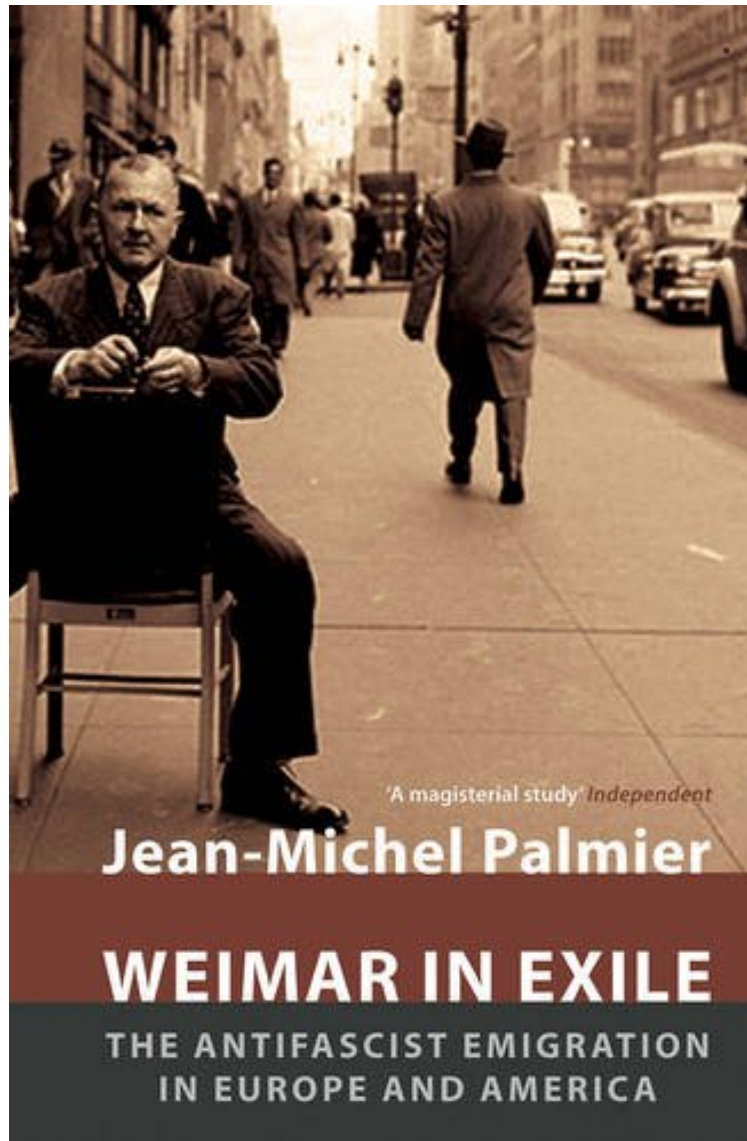


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Weimar in Exile: The Antifascist Emigration in Europe and America

Jean-Michel Palmier

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Jean-Michel Palmier : Weimar in Exile: The Antifascist Emigration in Europe and America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Weimar in Exile: The Antifascist Emigration in Europe and America:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Authoritative historyBy A readerBeyond encyclopaedic in scope, this is anything but a beginning text. Palmier's mastery of his subject, the breadth of his knowledge and expertise, are

awe-inspiring. What was the reaction of German writers and artists to the rise of Nazism, and what did they do in response? Many fled the country, others stayed. Where did the refugees go, and why? How were they received in other European countries, the Americas, the East? To what extent were they the targeted victims of totalitarianism? Dense with factual information on every page, yet brimming with sympathy, the text is informative and moving at the same time. Recounting names (the majority of which were unknown to me), dates, and places, this is a work of unsurpassed scholarship of the period.³ of 3 people found the following review helpful. *The Fate of the Exiles* By Abraham Hoffman After the Nazis won control of the German government in 1933, no time was lost in letting the world know what National Socialists thought of intellectuals, journalists, authors, theatrical producers, professors, actors, composers, philosophers, and people prominent in the professions. On May 10, 1933, amid Nazi pageantry, books were burned in ceremonies conducted outside German universities. The rites were all orchestrated rather than spontaneous; lists of banned works had already been published, and students and SA men had taken the books from libraries and bookstores. Newsreel films of the burnings sent a stark message around the world as to what the Nazis considered non-German. At the top of the lists were Jewish authors, including Scholem Asch, Stefan Zweig, Franz Werfel, and Vicki Baum. The book burnings compelled thousands of opponents of the Nazi regime to consider what overnight had become a precarious position for them. To remain in Germany was to risk arrest, imprisonment in a concentration camp, or murder. Many members of the intelligentsia, including antifascists, socialists, and communists, fled Germany. More fled as the decade of the 1930s saw Nazi intensification of harassment, brutality, and murder of those who opposed Hitler's government. Jean-Michel Palmier, author of this monumental study of the people who chose exile rather than risk their lives by remaining in Germany, first published this book in 1987, and it is now available in a well-done English translation. Palmier follows the often tragic path of the antifascists in exile, from the very famous to the obscure and forgotten. It should be noted that while many Jews fled Germany, they were part of a larger context. Christian intellectuals found themselves also at risk if they actively, or even implicitly, opposed Nazi policies. One of the challenges in reading this book is to recognize the Jews among the larger group. This is because German Jews were largely assimilated into German society and took pride in German culture, letters, arts, and professions. They were stunned to find themselves overnight outsiders, experiencing a psychic trauma that for some would end in suicide. It is also problematic, and a sad reality for readers of this book, that so many of the names will be unfamiliar except to academic specialists who study the era. For every Sigmund Freud, Lion Feuchtwanger, Max Reinhardt, and Peter Lorre, there were a thousand journalists, authors, actors, and others whose careers were ended or badly stunted. Being a prominent author with writings translated into other languages helped non-Jewish antifascists to adjust to living in other countries, the most notable examples being Thomas Mann, Bertolt Brecht, and also Feuchtwanger (who was Jewish). But for the majority of exiles it meant writing articles for magazines that had short runs and small circulation. Those in the arts fared somewhat better, especially in the motion picture industry. It helped to be bilingual, or even better, multilingual. In a supreme irony, German Jewish historian Ernst Kantorowicz fled to the United States, only to find himself caught in the loyalty oath controversy in California in the late 1940s. The saddest and most frustrating sense that Palmier conveys is the impotence of most exiles to make their voices heard. In Germany the Nazi propaganda machine proclaimed them traitors. Democratic nations varied widely in their aid to the exiles, from significant support to grudging assistance. Some countries granted asylum but forbade employment that might compete with their own citizens. As the Nazis marched into other countries, the refugee tide grew to include Jewish businessmen and their families, wealthy or simply shop owners, who found it more and more difficult to find asylum. And then came the war. Six decades later only a remnant of memory remains of the exiles from Weimar (an ironic term, given the fact that the Weimar Republic wasn't all that democratic when it came to communists and left-wing activists). Thomas Mann's books are still in print; exile Anna Seghers' novel *The Seventh Cross*, made into a major Hollywood film in 1944, still shows up on cable TV. Most exiles, however, are orphans of history, either long forgotten or little remembered. Palmier ends his book on an ironic note, quoting from an essay by Kurt Tucholsky, a German Jewish satirist who in 1926 wrote to a future reader in 1985: You aren't any better than we were, or those before us. Not in the least, not in the very least (p. 660). Tucholsky committed suicide in 1935.

A magisterial history of the artists and writers who left Weimar when the Nazis came to power In 1933 thousands of intellectuals, artists, writers, militants and other opponents of the Nazi regime fled Germany. They were, in the words of Heinrich Mann, the best of Germany, refusing to remain citizens in this new state that legalized terror and brutality. Exiled across the world, they continued the fight against Nazism in prose, poetry, painting, architecture, film and theater. *Weimar in Exile* follows these lives, from the rise of national socialism to their return to a ruined homeland, retracing their stories, struggles, setbacks and rare victories. The dignity in exile of Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Bertolt Brecht, Alfred Döblin, Hanns Eisler, Heinrich Mann, Thomas Mann, Anna Seghers, Ernst Toller, Stefan Zweig and many others provides a counterpoint to the story of Germany under the Nazis.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . One of the many sobering lessons of the Third Reich was the failure of Germany's intellectual elite to stop the rise of Hitler. Starting in 1933, with Hitler's assumption of power, German poets,

philosophers, playwrights, artists and scientists including Bertolt Brecht, Thomas Mann, Walter Benjamin, Stefan Zweig and thousands of others seeing the writing on the wall, packed up and found new homes. French scholar Palmier has written a well-nigh exhaustive work on this cultural diaspora. His staggering achievement is to portray the exquisite poignancy of these exiles' situation: powerless Germans forced to watch their country implode from abroad. Palmier's deceptively straightforward structure cloaks a far more cunning and generous approach. "Europe" ends in Barcelona, while the American phase ends with McCarthy; thus, he shows, these cultural stalwarts were learning new forms of political disappointment with each passing day. Palmier's command of this vast subject is truly breathtaking; he finds space to address exiles in Turkey, China and Latin America; exiles in American academia; and the legal problems they faced. And all the while, the story of these exiles is really, by indirection, the story of the Third Reich itself constantly agitating against them. (July) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. A magisterial study. Independent Jean-Michel Palmiers book establishes more fully than any other the extent of emigration of Germany's greatest minds and talents, and that neither the exiles nor Germany ever fully recovered. Financial Times A monumental study, an impressive testament to the experiences, achievements and far-reaching influences of the refugees. Scotsman Jean-Michel Palmier published books on Georg Trakl, Hegel, Lenin, Lacan and Marcuse, as well as studies on German expressionism and a great work on the fate of anti-Nazi intellectuals, *Weimar in Exile*, celebrated by the Acadmie française. Everything fascinated him. He was a scholar who anxiously, almost mystically, quested after knowledge, and reminded one of a medieval philosopher even more than of a Renaissance man of letters. He was obsessed with art and culture. He was a surveyor of the past who tracked its faintest traces. *Le Monde Diplomatique* A monumental work. *Le Monde* This is an extraordinary book: in its historical breadth, its command of literature, documents, and archival material, its ambitious scope, and its sweeping judgments. *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* About the Author Jean-Michel Palmier, the author of numerous works, was Professor of Aesthetics at Universit Paris I specializing in German artistic movements of the 1920s and 30s. The Acadmie Française awarded *Weimar in Exile* the Prix Eugne Piccard for a work of modern history.