feature films released in Germany in 1933, 114 were of German and 64 of American origin.»¹⁰⁷

The MGFE data for the release year 1933 alone includes 175 films produced or co-produced in Germany with at least one film exile involved. The group studied was involved in a total of 354 films worldwide in 1933. Unlike the criteria set by Alfred Bauer or Eric

¹⁰⁴ Films with exile participation appear on IMDb after 1933 and even during the war due to ambiguous data. As such, IMDb lists films by their release year rather than their production year. Therefore, these dates should be interpreted with caution.

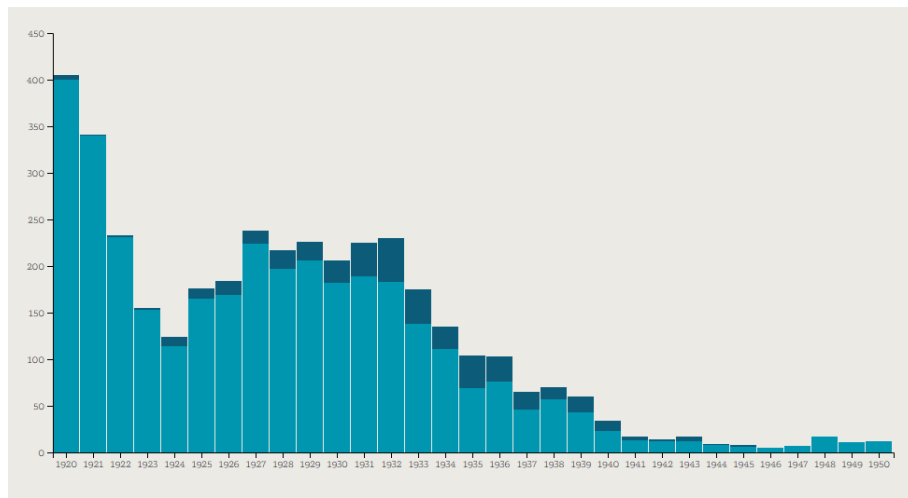
¹⁰⁵ Alfred Bauer, *Deutscher Spielfilm-Almanach. 1929–1950* (Munich: Filmbuchverlag Winterberg, 1976).

¹⁰⁶ Eric Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion. Nazi Cinema and its Afterlife* (Cambridge, Mass. [and other]: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 255.

¹⁰⁷ Sabine Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), p. 133. She notes: «The numbers are taken from Boguslaw Drewniak, *Der deutsche Film 1938–1945*, p. 814.»

Rentschler, this count includes not only feature films but also documentary, experimental and cultural films, if they are listed on IMDb.

Chart 5: Films with exile involvement, production or co-production country Germany from 1920 to 1950



n = 1,926 persons

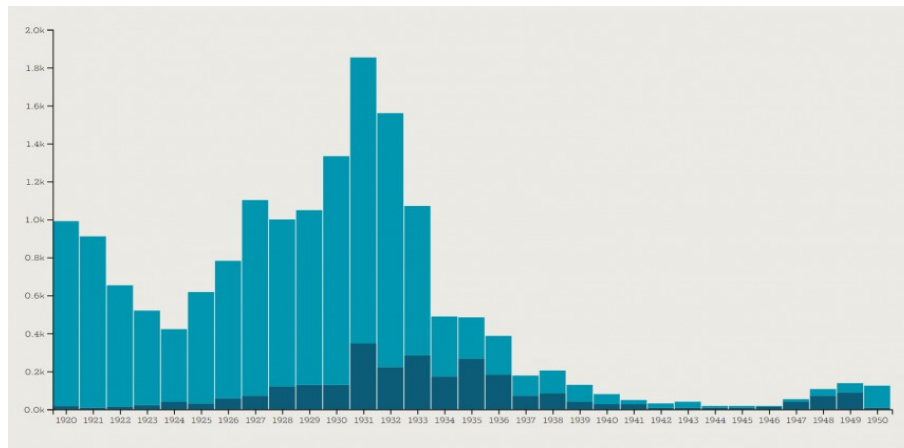
- Number of opening and closing credits of exiles in German films
- Number of opening and closing credits of exiles in co-productions with Germany

Data source: All persons from the Straschek estate with IMDb entries who were born before 1920.

Using the total number of exiles mentioned in the opening and closing credits, rather than the number of individuals, for the visualization results in 27,142 entries across 10,347 films from 1920 to 1950. This paints a drastic picture of the loss suffered by the German film industry after 1933. As the chart below shows, there was a slight increase in German co-production involvement in the mid-1930s (marked in dark blue), following the exodus to Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia in 1935.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ See also: Amin Loacker, *Unerwünschtes Kino: Deutschsprachige Emigrantenfilme 1934 bis 1937* (Vienna: Filmmarchiv Austria, 2019).

Chart 6: Opening and closing credits of films with exiles, produced or co-produced in Germany from 1920 to 1950



n = 27,142

- Number of opening and closing credits of exiles in German films
- Number of opening and closing credits of exiles in co-productions with Germany

Data source: All opening and closing credits for persons from the Straschek estate with IMDb entries who were born before 1920, from 10,347 films released between 1920 and 1950.

4.3 Fleeing into Exile

«[It] was illegal to leave Germany back then unless you had a very special reason» says photographer Gisèle Freund in an interview with documentary filmmaker Georg Stephan Troller.¹⁰⁹ People fled Europe in a variety of ways.¹¹⁰

This chapter focuses on two aspects of flight: It discusses «escape routes or places of exile» and explores the significance of «networks among refugees.» The duration of stays in transit countries, which were sometimes used for short breaks, varied. From 1933 to the mid-1930s, travelling between several European countries was possible, but only if you had a work contract. This changed radically following the Nuremberg Laws and the «annexation» of Austria in 1938, as fleeing to a safe country became much more difficult, largely because the only possible route was by sea. The timing played a decisive role in determining the course of the escape. The increased financial burden of

¹⁰⁹ Gisèle Freund, Interview with Georg Stephan Troller, 1993 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIM0o93fFG4&ab_channel=KunstSpektrum (last accessed 22.03.2024)].

¹¹⁰ An overview of the countries of exile is provided by the map of Kim Wünschmann, Exilländer jüdischer Flüchtlinge aus dem Deutschen Reich, 2014 [<https://www.bpb.de/themen/holocaust/gerettete-geschichten/177609/exillaender-juedischer-fluechtlinge-aus-dem-deutschen-reich/> (last accessed 22.03.2024)].

departure also influenced the choice of route. After 1933, the main route was through Austria (Hungary, Czech Republic) and the neighboring countries such as the Netherlands, Great Britain, Denmark, and France. After Austria's <annexation> in 1938 and the National Socialists' entry into Vienna, many journeys went through France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal – provided they did not result in arrest or internment in one of the many European camps, such as Mauthausen in Austria (from 1938 onwards), which had many satellite and subcamps (from 1941). The Westerbork transit camp in the Netherlands (1939), the Drancy internment and transit camp (1941, previously used for political prisoners as well), and the Gurs internment camp (used for political refugees from 1939, with deportations beginning in 1942), and the Royallieu concentration camp (1941) in France are only some of the 1,000 satellite and labor camps in Europe.¹¹¹

Those who could reach the ports of Genoa, Marseille,¹¹² or Portugal and had a visa could embark on a sea voyage to Casablanca, New York, Tel Aviv, or Buenos Aires, where precarious working and residency conditions prevailed,¹¹³ or Shanghai, where entry without a visa was possible until 1941,¹¹⁴ or Manila, Havana, Montevideo, Sydney, or Auckland. For many Jews who remained in Europe in the late 1930s, financing the expensive passage and obtaining a departure visa became increasingly difficult.¹¹⁵

Between 1933 and 1945, those engaged professionally in Great Britain or Sweden generally did not return to Germany.¹¹⁶ Another escape route led through Budapest, Prague, and Vienna, where the exiles could initially produce German-language films.¹¹⁷ Even in France, where high unemployment due to the global economic crisis of the late 1920s prevailed, the metropolis of Paris offered potential work opportunities in the cultural

¹¹¹ «Between 1936 and 1945, the European concentration camp system comprised 24 main camps and over 1,000 satellite camps». The Federal Archives concentration camps and satellite camps [bit.ly/3HI6aA3 (last accessed 22.03.2024)].

¹¹² Uwe Wittstock, *Marseille 1940: die große Flucht der Literatur* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2024).

¹¹³ Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, *Die Irrfahrt auf der St. Louis*, 2018. [<https://www.bpb.de/themen/nationalsozialismus-zweiter-weltkrieg/schicksalsjahr-1938/258896/die-irrfahrt-auf-der-st-louis/>] (last accessed 22.03.2024)].

¹¹⁴ Burcu Dogramaci et al., *Urban Exile: Theories, Methods, Research Practices*, 2023 [<https://library.open.org/handle/20.500.12657/61621>] (last accessed 22.03.2024)]; Cf. also: *Künste im Exil* (o.J.) *Orte und Länder* [<https://kuenste-im-exil.de/KIE/Content/DE/Themen/Exil/orte-und-laender.html>] (last accessed 22.03.2024)].

¹¹⁵ Among the countless others were Fred Zinnemann's parents, who had hoped to leave Poland. Although their son had already organized an affidavit for the U.S. and made ship reservations, their departure was unsuccessful. Imme Klages, *I do not get rid of the ghosts*, 2018. On the experience of exile in films, Fred Zinnemann: *The search* (1948), *The nun's story* (1959) und *Julia* (1977). *Marburger Schriften zur Medienforschung* 80 (Marburg: Schüren).

¹¹⁶ Tim Bergfelder and Christian Cargnelli, «Destination London: German-speaking Emigrés and British Cinema, 1925–1950», *Film Europa*, vol. 6 (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2008); Tobias Hochscherf, *The Continental Connection: German-Speaking Émigrés and British Cinema, 1927–1945* (Manchester: University Press, 2011); Irene Nawrocka and Simon Usaty, «Im Exil in Schweden: österreichische Erfahrungen und Perspektiven in den 1930er und 1940er Jahren», *Exilforschung heute*, vol. 3 (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2013).

¹¹⁷ Loacker, 2019.

sector.¹¹⁸ Many exiles wrote for the exile press in France, including the **Pariser Tageblatt**.¹¹⁹ The cartographic visualization below depicts the places of exile and escape routes as discerned from the Straschek files. This visualization corroborates the findings on the countries of exile from the Gesellschaft für Exilforschung's **Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration 1933–1945**¹²⁰ and the escape routes examined by Helmut G. Asper and Jan Christopher Horak.¹²¹ It can be concluded that there was no dominant escape route from Nazi Germany because the political situation meant that there were few, if any, safe and reliable routes in the medium, and none in the long-term.

Places of Exile

The following chart offers a first cartographic overview of the countries of exile and the number of persons who remained in a country for a short or extended period during their time in exile. If an individual was in exile in three countries, all three countries are included in the presentation. The length of the stay is not considered here. The number of people who stayed in a specific country varies greatly. For example, the map shows 610 persons in France. Some stayed only briefly (Adrienne Thomas), some for a year (Edgar Schall), and some for several years (Lotte Eisner).

As the following chart shows, a first exodus in 1933 was followed by a second one in 1938.

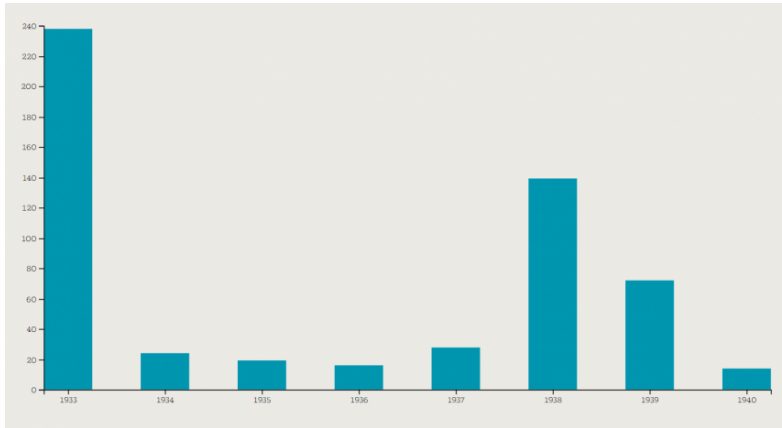
¹¹⁸ Helmut G. Asper, «Ungeliebte Gäste. Filmemigranten in Paris 1933–1940», in *Film und Fotografie* 21, ed. Claus-Dieter Krohn et. al. H. 21 (edition text + kritik, 2003), 40–61; Sturm and Wohlgemuth, 1996.

¹¹⁹ Lieselotte Maas, «Handbuch der deutschen Exilpresse 1933–1945», in *Die Zeitungen des deutschen Exils in Europa von 1933 bis 1939 in Einzeldarstellungen*, vol. 4, ed. Eberhard Lämmert (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1990); Héléne Roussel and Lutz Winckler, *Deutsche Exilpresse und Frankreich 1933–1940* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1992); Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, Exilpresse Digital, 2019. [https://www.dnb.de/DE/Sammlungen/DEA/Exilpresse/exilpresse_node.html] (last accessed 22.03.2024)]; Héléne Roussel, «Rechts und links der Seine,“ *Pariser Tageblatt und Pariser Tageszeitung 1933–1940*, vol. 89 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2002); Helmut G. Asper, ed., *Bibliographie der Filmseite und der Filmnachrichten des Pariser Tageblatts/Pariser Tageszeitung 1933–1940*, vol. 5 (Frankfurt am Main: Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften Peter Lang, 1995).

¹²⁰ Claus-Dieter Krohn, *Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration 1933–1945* (Darmstadt: Primus, 1998).

¹²¹ Asper, 2002; Horak, 1984.

Chart 7: Film exiles who went to France between 1933 and 1940



n= 619

Source: Straschek

The following chart uses data from the GND. The presentation includes 102 countries of exile, representing the escape routes of 2,925 people in total. The U.S., Great Britain, and France stand out as the most common destinations for exiles on the map. These countries had thriving film industries, which potentially made job hunting easier, though employment was not guaranteed even there. For example, it was nearly impossible to join the cameramen's union in the U.S., which served essentially as a work ban.¹²² The same applied in France, where employers had to prove that they had hired a certain number of French workers before they could hire an exile.¹²³ The map shows the many destinations of exile in Latin American countries.¹²⁴

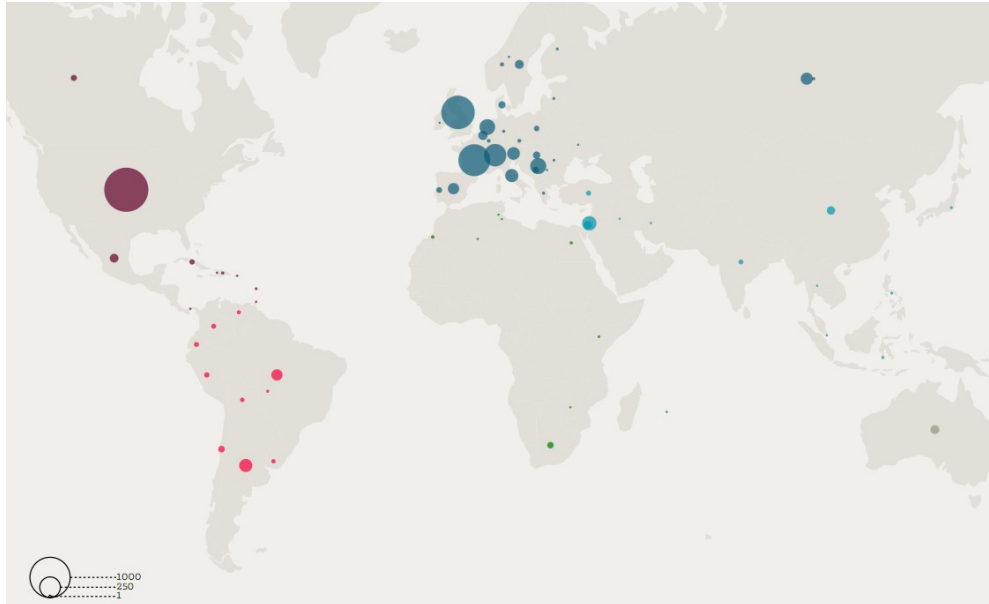
¹²² Cf. The professional biographies of Kurt Courant und Eugen Schüfftan: Asper, 2002.

¹²³ Cf. Asper, 2003.

¹²⁴ More on the working and living conditions in exile, see Arnold Spitta: Argentina; Irmtrud Wojak: Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay; Izabela Maria Furtado Kestler: Brazil; Maria-Luise Kreuter: Ecuador; Patrik von zur Mühlen: Latin America; Fritz Pohle: Mexico, in Krohn, 1998.

Chart 8: Cartographic visualization of the countries of exile by frequency

Link to the interactive map: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/auf-der-flucht/>



n = 4,280

total number of countries: 102

Data source: GND

Routes of escape

Unlike the GND entries, Straschek recorded the countries of exile in order. This information is included in the next interactive map, which also illustrates how many people took a specific route. The various transit points in exile are connected by lines. For example, the number of exiles who emigrated from France to the U.S. is indicated by the arrow connecting the two countries. In this case, Straschek recorded 186 of the 692 exiles who fled through France to the U.S. (from 1933 to 1945). Of the 678 exiles in Great Britain, 132 emigrated onwards to the U.S. However, it should be noted that movements were never as smooth as the connecting lines in the visualization might suggest.

Hovering the mouse over the U.S., a refuge for 1,076 film exiles, the map reveals the previous countries of refuge. From the country of exile, Spain (with 93 people), 19

people fled directly to the U.S., but more arrows point to South American countries and Mexico.¹²⁵

The exile country U.S. was reached through different routes. Many U.S. refugees were from the literary and music worlds,¹²⁶ and tried to find work in Hollywood.

Chart 9: Cartographic visualization of the escape routes¹²⁷

Link to the interactive map: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/auf-der-flucht/>



n = 4,940

Total number of countries: 90
Data source: Straschek

Networks in Exile

Networks are vital resources for exiles. They provide support when fleeing and during exile. Networks help one another by sharing information and providing mutual support

¹²⁵ The MGFE database has a search function for individual countries of exile and their exiles under «Country» und «Only Exile Country».

¹²⁶ For a comparison of musicians with those in other countries of exile, see the Lexicon of Persecuted Musicians during the the Nazi era [<http://www.lexm.uni-hamburg.de/content/index.xml>] (last accessed 22.03.2024)].

¹²⁷ In total, data from a total of 2,668 individuals was available on 4,940 countries of exile.

through money or work contracts.¹²⁸ The MGFE is interested in determining whether the Straschek dossiers contain references to forms of networking among exiles. This section explores the role of collaboration among exiles before, during, and after exile. It focuses on analyzing exile networks in Latin America and Europe from 1930 to 1950.

In terms of data, possible networks can be modeled as overlaps between respective filmographies. However, one should not assume that individuals listed together in a film's opening or closing credits have met in person, much less know each other. Since film production involves separate timed steps—preparation, filming, and post-production (e.g., editing, music, and sound recording)—the subsequent network visualizations remain theoretical models.

The following interactive visualizations are based on data graphs that were used to create network visualizations with Neo4J.¹²⁹ As mentioned earlier, depicting working relationships remains abstract because shared credits do not necessarily imply a direct working relationship.

The IMDb film directories were used as the basis for the network visualizations (as of August 2022). From 1930 to 1950, IMDb lists filmographies of 1,343 exiles, with a total of 7,379 film titles and 18,531 entries in opening and closing credits.¹³⁰ Therefore, IMDb only has information on about 50% of the exiles.

¹²⁸ Heike Klapdor, ed., «Ich bin ein unheilbarer Europäer: Briefe aus dem Exil», 1st ed. (Berlin: Aufbau, 2007); Larissa Schütze, «William Dieterle und die deutschsprachige Emigration in Hollywood. Antifaschistische Filmarbeit bei Warner Bros. Pictures, 1930–1940,» in *Transatlantische historische Studien*, ed. Hartmut Berghoff et al., vol. 55 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2015); Frank Liesl, Charlotte Dieterle, and European Film Fund, *Coming Into Their Own – How Exile Changed The Traditional Role Assigned To Women* (Berlin: epubli, 2012); Hervé Dumont, *William Dieterle: Un humaniste au pays du cinéma* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2002); E. Bond Johnson, «Der European Film Fund und die Exilschriftsteller in Hollywood», in *Kalifornien*, ed. John M. Spalek & Joseph Strelka (Bern/Munich: De Gruyter, 1976), 135–146.

¹²⁹ For a discussion of network analysis, see Grandjean Venturini, Mathieu Jacomy Tommaso, and Pablo Jensen, «What Do We See When We Look at Networks. Visual Network Analysis, Relational Ambiguity, and Force-Directed Layouts», in *Big Data & Society* 8, 1 (London: SAGE, 2021). A good starting point for the method can be found in Albert-László Barabási, *Linked. The New Science of Networks* (Cambridge, Mass.: Perseus, 2002).

¹³⁰ When earlier time spans are selected in the interactive graphs, the data is based on information from IMDb. Between 1900 and 1997, a total of 24,458 film titles and 51,122 opening and closing credits can be attributed to the 1,926 individuals listed on IMDb.

Table 12: Mentions on IMDb, opening and closing credits

	Amount 1930– 1950	Total amount	in %
Persons on IMDb	1.343	1.926	70
Film titles	7.379	24.458	30
Mentioned in credits	18.531	51.122	36

As the following table shows, the category <cast> accounts for a large number of the 18,531 mentions, nearly 50% of all entries. When broken down by gender, it becomes apparent that the proportion of women is higher here overall than in general: 40% in the IMDb <cast> category, compared to 20% female representation in the MGFE. Between 1930 and 1950, 88% of all references to women in IMDb's <cast> category were removed (compared to 36% for men). Notably, before 1933, many women in the German film industry were engaged in <invisible> professions (e.g. assistants, secretaries), which left few traces in film documents. Since IMDb does not record these professions, only actresses appear.

Table 13: Mentions on IMDb focusing on <cast>, opening and closing credits

	Gesamtzeitraum	1930–1950
Total number of persons	1,929	1,343
<Cast> in %	50	47
Of which actors in %	66	60
Of which actresses in %	34	40
% of actors in relation to total number of men	42	36
% of actresses in relation to total number of women	81	88

Source: IMDb, Straschek

When moving away from the limited scope of the IMDb data (where only 50% of the exiles are recorded) and incorporating all the sector, sixty-three percent of women are listed in at least one role as an actress (as opposed to 81% in Table 5 of the IMDb data).

Table 14: Total professions mentioned (incl. other industries)

	Tätigkeiten Eintrag
Number of persons	3.535
Men	2.891
Actors	790 (27 % of all men)
Women	644
Actresses	407 (63 % of all women)

Source: Straschek, GND, IMDb

After this brief overview of IMDb's information on exiles, the focus shifts to network visualizations based on IMDb data, starting with one that has a geographic focus.

Networks in Exile: Collaboration in Latin America

Although there are a series of scholarly works¹³¹ on the historical exile in Latin America, they focus on literary and political exile in Mexico and Argentina.¹³² There has been little research on film exile itself, including the films made by exiles in these countries. For example, there are numerous films by Pablo Taberero, an Argentine cameraman born Peter Paul Weinschenk in Berlin, who grew up in Mainz and worked on 41 Spanish-language films.¹³³ The same is true for Alfredo B. Crevenna, who was born in Frankfurt and did not leave Germany until 1938; he made over 150 films in Mexico during his lifetime.

¹³¹ Christian Kloyber, ed., *Mexiko: 1938–1947. Eine Dokumentation. Österreicher im Exil* (Vienna: Deuticke, 2002); Oliver Kühschelm, *Geflohen und geblieben: Jüdische Österreicher*innen in Uruguay*, 1st ed. (Göttingen: Böhlau Wien, 2023); Javier Guerrero, «Alternative Lateinamerika: das deutsche Exil in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus. Americana Eystettensia», Serie A. Actas 12 (Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert, 1994); Wolfgang Kießling, *Es begann mit der «Galgentoni» – Theater im Heinrich-Heine-Klub (Mexiko)», in Verfolgung und Exil deutschsprachiger Theaterkünstler*, vol. 1, eds. Frithjof Trapp et al. (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Saur, 1998), p. 423–436.

¹³² Klaus Meyer-Minnemann, *Fluchtort Mexiko: ein Asylland für die Literatur*, ed. Martin Hielscher (Hamburg [and others]: Luchterhand Literaturverl., 1992); Patrik von zur Mühlen, «Fluchtziel Lateinamerika. Die deutsche Emigration 1933–1945: politische Aktivitäten und soziokulturelle Integration», *Politik und Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 21 (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1988); Christine Fischer-Defoy and Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin, ed., «Letzte Zuflucht Mexiko. Gilberto Bosques und das deutschsprachige Exil nach 1939», 2.12.2012–14.4.2013, an exhibition of the Aktiven Museums Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin e. V. (Berlin: Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin, 2012).

¹³³ Also see the documentary film *TABERNERO*, Eduardo Montes-Bradley, USA, 2020.

The subsequent interactive visualization on collaboration in Latin America is limited to four countries because only these countries had exiles in common on IMDb: Argentina, China, Brazil, and Mexico. There are also examples from Colombia, but they are not listed on IMDb. Among these are films, for example, by Hans Brückner, a cameraman, director, and producer, who fled to Colombia. To our knowledge, he did not collaborate with other exiles.¹³⁴

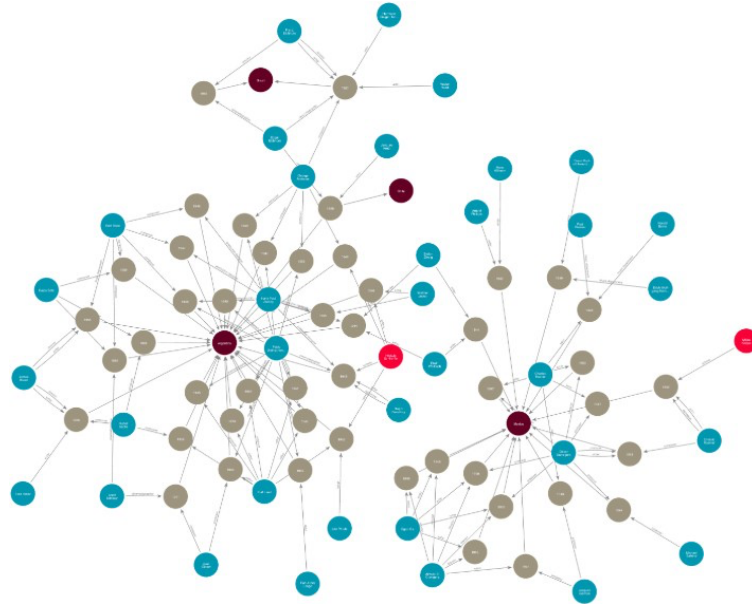
IMDb lists a total of 124 Latin American films from 1930 to 1950, most of which are from Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, and Chile. Many of the entries are related to the composer George Adreani, the editor Kurt Land, and the production designer Hans Jacoby (all of whom were in exile in Argentina), as well as the producers Oscar Danzigers and Michael Salkind (both were in Mexico). Similarly, many entries are linked to the two cameramen Pablo Taberero and Adolf Schlasy (both were also in exile in Argentina). However, since Alfredo B. Crevenna and Pablo Taberero primarily worked with local teams, their films are not included in the interactive visualization of collaborations with other exiles.

Of the 124 films listed as having at least two exiles, only 47 are on IMDb. One example appearing in the subsequent interactive visualization is *EXPLOSIVO 008* (James Bauer, Argentina, 1940), an anti-Nazi film featuring the two exiles James Bauer (director) and Alfred Heller (scriptwriter), as well as the pianist and composer Rodolfo Sachs.

¹³⁴ IMDb Hans Brückner [https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0117674/?ref_=tt_ov_dr (last accessed 22.03.2024)].

Graph 1: Networks in Latin America from 1930 to 1950

Link to the interactive visualization: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/auf-der-flucht/>



- Films with year of release (47)
- Film exiles - women (2)
- Film exiles - men (35)
- Production countries of the films (4)

n = 88

Networks in Exile: Collaboration in France and Great Britain in 1938

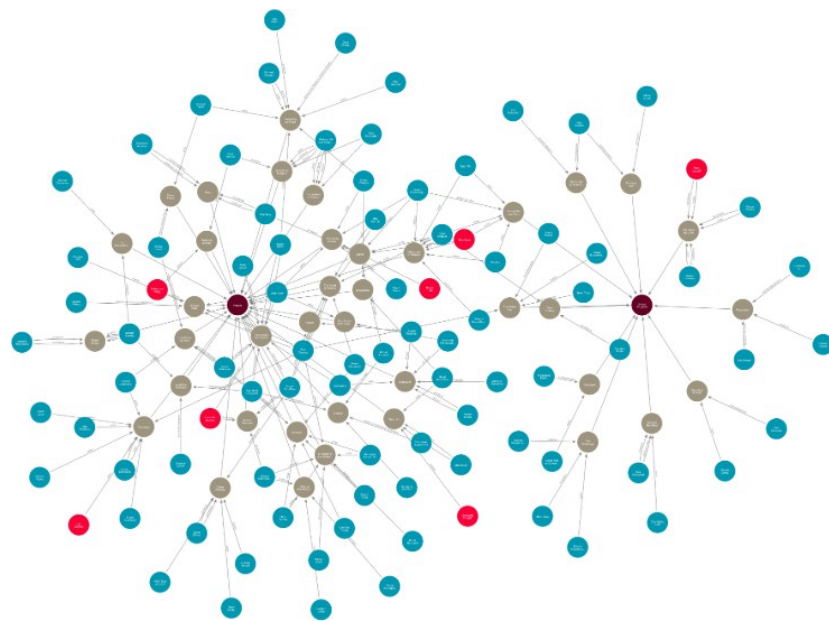
According to the MGFE data, a second large exodus occurred after Austria's <annexation> in 1938. The following visualizations illustrate this wave of flight, using France and Great Britain as examples. A central question is which film exiles were still actively involved in which films in France and Great Britain shortly before the outbreak of the war in 1938. The collaborations of the exiles reveal a network that remained quite stable.

Author Gina Kaus is represented in the following network with two films from 1938: one produced in France and the other in Great Britain. Interestingly, the year of the films' release says little about the exiles' stay in the production country, but there is at least some indication of who was still involved in French films before and up to 1938. In this case, the story had already published as a play by the Georg Marton Verlag in 1936, and

Gina Kaus did not collaborate on the script.¹³⁵ Network visualizations such as these reveal personal connections as well – for instance between Gina Kaus, Egon, and Otto Eis on the development of the story for *PRISON SANS BARREAUX* (Léonide Moguy, France, 1938; produced by Arnold Pressburger, script: Hans Wilhelm). This connection remains in the British remake of the same material: *PRISON WITHOUT BARS* (Brian Desmond Hurst, Great Britain 1938; produced by Alexander Korda), which mentions all four exiles (Eis, Eis, Kaus, and Wilhelm) in the opening credits for the «play.” Stories of transnational production like this one were not uncommon in exile films of the 1930s.¹³⁶

Graph 2: Networks in Great Britain and France in 1938

Link to the interactive visualization: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/auf-der-flucht/>



n = 131

- Films (39)
- Film exiles - women (7)
- Film exiles - men (83)
- Production countries of the films (2)

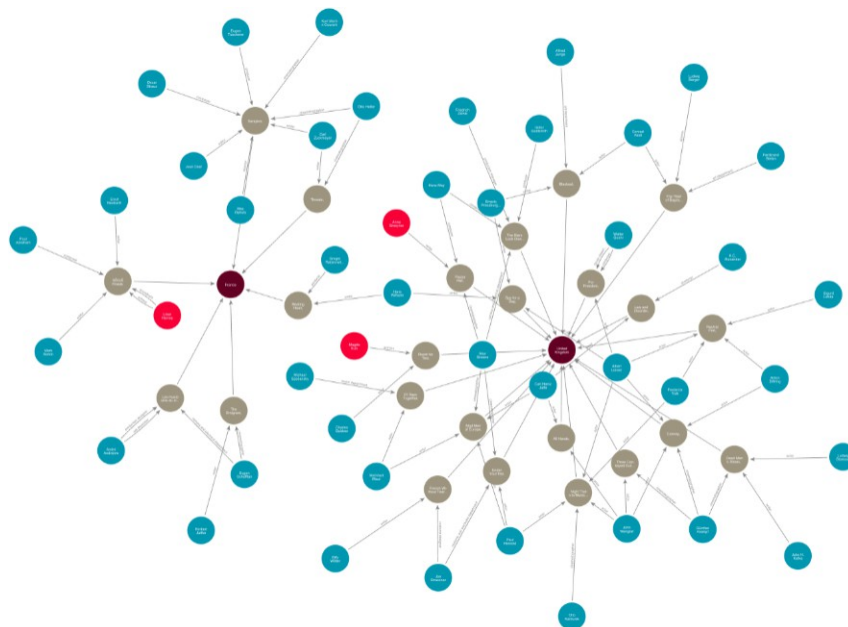
¹³⁵ Gina Kaus, *Gefängnis ohne Gitter*. Play. Together with Otto Edgar Eis [Eis, Otto & Eis, Egon], based on the play of the same name, in eight scenes by Charles Gordon-Ross, based on an idea by Hilde Kovalof (Vienna: Georg Marton Verlag, 1936).

¹³⁶ Alexander Korda bought the material and produced the English-language remake *PRISON WITHOUT BARS* (Brian Desmond Hurst, Great Britain, 1938). Cf. Karol Kulik, *Alexander Korda. The Man Who Could Work Miracles* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1975), 215f.

The following visualization shows the same information as the previous one, but from two years later. In 1940, the aforementioned wave of emigration became evident: It was no longer possible to work in France anymore; Great Britain was one of the few remaining European countries where exiles could find film work and seek refuge.

Graph 3: Networks in Great Britain and France in 1940

Link to the interactive visualization: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/auf-der-flucht/>



n = 71

- Films (24)
- Film exiles - women (3)
- Film exiles - men (42)
- Production countries of the films (2)

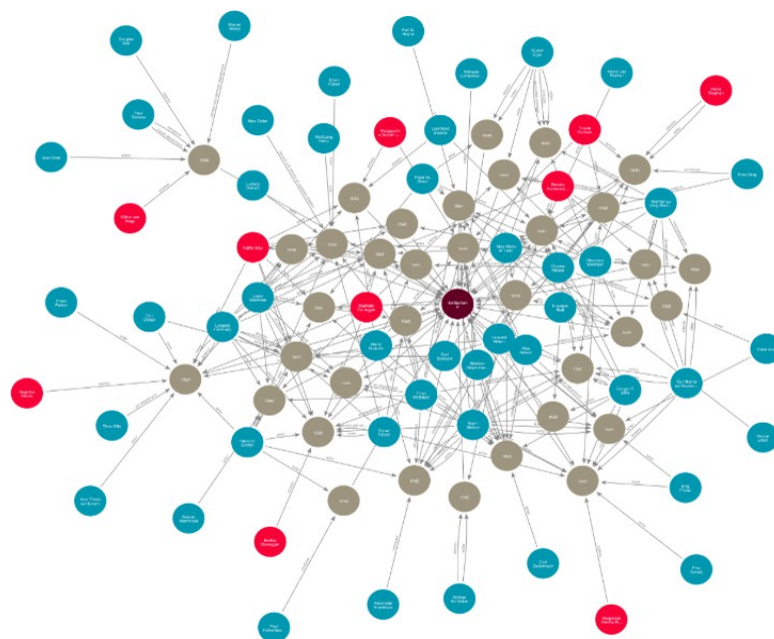
Networks in Exile: Collaboration in Switzerland from 1938 to 1945

According to IMDb, 35 films involving exiles were produced in Switzerland between 1938 and 1945. These include, for instance, the well-known films by Leopold Lindtberg, who arrived in Switzerland via circuitous routes in 1933: MARIE-LOUISE (Lindtberg, Switzer-

land, 1944) and DIE LETZTE CHANCE (Lindtberg, Switzerland, 1945), both of which deal with the theme of refugees during World War II and constitute the so-called «Contemporary Humanism».

Graph 13: Networks in Switzerland from 1938–1945

Link to the interactive visualization: <https://www.filmexil.de/schaubilder/auf-der-flucht/>



n = 92

- Films with year of release (35)
- Film exiles - women (10)
- Film exiles - men (46)
- Production countries of the films (1)

Given its proximity to Germany and the German-speaking Swiss cantons, it is not surprising that a relatively large number of films involving exiles are listed between 1930 and 1950. In contrast to Latin America, where 214 titles were identified, there were 101 films in the small country of Switzerland.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Cf. also Benedikt Eppenberger, Heidi, Hellebarden & Hollywood. Die Praesens-Film-Story (Basel: NZZ Libro, 2024); Louise von Plessen, Friedrich Dalsheim. Ethnographie – Film – Emigration (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2022).