



Alfred Tarski (1901–1983) and Kurt Gödel (1906–1978), Vienna, ca. 1935
Alfred Tarski papers, The Bancroft Library

Saved by The Bay

THE INTELLECTUAL MIGRATION
FROM FASCIST EUROPE
TO UC BERKELEY

January 28–June 27, 2014



**The Magnes Collection
of Jewish Art and Life**

The Bancroft Library,
University of California, Berkeley

magnes.org

Looking back

Immediately after the War, and increasingly more so over the following decades, UC Berkeley's refugee faculty set their gaze upon Europe.

Some looked for lost relatives, friends and colleagues who had remained behind or were murdered in the Holocaust. Others intervened on behalf of stateless refugees in Europe and elsewhere, and later of intellectuals persecuted by the Soviet regime. Some visited their countries of origin often, and spent considerable time in Europe. Others never or rarely set foot in Europe and regarded the San Francisco Bay Area as their new and only home. Some received belated recognition and even reparations from the same European countries and academic institutions that had once persecuted and expelled them. Of particular note, is musicologist Alfred Einstein's rejection of the prestigious "Mozart Medal," which had been conferred to him by the Mozarteum (Salzburg) in 1949.

Following a pattern that became increasingly more visible since the 1980s, many received honorary degrees, commendations, prizes, and other forms of public recognition from government branches, cities, and the very universities that half a century earlier had marked them as undesirables.



Alfred Einstein (1880–1952), Draft of letter to the International Mozarteum Foundation, December 16, 1949
Alfred Einstein papers, Hargrove Music Library

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INTRODUCTION

The spreading of fascist and anti-semitic ideologies across Europe in the early 20th century and the rise of Hitler to power in 1933 had wide-ranging consequences on the lives of millions of people. In addition, these events made intellectual and academic life initially difficult, and eventually impossible, for many, professors and students alike. Many intellectuals were targeted by systematic acts of violence. Others had the foresight to seek opportunities abroad before the Second World War, which broke out in September of 1939, made travel virtually impossible for all. Their migration enriched the intellectual landscapes of countries such as the United States, which became safe havens for many refugees.

In the Spring Semester 2013, faculty, curators and students interviewed current and Emeriti faculty, conducted research in the archival collections of the UC Berkeley Libraries, and led a public workshop at The Magnes. This work unearthed hundreds of primary sources documenting the lives of scholars who came to Berkeley as refugees from fascist Europe. These individuals contributed much to the academic life of our University, often becoming world-renowned leaders in all fields of scholarship and research. They also expanded the global mind of the campus, paving the way for UC Berkeley's leading role in academia and in public intellectual engagement, two decades before the rise of the Free Speech Movement.

The exhibition, *Saved by the Bay*, highlights the history of this important intellectual migration through biographical sketches, a film, and circa one hundred documents from the University Archives, The Bancroft Library, and the Jean Gray Hargrove Music Library at UC Berkeley. The materials, which include letters, photographs, travel documents, and professional records, document personal and professional lives in fascist Europe, the strategies of immigration and refugee life, the arrival in California, and the experiences on campus of a select number of exile faculty at UC Berkeley. We hope that this initial work will encourage further scholarship, and foster a deeper knowledge of the history and life of our University.

Francesco Spagnolo, Curator
Elena Kempf, Undergraduate Curatorial Apprentice

Presented by The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life, in collaboration with The Bancroft Library, the Jean Gray Hargrove Music Library, the Department of History, the Townsend Center for the Humanities Working Group on Modern Jewish Culture, and the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program of the University of California, Berkeley.



Hans Lewy (1904–1988) with colleagues, Berkeley, n.d.
Hans Lewy papers, The Bancroft Library

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Europe

Intellectual refugees carried with them the recollections of a lost world, made of childhood memories, family ties, university studies, and professional lives.

Many of these scholars were students and faculty at leading European universities, did research in some of the world's top libraries, worked as editors at influential academic publishing houses, contributed to national press outlets, and were often engaged public intellectuals. Born between the late 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, they experienced the peak of Europe's intellectual creativity. But they were also exposed to highly traumatic events, which from the end of the First World War led to the rise of fascism across the continent.

Photographs, birth certificates, school transcripts, and early academic publications kept in the personal archives of these scholars testify to this ever present past. Academics who were not openly aligned with the rising fascist parties experienced intellectual isolation. Jewish intellectuals often encountered anti-semitism at school and in the workplace. Some of them were amongst the earliest targets of Nazi and fascist persecutions. Denied their rights as students or faculty, expelled from academic institutions and publishing circles, at times incarcerated in the early waves of arrests and internment in concentration camps, intellectual exiles also brought to Berkeley an indelible first-hand knowledge of the inner workings of totalitarianism.



Manfred Bukofzer (1910–1955), Berlin University student ID, 1929–1931
Manfred F. Bukofzer papers, Hargrove Music Library

Migration strategies

Some intellectual refugees were still students when Hitler seized power in Germany in 1933, and others had just received their advanced degrees and were at the beginning of their academic careers. A few more, like mathematicians Hans Lewy and Alfred Tarski and musicologist Alfred Einstein, were already established figures in their academic fields and well known in international circles.

Regardless of individual backgrounds, migration strategies followed similar patterns. These included fully documenting one's life and professional career (a task that became nearly impossible after the beginning of the Second World War); leveraging international contacts and procuring endless scores of documents, including identity papers, letters of endorsement, and affidavits of support; and helping family members and colleagues in need.

All migration paths were met with the ultimate challenge: traveling out of Germany, Austria, Italy, and the other European countries that progressively fell under fascist rule and Nazi occupation, and securing passage to America. Travel happened exclusively by boat, sometimes directly from Europe, and at times via Asia.

With the exception of those who had already obtained academic positions prior to their departure, intellectual exiles had next to worry about becoming fluent in English, and finding long-term positions at academic institutions, while at the same time demonstrating to the US Government that their knowledge was a value to society and, after 1941, to the war effort. Many found jobs on the East Coast or in the Midwest. On the West Coast, UC Berkeley was one of the few institutions ready to open its doors to them as well.



Albert Einstein (1879–1955), Immigration advice to Hertha Heumann Einstein and Alfred Einstein, Belgium, September 4, 1933
Alfred Einstein papers, Hargrove Music Library

Berkeley life

Once in Berkeley, recently emigrated faculty joined campus life. They secured prominent appointments, acquired positions of leadership, and more often than not became leading figures in their respective disciplines. Their European education was an added bonus to the university, and their international connections and reputations highly contributed to that of the institution. The materials in the University Archives and in departmental libraries help paint a multifaceted picture of what developed over the decades following their arrival. New departments and institutes were founded, international publications were issued, and world-class awards conferred.

A first-hand knowledge of authoritarian regimes often proved to be a catalyst of political engagement on and off campus. Hans Lewy's vehement responses to the Loyalty Oath—the state-mandated oath of allegiance to the United States and the State of California required from faculty, to which in 1949 the Regents of the University of California had added an anti-communist clause—are the epitome of the impossibility, as a victim of fascism, to remain silent when faced with any form of institutional abuses of power. Some, like Ernst Kantorowicz, refused to sign the Oath, and left Berkeley.

Professional prominence combined with active open-mindedness proved to be essential elements in establishing a tradition of innovation on the UC Berkeley Campus, and the leadership of these immigrant scholars has created a legacy that is felt to this day in the work of their students and successors.



Gerson Goldhaber (1924–2010) working on data analysis, Stanford, Calif., ca. 1974–1976
Gerson Goldhaber papers, The Bancroft Library

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