

Reconsidering a Lost Intellectual Project

Reconsidering a Lost Intellectual Project:
Exiles' Reflections on Cultural Differences

Edited by

Carolina Rodríguez-López and José M. Faraldo

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

Reconsidering a Lost Intellectual Project:
Exiles' Reflections on Cultural Differences,
Edited by Carolina Rodríguez-López and José M. Faraldo

This book first published 2012

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2012 by Carolina Rodríguez-López and José M. Faraldo and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-3649-4, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-3649-4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contributors..... vii

Reconsidering a Lost Intellectual Project: An Introduction..... 1
Carolina Rodríguez-López and José M. Faraldo

Part I: German and Spanish Projects in America

Discovering a Lost Intellectuals' Project: George Mosse and Peter Gay
on Myth and Mind in History 13
Merel Leeman

Hopes to Reach an Academic Project: Spanish Exiled Professors
in the US Universities..... 37
Carolina Rodríguez-López

The Three Phases of *Liberación*, a Weekly Newspaper:
Tracing the Identity Shift of *la colonia española* in New York,
1946-1949..... 63
Natacha Bolufer

Part II: Spanish and Eastern-European Connections

Dreams of a Better Past: Central European Exiles in Franco's Spain
and the Projects of the Interwar Period..... 89
José M. Faraldo

Romanian Intellectual Elites in Exile Painful Experiences
and Multifaceted Actions..... 115
Mihaela Albu

CONTRIBUTORS

Mihaela ALBU, Romanian professor and writer. Between 1999 and 2004 she had been teaching as *visiting professor* at Columbia University, New York. Currently, she is teaching Romanian literature at University Spiru Haret, Bucharest. Mihaela Albu has a master in comparative literature and a PhD in philology (1983) at the University of Bucharest. She is a member of the Union of Romanian Writers, of the Union of Professional Journalists from Romania and of Romanian-American Academy, and also the editor-in-chief of the literary magazines *Lumina lina. Gracious Light* (USA) and *Carmina Balcanica* (Romania). She published essays and studies, poetry and prose both in Romanian and foreign magazines (Germany, Italy, Israel, Moldova, Canada, United States) and is the author of some books such as: *Presa românească din afara granițelor*, Editura Fundației România de Măine, București, 2010 (in cooperation with Dan Anghelescu); *Presa literară din exil. Recuperare și valorificare critică I*, 2009. Postface Dan Anghelescu; *Revistele literare ale exilului românesc. Luceafărul. Paris – o restituire*, 2009 (in cooperation with Dan Anghelescu); *Et in America ... Jurnal. 1999-2005* (Libra Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009), *Memoria exilului românesc. Ziarul Lumea liberă din New York (Memory of the Romanian Exile. The Newspaper Lumea Libera from New York*, Speteanu Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008); *Cultură și identitate (Culture and Identity*, Universitaria Publishing House, Craiova, 2008); *Literatura pentru copii. Discursul epic (Literature for Children. The epic discourse*, Universitaria Publishing House, Craiova, 2007); *Catharsis. Poems, Libra* (Bucharest) & *Humanitas* (Montreal, Canada), 2006; *Ca o dragoste târzie. Poezii*, Scrisul Românesc Publishing House, Craiova 2005; 2005; *Ion Biberi – Suferință și cunoaștere*. Studiu monografic, (second edition), Fundația Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 2005 (edited by the help of the Ministry of Culture, awarded with the Prize of International Society LitterArt, USA).

Natacha BOLUFER-LAURENTIE, is a Ph.D. candidate in Spanish in State University of New York at Albany, NY, USA where she is currently working as an instructor of Latin American Studies. She is specialized in Spanish Republican presence in New York, shifting identities, gender,

exiles, migration, nation building and borders in a global economy. She has participated in several national and international congresses.

José M. FARALDO, Profesor Investigador (Ramón y Cajal Program) at the Complutense University of Madrid. He studied in Madrid, Moscow, Frankfurt/Oder and Poznań. Research about communism, nationalism, European unity, visual and popular culture in former Communist countries, comparative history of the European resistance to fascism and communism. From 1997 to 2002, at the European University Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder; 2004 to 2008, research fellow at Center of Research on Contemporary History, (ZZF), Potsdam (Germany). Recent publications: *Europe, Nation, Communism. Essays on Poland*, New York, Frankfurt: Peter Lang Verlag 2008; together with Paulina Gulińska-Jurgiel and Christian Domnitz (Eds.) *Europa im Ostblock. Vorstellungen und Diskurse /Europe in the Eastern Bloc. Imaginations and Discourses*, Vienna/Cologne: Böhlau Verlag 2008; *La Europa Clandestina. La Resistencia contra las ocupaciones nazi y soviética (1938-1948)*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial 2011.

Merel LEEMAN, Master's in Comparative Literature at the University of Amsterdam, (August 2005); Master's in History at the University of Amsterdam, (August 2005). Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, (September 2008 to July 2009). At the present, Ph.D. student at the History Department of the University of Amsterdam. Title of dissertation: "Transatlantic Germany: the writing of history between emigration and Cold War of three Jewish German-American historians: George Mosse, Peter Gay and Fritz Stern". Last publications: Marion Gräfin Dönhoff: De wording van een fenomeen. In: *Het Wonder Bondsrepubliek in 20 portretten*, edited by Professor F.W. Boterman and W. Melching, Amsterdam 2009; *Singing The Self. Music and Identity in Richard Powers' 'The Time of our Singing'*, in: *I cinque sensi (per tacer del sesto)* (LeMonnier: Florence 2007); *Whitman Embraced. The Battle of America*, in: *De Revisor* (Amsterdam 2005) 42-49.

Carolina RODRÍGUEZ-LÓPEZ, Spanish Historian who specializes in academic and intellectual history. MA in Geography and History from the Complutense University of Madrid (1994); Ph. D. in History from the Complutense University of Madrid (2001). She awarded extraordinary PhD prize in 2002. Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Carlos III University of Madrid (2001-2007) and Assistant Professor, Complutense University of Madrid (since September 2007). In addition she was Junior Research

Fellow at École d'Hautes Études de Paris (1999), at l'Université de la Sorbonne (2000) and *visiting scholar* at Harvard University (2009 and 2010). Her research interests include university history, intellectual history, historiography, gender history and comparative history of the European exiles in the United States. Recent publications: "Cultural history in Spain" in : Jörg Rogge (ed), *Cultural History in Europe*, Mainz 2011; "La emigración científica alemana a los Estados Unidos" in: F. Morente (ed.), *Rebeldes y Reaccionarios. Intelectuales, Fascismo y derecha radical en Europa*, Barcelona 2011; *Tradición, autoridad y monarquía. Pío Zabala y Lera y su España bajo los Borbones*, Zaragoza 2009; *La Universidad de Madrid en el primer franquismo: ruptura y continuidad (1939-1951)*, Madrid 2002.

RECONSIDERING A LOST
INTELLECTUAL PROJECT:
AN INTRODUCTION

CAROLINA RODRÍGUEZ-LÓPEZ
AND JOSÉ M. FARALDO

We still do not realize what we have lost.
When the peace arrives I will have no
career, no job, no money, no name...., I will
miss all that I have gained in 40 years of
life... Everything will become smoke.
—Pedro Salinas¹

Pedro Salinas, a famous Spanish poet and professor at the University of Madrid, went to the United States in the summer of 1936. Faculty members at Wellesley College were really interested in having him among the professors who specialized in Spanish Language and Literature. His brilliant career thus far made him an asset for Wellesley College and the right person for the task of bringing Spanish culture closer to the young female students. He arrived in New England in September and, apparently, his first weeks there proved to be happy. Teaching at an American college for one year was a good opportunity for any Spanish professor. But this academic term became twelve years—an entire career.

When a part of the Spanish Army led by General Franco rose against the Republican Government in July of 1936, Salinas was in North Spain finishing his work at the International Summer University in Santander—just seven months before he had accepted Wellesley College's invitation. He moved to New England as planned, hoping the violent episodes erupting in Spain would quickly come to an end. Instead, the violence continued, marking the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, and Salinas had to choose: continue living in the States or run the risk of returning to a

¹ *Cartas de viaje. 1912-1951*. Pedro Salinas, ed. Enric Bou, (Valencia: Pre-textos, 1996), 77.

Spain dominated by Franco's supporters. While he did not have any serious political commitment, his left-wing sympathies and his close collaboration with Republican politicians put him in an uncomfortable position. The first purges of left-wing teachers and professors were implemented under Franco, yet during the Spanish Civil War, Salinas' name, along with those of some of his colleagues, appeared on the first blacklists of the Francoists. His "anti-Spanish" and "anti-national" behaviors (as they were described) and his antipathy to the new Regimen made it impossible for him to return to his fatherland. Pedro Salinas passed away in Boston, Massachusetts, in December of 1951.

Salinas had defined his own intellectual and academic project in Spain, first as a full professor at the University of Seville, and then at the University of Madrid, starting in 1926. From 1928 to 1936 he was integrated into the avant-garde Center for Historical Research as head of the division of Modern Literature. He participated in the modernization and Europeanization of the Spanish academic system. Meanwhile, his poetic activities were not only well known in Spain but also abroad, making him one of the most important writers of this time. The Spanish intellectual and academic *milieu* had Salinas among its most prominent members.

Living in the US, Salinas knew the kind of life his colleagues were forced to live in Franco's New Spain and decided not to leave his new home. This meant building up a new career that included his current—suddenly *old*—intellectual project. Like any other professor, poet and expert in Spanish Literature, he had to find the network and the academic opportunities that would allow him to show his skills. While this was not easy, Salinas soon understood that it was worth making the effort. "The prospect of launching a new career here is so awful!" he wrote in a letter to his wife. A job in the States might enable him to create a new life. But what about his former one? He had taken part in the ambitious Spanish republican project of transforming the Spanish university system and modernizing the country. This couldn't be carried on in America. Or could it?

Interwar modernizations

This book explores a complex and poorly researched aspect of the cultural history of 20th century exile: the influences of transnational experiences on the views of emigrants and exiles concerning their own (old) academic, scientific and intellectual cultures. The (social and cultural) modernization of Germany, Spain, Romania and Poland, which was halted by the

beginning of the war period, left exiles with a feeling of nostalgia, but their experiences in the US, Mexico, England, Spain and France led them to question their former views.

It is not very surprising that intellectuals, scholars and artists living in foreign contexts asked themselves about the lost projects of the interwar European elites. The years between 1918 and 1939, the interwar period in Europe, were not only tumultuous and violent years but also years of intensive modernization. The time when our protagonists' intellectual projects arose and fell was not only a period of crisis, difficulties and conflicts. While these two decades might appear as a prologue to total catastrophe when seen from the postwar and post-Holocaust years, these were times of innovative changes, fast transformations and, above all, incredible projects that would enable new ways of living. The utopian plans for society, developed by the ideologists of the Enlightenment starting in the 18th century, were implemented after the 1917 Russian revolution. Now it seemed only a matter of time and effort before a brand new reality was constructed. The perceived failure of Western society after the bloodbath and the destruction of the Great War made a new start necessary—and possible. A strong feeling of “No more wars” mixed with anxieties of violence and irredentism came along with the joy of knowing that there were no more limitations. On the battlefields, millions of men had felt that they could kill or be killed without restraint; the social engineering of death had broken all barriers. It became morally possible to construct a new world on the corpses of the opponents of change. Blood and flesh were the main stones used for building this paradise.²

Utopia was the goal, but the actual deeds were aimed at a more practicable possibility: modernization. Even when the word wasn't spoken, the idea was clearly present. In the Communist Soviet Union and beyond an epic passion for future-oriented progress exploded. The world transformed into a giant field of utopian experiments. Images of fantastic changes in popular journals, films and posters permeated people's minds. All around Europe, new roads and highways were constructed—or planned—enormous factories rose out of cornfields, and new towns sprung up in the middle of nowhere. The Polish government built the harbor town of Gdynia;³ in the Romanian capitol of Bucharest, which had one of the

² Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands. Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010) and Christian Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies. Mass Violence in the Twentieth-Century World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2010).

³ Janusz Żarnowski, *Polska, 1918-1939 Praca, Technika, Społeczeństwo*, (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza 1999).

most forward-looking urban plans in Europe, hundreds of extraordinary modern buildings were erected.⁴ Poor democratic republics, like that in Spain, designed universities in an avant-garde fashion,⁵ and everywhere small dictatorships, such as those in the Baltic region, developed elaborated plans for a state-run economy⁶. Indeed, the kind of state-run and planned modernization typical for those years had much to do with the growing pressure of dictatorships as a way of rule after 1922 and Mussolini's rise to power.

Europe as avant-garde

But this was an older, deeper phenomenon. At the peripheries of the continent—in Ireland, South Europe and Eastern Europe—modernization was a priority. It was thought that the perceived backwardness of their societies should be overcome, state structures built, and nations constructed and empowered. Ever since the 18th century and the end of the *Ancient Régime*, an ideological and cultural battle had been fought between autochthonism and Europeanism in the margins of Europe. Both currents had been present since the Enlightenment, but it wasn't simply a conflict between "nationalism" and "cosmopolitanism" or between "traditionalism" and "modernization." "Autochthonists," such as the Russian, Czech or Bulgarian slavophiles, were in favor of modernization as well, but one that was based upon internal sources and their own traditions. "Europeanists," such as (many) Polish liberals, were in many ways nationalists too: they wanted to save the nation through modernization, sometimes constructing a whole nation because it hadn't existed before. The 20th century left-wing and right-wing revolutionary movements tried to synthesize these ideological currents—or should we say "mentalities"? Soviet-style communism and the different forms of fascism summed up the spirit of the time—modernization and transformation—with the scatological sense of wonder that grew out of the catastrophes of the First World War. However, for all their similarities and shared characteristics, the currents were of different origins and had different priorities. Fascism had its roots

⁴ Luminita Machedon and Ernie Scoffham, *Romanian Modernism. The Architecture of Bucharest, 1920-1940* (Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 1999).

⁵ *La Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de Madrid en la Segunda República. Arquitectura y Universidad en los años treinta*, ed. Santiago López-Ríos and Juan Antonio González Cárceles (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales Culturales-Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2008).

⁶ Georg von Rauch, *The Baltic States: The Years of Independence: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, 1917-1940* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).

in the anti-liberal traditions of the anti-French Revolution movements, while Communism stemmed from the democratic tradition. Communism might be considered a freedom-less, totalitarian, violent and failed democratism. Fascism, on the other hand, was more a conscious attempt to manage modernity with the help of violence and authority. They were two different European traditions, but overlapped with respect to time, objectives and even tactics.

Communists stressed from the beginning their commitment to modernization, but in the early Soviet state, Lenin soon called for the preservation of those traditions that he thought were needed for building a Communist society. The Bolsheviks moved the capital from European Petrograd to Asian Moscow, forbade the futuristic experiments of the avant-garde, and, after everything else, promoted the all-embracing concept of Socialist Realism, which means to modernize in traditional ways. The fascists pledged for a return to an idyllic past, a lost paradise (old Rome in Italia, “Aryan” tribalism in Germany, imperial Castile in Spain, the glory of medieval Romania...). But this was connected to a violent drive toward modernization: the Nazis, for example, introduced many important changes to German laws and bureaucracy, changes that were often adopted by the successor regimes.

Although the 1930s were a time of such projects of authoritarian modernization, the interwar period had begun as an attempt to construct liberal democracies across all of Europe. Weimar Germany, the Polish Second Republic and the belated (because of the 1930s) Spanish republican regime wanted to transform their societies by applying democracy, human rights and civic freedoms. Liberal democracy—even with a social democratic flavor—was the project of many intellectuals in Europe. Many of them were forced to flee from their countries and even their continent. But democracy was always a possibility, even in the darkest hours of totalitarianism. On the periphery of Europe, modernization in a liberal fashion was the preferred option. It was only the evident failure of the democratic regimes from interwar times in satisfying the social and economic demands of the new societies that opened the way for more radical solutions.

“Modernization” on the periphery meant “Europeanization” too. “Europe” was perceived as the concept of a more developed part of the world, more civilized, better organized. For many émigrés—especially from Spain and Eastern Europe—it was necessary to find a political field where they could do something concrete for the liberation of their countries. It was not by chance that many of them wrote so much about

“Europe” and their interpretation of the concept. Patriotism was incrusting in Europeanism; it became part of exiles’ discourse.

The quest for “Europe” had been essential in the interwar times. Although extreme nationalism was very much present at the time, different projects for a united Europe circulated around the continent. All governments and political movements of the period had to support one side or another in the discursive fight around the concept of “Europe”. Liberal democrats were often supporters of the project. Communists and fascists also had to address the idea. They balanced between refusal and acceptance. Communism was *discursively* internationalist, while fascism was nationalist. There was no place left for Europe, or so it seemed. Indeed, communists had an ambivalent relationship to “Europe,” attacking pan-Europeanism—which in Count Coudenhove-Kalergi’s version was strictly anti-communist—while also claiming to be a part of the continent. Trotsky’s reflections on the “United States of Europe”—although without any real consequences—show how the Bolsheviks were aware of the problem. “Our unfortunate continent is cut up, divided, exhausted, disorganized and Balkanized – transformed into a madhouse,” wrote Trotsky in *Pravda* in 1923, when the Comintern approved the unification of Europe in its statutes.⁷ On the other side, fascists, national socialists, Falangists, Iron Guardians and many other groups dreamt of an imperially conformed and racially “clean” Europe. Even a pan-continental idea was possible, but under certain conditions: Hitler thought that a united Europe was only possible under the boot of an empire.⁸

Interwar project in exile

When the series of catastrophes that began in 1933 sent young—and not so young—intellectuals out of their countries and into exile, they were still deeply affected by the very different but always emotionally charged experiences of the interwar projects. They were not only exiles now, but failed modernizers of societies and countries. The vanishing of their window of opportunity for really changing society through politics and cultural work did not mean that they did not want to continue with it, even in the difficult conditions of exile. Some of these individuals held faithfully for years to the hope of someday applying their old projects to

⁷ *Pravda*, June 30, 1923. See: Lev Trotsky, *The First 5 Years of the Communist International*, V. 2 (New York: Monad Press, 1972): 341.

⁸ Hitler’s *Second Book*, ed. Gerhard Weinberg (NY: Enigma Books, 2006): 117-119. See too: Mark Mazower, *Hitler’s Empire. Nazi rule in occupied Europe* (London: Penguin Books, 2008).

the lost fatherland. Others fell to despair and abandoned their ideas, looking for other opportunities. Some even committed to suicide. A third kind of exile integrated into the new society where he or she was living and developed new perspectives towards the old country. An idea of “Europe”—be it a united Europe, or a Europe of the nations ...—was very often an important part of their reconstructed ideologies.

In this book, we focus on the reflections of people who left their countries during the period of 1933–1945—with some excursus to the time beyond. Many of them reconsidered their own past in the old country and compared it with their actual experiences in the new fatherland. This kind of reflection allowed them to rethink their former intellectual project and to reevaluate the current—and sometimes definitive—experiences at the same time. The final outcome depended on personal perspectives, expectations and experiences in every single case. This book brings together chapters on individual cases, but each one is embedded in a similar theoretical framework. We lay out meta-reflections on exile and on the form in which these reflections made their way back—if they made it back at all—to the dictatorships of post-war Europe. Given the nature of the chapters, the book is divided into two sections: the first one focuses on the German and Spanish *lost* project, and the second one deals with the East European projects—focused on Polish and Rumanian examples above all. In addition, the new fatherlands—America and other places in Europe—are identified in the titles of each part.

From the perspective of transnational history we pay special attention to personal experiences. Germans embodied their ideas in exile and defined their German project in America. Merel Leeman’s chapter analyzes the cases of two *special* exiles. George Mosse and Peter Gay left Germany in their teens with their families. Like other exiles and intellectuals, both of them had a kind of inherited memory of the modernization plans of the Weimar Republic. This ideal enabled them to build their own space in the American intellectual *milieu* and to define American liberal democracy. Weimar Republic was a cultural symbol. Memories of Weimar gave Mosse and Gay the chance to feel like they were recreating the European cultural traditions of their homeland in the US. So the intellectual project they developed in the US had *old* European roots. In the US they found the “real professors” they had missed in Germany, and their migration experiences were focused on the definition of the European and Occidental culture. The Cold War had just started and their roles at this time were more important than ever. Mosse and Gay conducted research in the US. Living in a kind of European atmosphere

and like intellectuals in America allowed them to perceive their exile as a success and as liberation all at once.

Spaniards lived their American project too. Spanish professors like Américo Castro or Jorge Guillén—all of them truly involved in the modern experience of 1930^s Spanish culture, the period known as the *Silver Age of Spanish Culture*—also decided to move to the US. Along with Salinas, they could *remember* their common lost intellectual project and turn it into one that was real and feasible. The memory of the opportunities they had in Spain in the 1930s never disappeared, and the new life they found allowed them to *reconsider* their lost intellectual project and also to *rebuild* a new one quite similar to the former one.

The experiences of these Spanish professors were similar to those who had also moved from their fatherland to try to save their lives and to reconstruct them in a new setting. The American project defined by Spaniards is the main topic of two chapters. Spanish scholars like Lorente, Carrasco and Pi-Suñer also defined their projects. Their examples—as Carolina Rodríguez-López writes—show the paths they followed to obtain an academic position in the US. Once the Spanish Civil War broke out they considered the US the most appropriate place to develop the intellectual project they were about to lose. They reconsidered their scholarly background, and the opportunities the new fatherland offered them to work in the fields in which they specialized, and decided to stay. The author discusses their hopes, plans and projects in the US, and the ways in which they took advantage of the ties they had in the country. There is no doubt that exile was a time for them to live a life connected to the one they had been able to live before.

The Hispanic community received Spanish exiles with a network already in place. Natacha Bolufer focuses on Spaniards who lived and worked in America starting in the 1920^s. They created associations and newspapers to show Spaniards' interests. Once the Spanish Civil War started and the exiled contingent began to arrive in the US, *Liberación*—the newspaper analyzed by Bolufer—paid special attention to Spanish leftists suffering from Franco's political measures. Bolufer has detected at least three different discourses in *Liberación*: the first one deals with the defense of the republican and democratic regime in Spain; the second focuses on the support of Spanish workers in exile; and the third linked these with other Hispanic issues—like the independence of Puerto Rico, something in which the editor was involved. The author showed how Spaniards were able to successfully build a community where exiles were welcome.

Communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe also forced people to leave their fatherland in search of a new home. These exiles defined a kind of Western-Eastern European connection which they had probably never considered before. José M. Faraldo looks at the cases of refugees from Eastern European countries—mainly from Romania and Poland—who escaped to Spain after the fall of the axis in 1945. His chapter explores their views on the modernization attempts in their *old* countries. The author studies the cases of intellectuals like Józef Łobodowski and George Uscătescu, who had participated in the cultural modernization of Poland and Romania before the war. After World War Two, they arrived in Spain where Franco's dictatorship received them with open arms. Uscătescu played easily the role of the intellectual who was forced to leave a communist country and sympathized with Franco's regime in a varied way: he was not exactly a fascist, but his national discourse on Europe's and Romania's modernization was quite close to the revolutionary discourse supported by the Spanish party *Falange* in the 1930^s and 1940^s. Meanwhile, Łobodowski connected with Franco's dictatorship in his anti-communist view. Living in a country like Spain whose political regime forced Spanish intellectuals to flee, they found a proper place to develop their own intellectual project. The (right-wing) dictatorship in this new country looked different from the perception they had of the (communist) dictatorships in their old countries.

The focus of Mihaela Albu's chapter is very different. She describes the diversity and plurality of Romanian exiles in the Western world, in diverse countries of Europe and also in the US. The intellectual importance of this exile is clearly explained—of all Eastern European exiles, the Romanian case—taken together with the Polish one—probably had the most importance for the country of origin. Albu describes the developed transnational networks of the Romanian exiles, their multifaceted activities and their experiences of indigence. By looking at the many journals the exiles published, the paper shows how the exile might be understood as a series of intellectual projects. The Romanian exiles struggled to define a Romanian culture and a Romanian identity in foreign countries. Old projects were conserved through the years in anticipation of a repatriation that never occurred.

Exile not only forced people to move. Concepts like modernization, science and academia became parts of the exile experience. And the processes of exile allowed intellectuals and scholars to rethink and reconsider their lives, their projects and their expectations. Exiles looked for new places to develop their lives and careers. Both sides of the Atlantic received people whose projects needed to be implemented. Despite their

misery, their melancholy and their feeling of being lost, some exiles viewed their situation as a chance to restore their old projects.

Living in the US, Pedro Salinas often missed Europe. He sometimes had the opportunity to talk about the lost continent with other refugees. In April 1937, Salinas visited his colleague Leo Spitzer. Spitzer—an Austrian professor who taught in Marburg and Cologne—had to leave Germany in 1933. He first settled in Turkey and then got a position at John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1939. Salinas and Spitzer met again in the spring of 1937 in Baltimore while giving lectures. Salinas carefully observed Spitzer’s way of life in the US and could see himself as an émigré, too. The things Spitzer missed about Europe were similar to the things that Salinas missed about it. In sharing their experiences, Salinas felt they had had a “real émigrés’ conversation.”⁹ This book wants to encourage this dialogue and show the terms in which the conversations might have taken place.

It would be impossible to compile an edited volume like this one without incurring a multitude of debts. Here we happily acknowledge the most important ones. First, Carol Koulikourdi, who proposed the idea of the book and who volunteered her and Cambridge Scholar Publishing’s efforts to publish it. Without the generous collaboration of the book’s authors, there would have been no book, and we are grateful to every one of them, not merely for meeting deadlines but especially because working with them has enriched our own understanding of exile. The original idea of the book was tested in a workshop at the Third European Congress on Global and World History in London in April, 2011. José Emilio Pérez helped us to edit the chapters. Ruth Lopez and Christine Hucko corrected our first English versions. Our families and partners contributed by making the time we spent working on this book a little warmer. We are more than grateful.

Berlin-Madrid, winter 2011/2012.

⁹ *Cartas de viaje. 1912-1951*. Pedro Salinas, ed. Enric Bou, (Valencia: Pre-textos, 1996), 91-92.

PART I:
GERMAN AND SPANISH PROJECTS
IN AMERICA

DISCOVERING A LOST INTELLECTUALS' PROJECT: GEORGE MOSSE AND PETER GAY ON MYTH AND MIND IN HISTORY

MEREL LEEMAN
(UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM)

Introduction

After its death, the Weimar Republic got a second life in the American mind. In 1969, the American magazine *The New Republic* observed: “Weimar entered the American intellectual consciousness only very late-not, in fact, well after its demise. (...) Since then, Weimar has left its undeniable imprint on the United States.”¹

The American awareness of German history was enlarged by Weimar intellectuals' emigration from Nazi Germany to the United States.² Together with the vast collection of captured German documents in the United States, former Weimar historians contributed to the quickly growing American field of German history in the postwar period.

The American interest in German history also reached beyond the academic realm. The significance of the history of the Weimar Republic in the United States was rooted in the knowledge that “the American century began with the collapse of Weimar democracy.”³ Because of its victory on Nazi Germany, the United States established itself as leader of the democratic world. As a consequence, both Weimar's glory and fate

¹ Peter Jacobsohn, “Weimar's Dazzling Moment”, in *The New Republic*, January 4, 1969, 25.

² Kenneth D. Barkin, “Émigré Historians in America, 1950-1980”, in *An Interrupted Past. German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933*, Hartmut Lehmann and James J. Sheehan eds. (Washington D.C.: German Historical Institute, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991, 153.

³ Jeremy Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Harvard University Press 2007), 7.

became important points of reference in American culture. Both as warning and example, the memory of Weimar helped to define American liberal democracy, but also pointed to its limitations during the early Cold War.

Weimar's ambivalent American life might be best reflected by the lives and historical writings of two young refugees: George Mosse (1918-1999) and Peter Gay (b. 1923). While many of the older refugees (born around 1900) represented Weimar's cultural and intellectual achievements, Mosse and Gay's biographies rather point to its demise. Both historians emigrated from Nazi Germany when they were still in their teens. After their emigration, Mosse and Gay became two of the most important historians of European culture in postwar-America. Mosse and Gay became convinced that Weimar's history and culture could teach the United States important lessons. Through historical writings like Mosse's *Germans and Jews: The Right, the Left, and the Search for a "Third Force" on Pre-Nazi Germany* (1970) and Gay's *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* (1968), they became responsible for much of the American image of the Weimar Republic⁴. Analyzing their cultural approach to history, I argue that Mosse and Gay used Weimar culture to endow European cultural traditions with new meaning for an American public at the beginning of the Cold War. The methodology of their research, I argue, developed under the influence of Weimar's intellectual project to define the complexity of human experience in history. Both historians' aim to prove the relevance of European cultural traditions took place within the broader context of the American academic and public discussion about "western" culture, developed to tie together American and European cultural traditions. Their successful careers in the United States, and dedication to American liberalism, seem to embody America's postwar rise as a superpower.

In this article, the two historians' use of Weimar's cultural traditions is principally discussed in the 1950s, when the ideal of a transatlantic, "western" culture confronted American intellectuals with the European past. After the Second World War, Weimar's intellectual and cultural traditions had become too controversial to make an uncomplicated continuation possible. Weimar intellectuals' failure to prevent the rise of National Socialism deeply complicated the republic's intellectual and cultural legacy. Mosse and Gay, therefore, did not just return to Weimar

⁴ Steven Aschheim, "The Tensions of Historical Wissenschaft. The Émigré Historians and the Making of German Cultural History", in *Beyond the Border. The German-Jewish Legacy Abroad* (Princeton University Press 2007), 87.

culture but also aimed to develop it through their examination of the confrontation between Weimar intellectuals and National Socialism. Their focus of both Weimar's failures and achievements allowed the historians to use the republic's legacy as both inspiration *and* criticism of the West.

In the examination of Mosse and Gay's use of Weimar's cultural traditions, the development of the historians' attitude towards German and American culture is reconstructed in the first period after their emigration. Furthermore, Mosse and Gay's "return" to Weimar's cultural and intellectual traditions is examined during the development of their cultural approach to European history. Finally, this article examines the two historians' development of Weimar's cultural and intellectual traditions in their respective research on National Socialism (Mosse) and the Enlightenment (Gay).

From Nazi Trauma to Weimar Culture

The cultural shimmer of the first generation of refugees, which included Weimar intellectuals like Hannah Arendt and Theodor Adorno, often absorbs scholarly attention. These émigrés had been brought up with German intellectual traditions and pursued illustrious careers in the Weimar Republic. After their emigration, many of them contributed substantially to American culture, although their bias in favor of German culture often prevented them from confronting their new homeland with an open mind. The refugees who came to the United States as children, like Mosse and Gay, present a different case. Mosse and Gay were respectively fifteen and ten when the Weimar Republic ceased to exist. As a consequence, both future historians gained most of their knowledge about Weimar in the United States.

In order to understand the development of their particular view on Weimar culture, and its meaning for American culture, one should take a closer look at their experience of emigration. Gay's awareness of Weimar culture merely expanded after his admission to Columbia University in 1946. At Columbia, Gay developed contacts with many former Weimar intellectuals, who had found a new intellectual harbour at the American university:

It was not until 1946, when I moved to New York to attend graduate school to study political theory at Columbia University, that the idea of a German-Jewish legacy in my new country began to acquire some concrete outlines for me. I began to meet refugee intellectuals, read books by

refugees, above all observed refugee professors at work. Not all of these were Jews, but most of them were.⁵

Gay's cultural encounter with Weimar was especially significant, since his liberal German upbringing had not been particularly cultured. His father had been a small businessman, who struggled hard to make ends meet. Gay started to attend high school after the Nazi succession to power. Although he states in his memoirs that he has never been physically abused,⁶ the absence of Weimar's cultural traditions from the school's curriculum did exclusively expose him to Nazi culture.

Contrary to Gay, Mosse was brought up in a wealthy family. As owner of the well-known paper *Berliner Tageblatt*, the Mosse family represented a long tradition of enlightened German liberalism. Because of his family's prominence, Mosse was already forced to leave Germany for England in 1933. Nevertheless, in his memoirs he recalls to have often experienced anti-Semitism at his boarding school. After his graduation, Mosse attended the University of Cambridge to embark on the study of history. Only in 1939, Mosse would, much against his will, follow his family to the United States. The Gay family, on the other hand, had to wait until 1938 to leave Nazi Germany. Before they could enter the United States, the Gays first had to wait for a visa for two years at Cuba.

To understand Mosse and Gay's initial attitude towards Germany in the United States, it is essential to realize the shock when they discovered that their Jewish background had suddenly made them objects of contempt. Although both Mosse and Gay came from acculturated backgrounds, Gay's parents had only recently broken with the religious traditions of their families. Still in the process of establishing their "anti-religious"⁷ identity, as Gay called it, they had brought up their son in a sphere of disdain for irrational behavior. The Mosse family was, maybe due to its long tradition of secularism, more at ease with its Jewish background. After the Nazi's succession to power, however, both families' ongoing attachment to their German background further weakened Mosse and Gay's position. Gay recalls in his memoirs:

⁵ Peter Gay, "The German-Jewish Legacy and I: Some Personal Reflections", in *The German-Jewish legacy in America 1938-1988. From Bildung to the Bill of Rights*, ed. Abraham J. Peck (Middletown, CT: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 22.

⁶ *My German Question. Growing Up in Nazi Berlin* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1997), 64.

⁷ *My German Question*, 50.

The parents who sent their children to Jewish schools from 1933 on might know little of Jewish culture, Jewish religion, Jewish history, but they knew enough, they believed to give their children, and themselves, a secure identity that could take daily insults as just another instance of barbarism.⁸

Not surprisingly, both Mosse and Gay experienced their emigration, often associated with deprivation and loss, as a liberation. Besides, they were too young to have made important connections or commitments in Germany. That is not to say that they did not suffer from the difficulties of starting anew in a different country. Gay, who had moved with his family to Denver, even had to drop out of high school to support his family financially. In the end, he was able to graduate with the assistance of a former teacher. At the second half of the 1940s, however, the emigration of the two young refugees could be called a success: Mosse and Gay had been accepted by two of the most famous universities of the United States: Harvard and Columbia. The two refugees benefitted from the decline of anti-Semitism after 1945. On the occasion of President Roosevelt's death, Gay wrote the United States a sincere thank-you note in *The New York Times*: "For me Roosevelt's America was in every respect what Hitler's Germany was not: a land of justice and freedom".⁹

However, their dislike of Germany was too strong to allow for a complete release from their former homeland. Contrary to Mosse and Gay, the view of many members of the older generation of refugees on Germany also went beyond Nazi Germany. This made it easier for these older refugees to continue their attachment to German culture in the United States.

Mosse and Gay's mistrust of Germany, however, was increasingly countered by their experiences with "good Germans" at their universities. These contacts with the older generation of refugees became instrumental in the development of Mosse and Gay's view on Weimar culture. Although New York remained the brimming center of refugee experience, Mosse encountered many émigré professors at Harvard, like the famous political theorist C.J. Friedrich. Mosse recalls in his memoirs that especially in Iowa, where he got his first job as a professor in the early fifties, the interdisciplinary circle of German-American refugees broadened his outlook on the arts, public service and politics.¹⁰

⁸ Gay, *My German Question*, 110.

⁹ Gay, "At Home in America", in *American Scholar* (Winter 1976-77), 31.

¹⁰ Mosse, *Confronting History* (Madison, WI: University of Madison-Wisconsin Press 2000), 136.

At the same time, Mosse and Gay's emigration as teens shaped their broad German-American view through their absorption of American culture. The two refugees' attachment to America's liberal democracy continued to be the cornerstone of their intellectual life. At the beginning of their careers as historians, Mosse and Gay did not only establish close contacts with émigré intellectuals, but also with American intellectuals. In the United States, the ideal of transatlantic exchange between German and American liberals had been fuelled by the Office of Strategic Studies (OSS), an American intelligence service. The OSS had recruited former Weimar historians, like Franz Neumann, Hajo Holborn and Felix Gilbert, to provide background information about the German enemy. Together with other refugees, like Herbert Marcuse and the jurist and political scientist Otto Kirchheimer, Neumann continued this intellectual exchange at Columbia. After the war he collected a circle of young American historians who later became famous professors of European history, like Leonard Krieger, H. Stuart Hughes, Carl Schorske, and Franklin L. Ford. This permanent seminar, which Gay would also attend, provided the main context for the discussion on the rise of National Socialism between German refugee historians and their American colleagues in the United States. Because of the diversity of the intellectual networks of which Mosse and Gay were part, they were never completely absorbed by refugee circles, nor by their American context.

The Construction of the West

The examples of committed research that these intellectuals offered were a first indication of the postwar polarization of German history in American public and academic spheres. While Mosse and Gay became advocates of transatlantic cooperation, this ideal was undermined by the battle against the Soviet-Union. At the end of the 1940s "western" culture became increasingly defined by the battle against communism. Contrary to the new totalitarian enemy, many American liberals, like the sociologist Daniel Bell, imagined American society to have reached a state beyond ideology. Although the ideal of western culture aimed to narrow the gap between European and American cultural traditions, the view that American culture was beyond ideology did not encourage a fruitful interaction with conflicted European intellectual traditions.¹¹ In the 1950s, the popularization of Hannah Arendt's theory of totalitarianism stimulated

¹¹ Richard Pells, *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age. American Intellectuals in the 1940s and 1950s* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press 1985), 139.

this tendency. The memory of Munich was often exclusively evoked as justification of a strong attitude towards the communists.

At the same time, the significance of the experience of National Socialism for the United States manifested itself in the pessimist view of American intellectuals, like Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Martin Semour Lipset, on the human capacity to change the world.¹² In general, American liberals had often simply not enough knowledge of European cultural traditions to develop a more nuanced view.

In speeches and articles, Mosse and Gay reacted against the American tendency to either attribute too much or too little significance to the experience of National Socialism. They neither believed that the political downfall of National Socialism implied the evaporation of its cultural existence—a belief that was in the 1950s only reinforced by the rise of McCarthyism—nor did they approve of the pessimism and fear of ideology that was the result of many comparisons between the United States and Nazi Germany. Instead, both historians, now professors at respectively the University of Madison-Wisconsin and Columbia University, proposed a cultural approach that could balance between the particular and universal qualities of German history.

However, the cultural approach to the research of the rise of National Socialism was a provocative enterprise after the Second World War. On the one hand, Arendt's conviction that the Nazis had been part of the uneducated lower middle class ruled out any responsibility of German cultural traditions for the Third Reich. The popular *Sonderweg*-theory, on the other hand, which explained National Socialism as the culmination of German culture, denied Germany's twentieth-century history any relevance beyond the borders of German history.

While Mosse and Gay's close contacts with the intellectual emigration from Nazi Germany had undermined their belief in the *Sonderweg*-theory, the "innocence" of German culture was questioned by the publication of Ferdinand Lilge's book *Abuse of Learning: the failure of the German university* (1947). In his book, Lilge demonstrates the popularity of National Socialism among the academic elite. Because members of the elite had been seduced by National Socialism, it was clear that an examination of its attraction should include "irrational" factors, like culture and psychology. The growing awareness of the involvement of the cultural elite in the rise of National Socialism, therefore, opened the door to the German tradition of *Geistesgeschichte*.

¹² Pells, *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age*, 146.

Returning to a Lost Intellectual's Project

Mosse and Gay's interest in the German tradition of *Geistesgeschichte* was fuelled by their complaint that the emphasis on "logical" thinking of American scholars made them blind for the complexity and variety of historical experience. Accordingly, Mosse attacked these scholars' lack of understanding of National Socialism: "that is why Anglo-Saxon scholars have such a difficult time discussing it. They're always looking for logical, consistent political theory."¹³

Mosse and Gay did find a better way to understand historical experience in the writings of Weimar intellectuals like the philosopher and cultural historian Ernst Cassirer. Cassirer was one of Weimar's most renowned intellectuals and defenders of the Enlightenment. Although the two historians did not personally get to know Cassirer, his intellectual legacy was omnipresent at Columbia University, where he became a professor until his death (1945). Cassirer's work became known in the United States around the 1950s. *The problem of knowledge: philosophy, science, and history* was translated into English in 1950 and *Myth of the State* in 1946.

Moving away from the philosophical emphasis on the natural sciences in the 1920s, Cassirer created the foundations of the *Geisteswissenschaften*. In this sense, Cassirer represented a broader turning away from the transcendental-idealist method in the decade following World War I.¹⁴ During the Weimar Republic, Cassirer had been a member of the famous Warburg Institute. In the interdisciplinary context of the institute, the studies philosophy, religion, literature and art were connected to encapsulate the whole human experience in both its rational and irrational capacities.

As the writer of one of the few analyses of the Enlightenment that were translated into English ('The Philosophy of the Enlightenment' (1955), originally published as *Die Philosophie der Aufklärung* in 1932) Cassirer's influence on Gay is stated in many of his works: "Cassirer wrote by far most impressive book on Enlightenment".¹⁵ Both Gay and Mosse were attracted to Weimar intellectuals like Cassirer because they were dealing with a "cultural crisis" that was defined by an ongoing battle of "irrational"

¹³ Mosse, *Nazism. A Historical and Comparative Analysis of National Socialism* (Oxford 1978), 108.

¹⁴ Peter E. Gordon, *Continental Divide. Heidegger, Cassirer, Davos* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2010), 9.

¹⁵ *Voltaire's Politics. The Poet as Realist* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1955), 358.