

Frank, Tibor. *Double Exile: Migrations of Jewish-Hungarian Professionals through Germany to the United States, 1919-1945*. Exile Studies, Vol. 7. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang AG, 2009. 501 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Appendix. Index. Illustrations.

Reviewed by Andrew Felkay, Kutztown University.

This book is an encyclopedic study of how Jewish Hungarian professionals found their way to the United States via Germany. This impressive study goes well beyond the suggested title. It covers the historical background of the rapidly developing Hungarian society since the *1867 Compromise* between Austria and Hungary, the fin-de-siècle, the post-World War I period, the Weimar Republic, and the consequences of Hitler's coming to power. Ever since 1867, the Hungarian Jews were able to carve out a significant role in their country's scientific, educational, and cultural life.

Professor Frank also gives a detailed picture of the development of the Hungarian education system, which was based on the German model. The German influence was a natural consequence of the linguistic connection with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. He focuses on the exceptional academic high schools, the gymnasiums. He highlights the so-called Minta (model) and Lutheran gymnasiums for their excellence, especially in teaching mathematics and the sciences. He repeatedly names future scholars who had attended those schools. Even though the outstanding schools were run by religious organizations, most aspiring Jewish students were able to attend. Many graduates of these elite schools, gravitated toward well-known German universities to earn advanced degrees and even take the *Habilitation* examination, which qualified them for university teaching positions in Germany. The post-World War I turmoil of the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic and the following rise of anti-Semitic White Terror gave special impetus for Jewish scholars to escape to Germany. The enactment of the 1920 *Numerus Clausus* law, which restricted the number of Jewish students to be admitted to the Hungarian universities, was also contributing factor for university-bound students to head for Germany.

Many talented Jewish Hungarian scholars, through their own accomplishments and with the help of previously emigrated professors, found university teaching positions in Germany. Professor Frank through several case studies gives examples of Hungarian scholars who had managed to receive university appointments. All this came to an end once Hitler and the Nazis seized power. A small number of Jewish scholars returned to Hungary, but most of them sought refuge in the United States, often by way of English universities.

But emigrating to the U.S. was an arduous process. Professor Frank provides the readers with a study of U.S. emigration laws and corresponding statistics. Emigration to the U.S. was controlled by a quota system based on ethnic origin, and the Hungarian quota was pathetically low. Ways had to be found to admit the ever-increasing number of German and Hungarian Jewish scholars and artists. Accomplished scholars and artists could be admitted to the United States under the non-quota category of the law. Under the aegis of this provision, well-trained professionals with special intellectual abilities, and prospective professionals who would eventually serve the United States' interest, could be admitted. These provisions also had several restrictions; for example: two years of prior university teaching had to be documented to qualify for a visa. As the Nazi atrocities in Germany worsened, more and more Jewish refugees flooded

the American consulates in hopes of emigrating to the U.S. In response to the plight of the Jewish professionals, Professor Frank lists dozens of agencies which were formed to assist the new-comers. Many American universities opened their doors to émigré Jewish professors, but there was also a backlash, to the perceived. Over-saturation of Jewish physicians, lawyers, and other professionals was resented, and there were serious political attempts to curtail immigration. All this is substantiated by hundreds of references. Some of footnotes identify the sources, others give a brief explanation of the text. To illustrate the extent of documentation, the chapter dealing with the resettlement of Jewish emigrants has 343 footnotes.

The last part of the book *Double Exile* discusses the most significant achievements of the Hungarian Jewish professionals and their contributions to the U.S. war effort. In each instance the author reviews the backgrounds of individual professionals and then discusses their contributions to the United States. For example, he discusses George Polya's theories for the solutions of difficult mathematical problems; Theodor von Karman's work in aeronautics; and John von Neumann's in applied and pure mathematics. A particularly important figure was Leo Szilard, who became best known for his efforts to warn the United States about the dangers of the Nazi's progress in developing a nuclear weapon. In his own research Szilard focused on nuclear physics and had several patents in connection with his research and he also contributed to the development of the atomic bomb but advised against using it in Japan. With great foresight he warned against a post-World War II arm race between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Strangely, Professor Frank did not assess the contributions of another figure arguably even more important than Szilard, Edward Teller.

Given the nature of such a comprehensive framework, repetitions are unavoidable. The author substantiates his study with the extensive use of primary sources, archival research, census records, a variety of documents, printed studies, private correspondence, numerous secondary sources and personal interviews. Throughout the book, there are endless lists of more or less prominent Hungarians, while/and in the book's Appendix, Professor Frank lists 250 eminent Hungarians who had immigrated in the U.S. from 1919 to 1945. Clearly, the solid educational foundation that the Hungarian notables had received in Hungary was enhanced by German scholarship and came to full maturation in the free environment of the U.S. Apparently, these highly qualified professionals found life in the U.S. the most agreeable, where they were able to have, as here they had long productive careers. According to Professor Frank's findings: 33 percent lived to 85 years, 20 percent to 90, and 1.5 percent lived more than 100 years.

This commendable scholarly work, in addition to its primary purpose of "double exile," can serve as a rich source for future research.