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EUROPEAN REMIGRATIONS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Twentieth-century Europe witnessed migration on an enormous scale. Economic hardship, revolutions, political upheaval during and after the wars, and outright political and ethnic cleansing forced millions of people—individuals and families—out of their homes and countries. Many did not migrate only once, but passed through several countries before they could find somewhere to settle permanently. Others returned home as soon as circumstances allowed. This applies particularly to the remigration of political émigrés who, after their return, were often able to exert significant influence on the social and political development of their respective countries.¹ Whenever a war is lost, an occupying force pulls out, or a revolution succeeds, a fundamental change of elites is likely. This opens up chances for those waiting in the wings at home, but also for those who had fled or been driven out. Political émigrés mostly take a clear stance against the old regime when they leave their homelands. The knowledge of different cultural and political systems they laboriously acquire in exile seems to predestine them for positions in which they can help to shape new beginnings.

The experience of living, or even growing up, in a different society, however, tended to change the lives of the emigrants so profoundly that they became 'different people', and returning to their former home countries was often more a renewed emigration than a remigration. In fact, most remigrants returned to what had become a

¹ Much research has been done on the significance and problems of political emigration in twentieth-century Europe. As far as remigration is concerned, the more systematic comparative approaches focus almost entirely on return migration in the context of economically motivated emigration. For an overview see Edda Currele, 'Theorieansätze zur Erklärung von Rückkehr und Remigration', in Informationszentrum Sozialwissenschaften/Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (eds.), *Sozialwissenschaftlicher Fachinformationsdienst 'Migration und ethnische Minderheiten'*, 2 (2006), 7-23.

foreign country to them.² Remigrants were also treated very differently, depending on the country and the situation of crisis. The spectrum ranges from a triumphant welcome to a sceptical wait-and-see attitude, rejection, and resistance. Charles de Gaulle, for example, was celebrated as a liberator in the Paris of 1944, while Willy Brandt and others who returned to Germany faced lifelong prejudice. Some returning political activists ran into severe difficulties with the new political structures and their elites after returning 'home', and had to face trial or flee again. Others were able to exert considerable influence on the future development of the country they had had to leave and to which they wanted to return in order to make it a better place.

In 2012 the German Historical Institute London, in cooperation with the Department of Local and Regional History at the University of Augsburg, hosted a conference on the comparative history of remigrations of political émigrés to and from Europe in the twentieth century.³ It focused on the turning points of 1945 and 1989, and on the remigration of political and cultural elites. In the context of the conference, one evening was devoted to a public panel debate on the individual biographical backgrounds of different experiences of emigration, exile, and return. Three prominent émigrés were invited to take part: a historian; a journalist and filmmaker; and a politician. Two of them, the journalist and filmmaker Georg Stefan Troller,⁴ and the historian Edgar Feuchtwanger,⁵ fled from Austria and Germany

² Marita Krauss, *Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land: Geschichte der Remigration nach 1945* (Munich, 2001).

³ The full conference programme can be found under Events and Conferences on the GHIL's website <www.ghil.ac.uk>.

⁴ Georg Stefan Troller (b. 1921) is an author, journalist, and filmmaker. He fled from Austria in 1938, going via Czechoslovakia and France to the USA, served in the US army, and tried to return to Austria after the war. Troller finally settled in Paris, from where he worked extensively for German radio and television stations. His autobiographical prize-winning film trilogy, *Where To and Back*, is best known under the title of its third part, *Welcome in Vienna*, which was shown at Cannes in 1988. Among his many prizes and awards is the 2005 Theodor Kramer Prize for Writing in Resistance and Exile.

⁵ Edgar Feuchtwanger (b. 1924) fled with his family from Munich to Britain in 1939, after his father had been detained by the Nazis in Dachau for several weeks during the *Kristallnacht* pogrom in November 1938. In Britain, Feuchtwanger studied history at Magdalene College in Cambridge. He received his

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as children during the Nazi period. The third panellist, the politician Jan Kavan,⁶ left his native Czechoslovakia after the Soviet invasion of 1968. Kavan returned after 1989 and quickly rose to high political office, both nationally and internationally, but also encountered much hostility at home, and was certainly not welcomed by all. Troller returned to Germany with the American forces in 1945, went back to the USA to study, and then returned to Europe again, while Feuchtwanger stayed in Britain and pursued an academic career as a historian at British universities. He never returned permanently, but was a frequent visitor to Germany and formed an important link between British and German historiography.

These three panellists, all from a Jewish background, represent three different ways of emigrating, returning, and engaging with the country that expelled them. The panel debate provided insights into many facets of the general topic which were relevant beyond these individual cases, and could be linked to several other papers delivered at the conference. As a framework for the individual perception of emigration, the discussion began by touching on the traumatic experience of emigration and the deep personal turning point it represented in the lives of these three men. In a second section the debate concentrated on the reasons for returning (or not returning), the difficulties involved, and the impact the returnees had on their home societies. Finally, the members of the panel were asked what the experience of emigration and integration into a new society meant for their personal development and how they approached their past and their return. This article draws on the personal contributions by

doctorate in 1947 and became Professor at Southampton University. Feuchtwanger decided not to return to Germany, but accepted the offer of a visiting professorship at Frankfurt in 1981/82. In 2003 he was awarded the Federal Republic of Germany's Order of Merit.

⁶ Jan Kavan (b. 1946) was born in London as the son of a Czech diplomat and a British teacher. After his return to Czechoslovakia, his father became a victim of the infamous Slansky show trials in the 1950s. Jan Kavan was an active student leader during the Prague Spring and had to re-emigrate to Britain after its suppression in 1969. In exile he was editor of the *East European Reporter* and Vice-President of the East European Cultural Foundation. Kavan returned to Prague in 1989. He became Foreign Secretary (1998–2002) and President of the United Nations General Assembly (2002–3). He has received several honorary degrees and human rights awards.

Edgar Feuchtwanger, Jan Kavan, and Georg Stefan Troller to present some aspects of this conference.⁷

Trauma, Identity, and Engagement with the Past

In her book on remigration to Germany after 1945, Marita Krauss argues that the experience of hurried emigration or outright flight from persecution generally resulted in severe traumas which affected migrants for the rest of their lives,⁸ and this was a recurring topic at the conference. Feuchtwanger and Troller vividly described their flight from Nazi persecution. Both experienced *Reichskristallnacht* as the turning point that brought constant threat and fear to the centre of their everyday lives. 'The events of *Kristallnacht* in November 1938 had a traumatic impact on my family', writes Feuchtwanger.

It was nothing short of a miracle that my father escaped alive from his six weeks in Dachau. Had it become known to the SS camp guards that he was the brother of Lion Feuchtwanger, for Hitler and Goebbels Public Enemy No. 1 among the Weimar intelligentsia, my father would have been killed without a doubt. . . . Even as a not yet fully grown adult I knew that we as a family were in great danger, though no one knew as yet that Jews remaining in Germany would almost all be wiped out. I knew enough to feel that I was escaping from what would years later be called 'an evil empire'.

Similarly, Troller experienced *Reichskristallnacht* in Vienna, hidden in the cellar of a bookbinder's shop with a window overlooking

⁷ After the conference, Edgar Feuchtwanger and Jan Kavan provided written autobiographical statements. The quotations in this paper are taken from these authorized statements. Except for a few quotations from a short autobiographical text by Georg Stefan Troller, *Wohin und zurück: Die Axel-Corti-Trilogie* (Vienna, 2009), 7-14, his words in this article are all taken from transcripts of the recorded panel debate. The quotations from the published text are referenced and printed here with the kind permission of the Theodor Kramer Gesellschaft. For Edgar Feuchtwanger, see also his recent book *Erlebnis und Geschichte: Als Kind in Hitlers Deutschland – Ein Leben in England* (Berlin, 2010).

⁸ Krauss, *Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land*.

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a police station. His father was amongst the Jews who were randomly arrested and maltreated there.⁹ Shortly afterwards, he and some members of his family started their odyssey across Europe, going via Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Italy to France, and then finally to the USA. What he remembers as the dominant experience of this time is constant fear,¹⁰ and the emotional emptiness caused by the loss of all that his world had consisted of until then:

The sudden loss to a 16- to 17-year-old boy, as I was, of relatives, of home, the boys you went to school with, was an incredible shock. [You experienced a] loss of feelings, because you didn't know what to attach your feelings to. The world had been part of our feelings. At that age, things consist of your own feelings to them. [If] that is gone then [there is] no justification for your life. What are you living for? What are you surviving for? It doesn't make sense. Yes, you might as well have not survived.

Having escaped the immediate danger, this loss of home was a strong motive, especially for young emigrants, or expellees, as Troller rightly points out,¹¹ to 're-invent' themselves and change their identity. This was particularly noticeable in the case of Feuchtwanger, who was only 14 years old when his family left Germany:

I was born in Munich in September 1924 and left Germany when I was 14 years old in February 1939. At that age I was, in those days, nearer to being a child than an adult. I was just young enough for a complete change of identity, language and background. The motive for making such a change could hardly have been stronger. . . . Once I had made this great change, one could almost call it a second birth, there was never in practice a chance that I could go back to Germany. By the time the

⁹ Troller, *Wohin und zurück*, 8.

¹⁰ Ibid. 10: 'The main feeling at that time, one that did not leave us day or night, was: fear. Fear is in the bones of refugees; it marks them out for ever.'

¹¹ Ibid. 7: 'The word emigrant, however, hardly appears in the screenplay. We were not emigrants, but expellees. Emigration presupposes not only a certain degree of voluntariness, but also the existence of a country to which one intends to migrate. This intention was present among very few of us.'

war ended six years later I was an undergraduate at Cambridge. To make another switch from my identity as it had by then evolved would almost have necessitated a third birth.

Troller approached this problem of identity change more indirectly, partly, perhaps, because he did not fully succeed. He rejected the idea, however, that he might have perceived himself as an exile. It was clear for him that he would not return. He wanted to start a new life and initially had little interest in taking part in the reshaping of post-war Austria or Europe.

We never saw ourselves as exiles, but as immigrants. The word exile never entered our thought. Exiles were people like Brecht or Thomas Mann who we knew were going to come back, or various politicians, socialist party politicians and so on, who obviously intended to come back and play a role in post-war Germany or Austria. That was not our case. . . . I came to America in 1941 after various (the usual) difficulties getting there. I never thought about going back.

That is, however, exactly what Troller did. He was drafted into the US Army in 1943 and was sent, via northern Africa, Italy, and France to Munich, where he served

as a part of the American military government as a journalist, first working for Radio Munich which was an American propaganda station and then . . . for the *Neue Zeitung*, edited by Hans Habe, which was also an American propaganda medium, on a higher level, so I was a returnee in 1945 in post-war Germany from day one.

Although Troller returned to the USA after the war to study, he felt somehow bound to Europe, and the German language:

I was studying at the University of California. I was very happy as a student. I was deep into Shakespeare . . . and the professor asked us what we saw our future as. . . . Language I felt, at least for me, was the only possible road towards identity, towards feeling at one with myself. I had to write in my lan-

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guage and my language, much as I adored English and I still do, could not be that. It had to be the childhood language, it had to be the language into which every word corresponded to a feeling or ten feelings.

Hardly any older than Feuchtwanger, Troller was old enough to have served in the US army and fought against the Nazis. And although he was perfectly fluent in English, Troller remained attached to his old 'home' through his language and the need to express himself in German, and therefore also to a German-speaking audience. At the same time, however, he felt that the German language had been corrupted, and that it was sometimes easier 'to talk' in pictures. That is why he was drawn to film as a medium, and why he preferred to speak about, and to, Germany from outside, from Paris:

The other way of dealing with this returnee question, was my personal way, of that I have lived in Paris now for sixty years and that I became a sort of Paris specialist to the German public. Paris was, after the war, what Rome was at the time of Goethe, it was some sort of paradise of easy living, good cooking and great sex and so there was Troller talking about Paris. So by the detour of filming and talking for ten years or more in a show that was called *Paris Journal*, I could talk about the things I was personally interested in . . . whilst still everyone thought I was only talking about Paris.

Our third protagonist, the Czech politician Jan Kavan, was born after the war (1946), but his family had been deeply affected by it, the Nazis, the subsequent Soviet domination of the Eastern Bloc, and the Cold War confrontation. He describes his family background as a chain of forced emigrations and returns:

I was born during highly political times into a very political family. My Czech father had to escape from the Gestapo in March 1939 in the then occupied Czechoslovakia. He was pursued by the Gestapo as a leading Jewish official of the youth organization of President Masaryk's National Socialist Party (a leftist party not to be confused with the German namesake). After fighting in Poland and France he was transferred with

other Czech soldiers to England. As a soldier émigré he met my English mother here but returned to the front after D-Day. He was wounded during the siege of Dunkerque and sent for treatment to England where he married my mother before returning to fight in France and Germany. At the end of the war he returned (remigrated in current terminology) to Prague and my mother emigrated with him. He was soon posted to our Embassy in London where I was born in 1946.

In 1950 Kavan's father, by then a convinced Communist, was recalled and soon afterwards arrested and sentenced to twenty-five years imprisonment in one of the Stalinist political show trials. His father's fate profoundly affected Kavan's political orientation:

I was brought up as a son of a Czech traitor and an English imperialist mother. As a young teenager I became preoccupied with the need to find out the truth about those trials and also with the need to ensure that judicial murders cannot ever be repeated and more generally with the need to protect justice, human rights and the rule of law and to project ethical values into political decision-making.

It is not without tragic irony that in many respects, Kavan's life eventually came to resemble that of his father.¹² Emigration, return, and hostility towards the returnee at home repeated itself in a series of surprising parallels. Kavan was involved and influential in the Prague Spring of 1968. He was an active student leader and promoter of the passive resistance to Soviet occupation and the subsequent concessions made by the Czech government. In order to avoid persecution he left the country in 1969.

In May 1969 some of the remaining supporters of Dubček and his socialism with a human face helped me to travel to England where they thought I could stay until the worst repres-

¹² On the general context see also Sarah Scholl-Schneider, *Mittler zwischen Kulturen: Biographische Erfahrungen tschechischer Remigranten nach 1989* (Münster, 2011); ead., "'Die Remigration ist schwieriger als die Emigration': Die Rückkehr tschechischer Emigranten in ihre Heimat nach 1989", in Jasna Čapo-

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sion died down. But the repression accelerated and so in August 1970 I was faced with a decision to return and face the possibility of a prison [sentence] or to stay in England and become a political émigré. This was an extremely difficult and quite traumatic decision which I was unable to make on my own. I therefore decided to travel to Prague illegally (using my British passport and a change of name) to consult my political friends. A majority of them asked me to escape again and help the new opposition from England by 'meeting their needs' as they would define them. I did precisely that. I became a Czech political émigré which is a more accurate description than a return of a 'long lost son' back to his English motherland or that I 'remigrated' to the UK.

It is interesting to note that Kavan was not willing to make the decision whether to stay in Britain or to return to Prague on his own or with his family, but only in close consultation with his political allies at home. Thus his return to England became a clear case of exile, almost an official mission to organize an effective network of supporters for the opposition at home. He lived in Britain, always with the intention of returning to Czechoslovakia as soon as possible. His problems were not of identity, but of how to earn a living and support family, friends, and political allies at home.

I did not face any loss of identity. But I had no job, no money and my four years of unfinished Czech studies were no longer recognized (as they were a year earlier). I therefore started my university studies again from scratch. A year later I helped to smuggle my mother out of Czechoslovakia, only a week before the police came to arrest her for her support of the opposition. . . . In order to preserve my political independence I refused to accept support from any intelligence agencies or similar institutions. This meant that I was going from debts to even greater debts.

Žmegač, Christian Voß, and Klaus Roth (eds.), *Co-Ethnic Migrations Compared: Central and Eastern European Contexts* (Munich, 2010), 195-211. The authors would like to thank Sarah Scholl-Schneider for her help in preparing the conference and establishing contact with Jan Kavan.

European Remigrations

In Britain Kavan built up a wide network of friends, mostly on the Trotskyite left, joined the Labour Party, and became a prominent member of the circle of Czech and Eastern European dissident émigrés. But his life seems to have revolved entirely around organizing and supporting the opposition movements, most importantly by providing them with literature, printing the pieces they produced, and publicizing them internationally. Kavan was the founding editor of the *Eastern European Reporter* which published, for example, all the Charter 77 documents. He was British, but did not want to become it in the sense of abandoning the purpose of his life in exile, which was political reform in Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe.

Returning Home?

Why did emigrants return to the country that expelled them? What were their motives and timings? What types of remigration were there, and what happened to remigrants after their return? How did the returnees engage with their former environment, their former friends and colleagues, and society at large? There are various ways of returning and reconnecting, and the members of the panel reflected on these questions, drawing upon their individual histories.

Moving back to Germany and resettling there was not an option for Feuchtwanger. However, he became an important intermediary and a regular visitor to Germany, which, since the 1950s, was the place where his extended family seems to have met most regularly:

Broadly speaking, my contact with things German was intermittent after I came to England in 1939, but was through the presence of my parents never wholly lacking in the 1940s and early 1950s. . . . I returned with my mother to Munich for the first time in 1957 and frequently thereafter, even after my marriage in 1962. My mother's elder brother, who lived with a housekeeper in a flat overlooking Central Park in New York, spent the summer months on the Starnberger See. Many other relations returned to their former haunts from America, Israel and elsewhere. There was often quite a gathering of the clans, but permanent remigration probably never entered their minds nor was it a practical option for any of them. The only

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member of the Feuchtwanger family who remigrated was my third cousin Walter, who came from the banking branch of the family and reopened the bank in the early 1950s.

Revisiting old family holiday places, often in Switzerland or Italy, was a not uncommon way of re-engaging with Europe and the family's past in more normal times. For many years Feuchtwanger's interest in Germany did not go beyond these irregular visits. In his early academic career he concentrated primarily on British history, writing his Ph.D. thesis on Disraeli and the Conservative Party,¹³ and subsequently publishing on Gladstone.¹⁴ In the late 1960s, however, he was commissioned to write a book on Prussian history, which was translated into German.¹⁵ It was mainly through this research that he re-established academic contacts with German colleagues.

It was at this time that I re-established contact with my German cultural background. I was commissioned to write a book about Prussia, which for many in the English-speaking world was still the villain of the piece in German history. I wrote a book which was not so much a history of Prussia, for which there was hardly the available space, as an exposition of the Prussian ideology. It was published in 1970 under the title *Prussia: Myth and Reality* and also translated into German. In 1968 I first went to the University of Frankfurt and became involved in setting up a link which continued for some thirty years, with annual joint seminars and later staff exchanges

Feuchtwanger was awarded the Federal Republic of Germany's Order of Merit for his engagement in Anglo-German academic understanding. He received the award from the German Ambassador in London on 30 January 2003: 'Exactly 70 years earlier and at the same hour Hindenburg had appointed Hitler *Reichskanzler*.'

¹³ Edgar J. Feuchtwanger, *Disraeli, Democracy and the Tory Party: Conservative Leadership and Organization after the Second Reform Bill* (Oxford, 1968).

¹⁴ Id., *Gladstone* (London, 1975).

¹⁵ Id., *Prussia. Myth and Reality: The Role of Prussia in German History* (Chicago, 1970).

Despite this engagement with bilateral academic relations and frequent family visits, Feuchtwanger always kept Germany and German politics at a certain distance:

It never occurred to me that I could or would want to influence German affairs. Even when I first went back to Germany in the 1950s I never experienced much of the feeling that met some returnees, namely, that they had somehow contracted out of the national fate. Perhaps I occasionally heard 'Wir haben auch gelitten', which always seemed to me an inappropriate remark. Not that I wished to blame everybody who had remained in the Third Reich for what happened, but exiles like myself had had to flee at the peril of our lives.

Even though he fostered close relationships with many colleagues, Feuchtwanger did not want to cross the border and become a German academic. He continued to publish primarily in English. Most of his books also appeared in German, but in translations by others.

Troller returned to the USA after his first period in Munich with the American Army, but came back to Europe shortly afterwards. At first he tried to return to Vienna, but this soon proved impossible for him, as he was unable to cope with the hypocrisy and false friendliness of all the Nazi bystanders and perpetrators in the years after the war.

I went back to Austria first and I wanted to study theatre art . . . to my amazement, the Director of the Theatre Arts Department was Professor Kindermann, who had been a terrible Nazi in the war years and everyone knew about him. So being a specialist, they kept him on. And then there was a list of . . . those important German or Austrian dramatists that we were going to deal with, and to my amazement I found that the Nazis were mixed in with the non-Nazis, or the anti-Nazis, or the emigrants without making any difference. They were all authors, they were all writers, they all suffered in their souls didn't they? And I rebelled against that . . . Then I went to France. France had her own problems, God knows, also her own problems under the German occupation, but it was not the same kind of people.

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Troller's return to Vienna resulted in a confrontation with the old Nazis who continued in office and remained culturally influential. Much as he loved his native Vienna, this was not where he wanted to stay. To be in Europe, however, seemed important for Troller. Had he returned to the USA he would have had to change identity to become an American writer and journalist. That was a direction he could not, and did not want to, take.

Even though Troller did not want to see himself as an exile when he left, he in fact became one during emigration and felt a strong need to return to an environment which would allow him to use his mother tongue. Working from Paris for German-language newspapers and radio and television stations appears to have been the compromise. What did Troller want to write? Did he have an agenda, a mission as a journalist, writer, and filmmaker?

Did I want to improve the German mentality, if that is what we are going to be talking about? . . . Germany, as I found it in 1945, was a deeply corrupted country. Even a non-Nazi, and everyone was a non-Nazi, we know that, even they were deeply corrupt and some of them still are. . . . Yes, I wanted to influence that, but I did not want to influence that by preaching or by politics, I am sorry it is not my way, but by truth talking, also by showing myself as I was with all my faults and weakness.

In a moving introduction to his autobiographical film trilogy *Where To and Back*, directed by Axel Corti, Troller explained this approach of 'truth talking', including his own weaknesses in more detail:

I show the refugees not as heroes, but as fugitives, running away. We might be blamed for this. Some people tried to rescue a bit of self-respect from the catastrophe; others didn't. Most of us were not fighters. Who was there to inspire us, organize us? . . . We were in countries that watched a rearmed Germany with fascination, even admiration. How did we look by comparison? 'German spirit in exile', don't make me laugh. After all, the big names, people we admired too, had stayed on in Germany: Hauptmann, Richard Strauss, Furtwängler,

Gründgens, Jannings, Albers, Benn, Barlach, Weinheber, Fallada, Jünger, Kästner . . . Those on our side suddenly seemed small and petty, except, at best, Einstein, Brecht, and the equivocal Thomas Mann. Who were we meant to emulate? For the world, and for ourselves, we were a bunch of 'Jews and Communists', just what Hitler had called us. Exile—we weren't in exile. We hadn't even thought of the term. In an undignified way we scurried from office to office, committee to committee.¹⁶

Troller's way of engaging with the German public was not by trying to turn the mass of refugees into heroes, but to show their vulnerability and suffering, their complex mixtures of love and hate, and the frequently hostile reception they received as often unwelcome 'guests' in the countries where they sought refuge.

Unlike Feuchtwanger and Troller, Kavan was never really in any doubt that he was in exile and that he would return as soon as circumstances allowed. He was the type of political émigré who lived in exile, but with such close connections to home and such strong political networks that he was never really in any danger of changing identity and going native in his host country, Britain. Ironically, in Kavan's case, this was indeed the country of his birth and citizenship. But he had not grown up there, and it was not where his political identity had been formed.

When the Czechoslovak Communist government began to crumble it took me only a few minutes to decide to return to what I have always regarded as 'home'. The purpose of my emigration to the UK was fulfilled. It made no sense to stay here any longer. And I was the first re-émigré to return on 25 November 1989.

Kavan is aware, however, that compared to other émigrés, his uncompromising focus on political activities and goals was exceptional, and came at a price, one he was prepared to pay.

At the beginning of my emigration I wrongly assumed that the so-called repressive 'normalization' in Czechoslovakia would

¹⁶ Troller, *Wohin und zurück*, 12.

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last only about the same time as the worst time after the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, that is, about six years. (Incidentally six years was the period my father spent abroad during the war.) Six years is too short a time to start a new life, a family which I would later have to uproot. Most of my émigré compatriots decided to cut their umbilical cord to their countries in order to firmly integrate into their new host country. There were no half-way houses. The life of a political émigré is not an easy one. The feeling of certain isolation, occasional bouts of doubt concerning a hopeless struggle, lack of any professional career, all of that and more was simply the price I was prepared to pay.

The life of a political émigré is not an easy one, but returning home was not easy either as Jan Kavan was soon to experience. His fate not only frighteningly resembled that of his father, but was in many ways symptomatic of the problems faced by the exiled political elites on their return. Some received them as returning leaders and, to a certain extent, saw them as the legitimate political authorities. Others met them with hostility and distrust. Jan Kavan experienced this ambivalence from day one of his re-entry to the country, and gave a sharp analysis of the mechanisms behind it:

I was detained at the airport and interrogated for about sixteen hours. The interrogators called me one of the protagonists of the change which was then unfolding. They came the next day to detain me in the hotel and questioned me in one of their special conspiratorial villas for several hours. They secretly filmed the interrogation on a video which was later used in order to discredit me.

I was immediately elected to the leadership of the 'revolutionary' Civic Forum and seven months later to the Federal Assembly. However, a few months later I was accused of being a former agent of the Communist Secret Service StB. It took me five years of struggle in courts to clear my name. During those five years I was the main target of the media which was dominated by young almost fanatical rightists. That vicious campaign left a lasting impact on the people to date irrespective of the final court's decision.

Kavan interpreted this campaign against him primarily as an attack of the political right on attempts to introduce any kind of reformed socialism into the country. To have cooperated with the left in Britain or elsewhere was therefore considered suspicious. But there was also a general mistrust of those who had spent time abroad in exile, while others at home had endured the hardships of the regime, although mostly without taking the risk of rebelling against it.

First of all, most émigrés were perceived as people who escaped from the misery the majority had to live in. And people believed that émigrés lived in the prosperous West as rich and successful people while the rest of the nation suffered. The reality was, of course, frequently different. And, therefore, a certain envy coloured peoples' perceptions. The only returnees (remigrants), who were welcomed and decorated were those émigrés who had a history of fully supporting the USA, i.e. the victors of the Cold War. A possible cooperation with the CIA would have been very helpful. . . . But émigrés who have been in the West associated with the Left were automatically very suspicious. People were asking me how could I escape from Communism and then join the Labour Party and become critical of Maggie Thatcher when the Iron Lady led the courageous and victorious struggle against the evil Communists?

The three panellists represented three types of return: the intermittent return, as a visiting professor or similar, of those who had decided to pursue their careers abroad;¹⁷ the failed return of the homesick (which resulted in their taking up domicile in a neighbouring state); and the full return of the political activist (which, as was so often the case, also partly failed). Types one and three were the most frequent; type two, that is, Troller's way of returning, was the least common. It seems to have been intellectuals such as Troller, in particular, who preferred this distanced closeness, returning not to Germany or Austria, but to Switzerland (for example, Thomas Mann

¹⁷ On this topic see Marita Krauss, 'Exilerfahrung und Wissenstransfer: Gastprofessoren nach 1945', in Dittmar Dahlmann and Reinhold Reith (eds.), *Elitenwanderung und Wissenstransfer im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Essen, 2008), 35–54.

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and Carl Zuckmayer) or France, from where they were still able to exert considerable influence on post-war Germany.

Taking Personal Stock of Living in Exile

People who were driven out of their home countries on political or racial grounds mostly had to endure a great deal: leaving family and friends behind or losing them altogether; abandoning their homes and property; having their professional qualifications and status questioned; and retraining and starting a new career in order to make a living. They could also, however, gain much to which they might have not have had access without emigrating: wealth and social mobility; insight into different cultures; the advantages of an informed view, from outside, of their society and culture of origin; and moral authority as an intellectual or political leader. Yet in general it seems difficult, at least for émigrés such as our panellists, to come to a clear overall balance.

The Feuchtwanger family had lost much by leaving Munich, where they had been at the centre of intellectual life. The father had been academic director of one of the most distinguished academic publishers, Duncker & Humblot. Unlike his father, who was never able to put down roots in Britain, Edgar Feuchtwanger changed identity and became 'what years later a friend of mine, an Old Etonian retired ambassador, called "an honorary Englishman"'. This was primarily a way of surviving, but, of course, it was also a gift of the host society which accepted the immigrant as one of theirs. In later life, however, Feuchtwanger increasingly re-acquired an affinity with Germany and especially his native Munich, giving rise to something like multiple identities, which he can now see as an asset rather than a burden.

I have to recognize that I have spent so much of my long life, from my days as a schoolboy in a major English public school down to the present, in an ambience that makes me a bit of an outsider in Germany, so that it would have required another major transformation to live there permanently. Yet not a complete outsider either. Where I was born and brought up, Munich, Upper Bavaria, I can still feel a special affinity, possi-

bly more so than many Germans who come from other and very different parts of Germany. On the whole I think it is an advantage, in our globalized world, to have multiple identities.

For Troller, this phenomenon of multiple identities is more ambivalent. He stresses the price the expellees had to pay for their involuntary cosmopolitanism. Always to be somewhere in between; not able fully to identify with one society or the other; and not being entirely accepted anywhere were traumatic experiences that, to the present day, run through his autobiographical writings and general thinking on the fate of refugees.

This is the most heart-breaking thing. The refugee suffers homesickness for a country that he may no longer call his home. He lives in a different country, and is en route to a third, and a fourth—to countries that he will never really call his new home. He knows this already. He loses one culture and language (from now on he speaks ‘Emigranto’), without ever really mastering another. Essentially, he loves the people that drove him away, and cannot unconditionally love that which allows him at least to exist. He finds himself in an intermediate realm where—because one can never really return—he will stay for ever. He will never really belong anywhere again. . . . He is rootless, ‘cosmopolitan’. What, in the full awareness of belonging, people like to praise as the future condition of humanity, the refugee has already experienced, when what he wants, deep down, is something quite different: internationality.

Yet Troller does see ways of alleviating this rootlessness. His work as a journalist, especially on the TV show *Paris Journal*, which he worked on for more than ten years, making fifty programmes, allowed him to come to terms with the city and its people, especially the poor and apparently weak. It permitted him to approach them and to learn, at first hand, of their everyday heroism.¹⁸

¹⁸ ‘At first, this city was a Babel, something that scared me, and *Paris Journal* gave me a chance to overcome all that. This programme was what first allowed me to become human at all.’ See <http://www.wdr.de/wissen/wdr_wissen/programmtipps/fernsehen/11/12/11_0030_w.php5>, accessed 8 Mar. 2013.

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It was only after his return home to Czechoslovakia that Kavan appears to have fully suffered from the ambivalence of having been in exile. The fact that he was accused of being an agent of the Czech Communist secret intelligence service and that, like his father, he had to stand trial after his return, hurt him immensely. It not only undermined his standing and career as a politician, but also drove a wedge into his former circle of friends and allies, which seems to have been his most important and motivating bond during his years abroad.

Even when I was elevated to some of the highest positions in the country (Foreign Minister, Deputy Prime Minister) I was still perceived as being different. Later even President Vaclav Klaus questioned my loyalty to the country given my close association with the UK. Suspicion and/or envy prevailed. . . . While it is possible to clear one's name formally in courts, it is impossible to wipe off the suspicion of peoples' minds.

This hostility and suspicion against the returnee is why Kavan's final assessment of what he and his political work gained from his first-hand experience of British democracy and political culture in Britain and elsewhere is somewhat ambivalent and melancholy. He concluded his biographical sketch as follows:

On the other hand returnees (remigrants) are definitely capable of helping their countries to learn from the achievements of their host countries. However, in many instances their experience was in vain and the countries went on to commit many (probably unnecessary) mistakes (wild privatization without any legal rules, for example, against laundering of dirty money, corruption, etc.). . . . There are no simple, black and white models of behaviour. There are many stories that may resemble my own but there are also stories of people whom their Western acquired skills and excellent language abilities helped to become successful in their former homelands. With some notable exceptions, many of them enjoyed their wealth and prosperity but deliberately kept their heads down not wishing to draw too much attention to themselves and thus risk outbursts of envy and distrust.

There can be no doubt that post-war Germany and the post-Communist countries of the former Soviet sphere of influence profited immensely from returning exiles and were deeply influenced by their input and experience,¹⁹ but individual migrants tend to take stock of their time in exile in a more reluctant and ambivalent way. Even in cases such as that of Kavan, whose efforts and endurance during exile seem to have been rewarded by the ultimate success of the political opposition and the regime change in Eastern Europe, the personal cost of spending so many years abroad was still very high. This was felt even more when the delight of returning home and being appointed to high political positions was marred by a renewed wave of suspicion, distrust, and hostility. Whatever the other, less politically focused refugees might have gained by being forced to get to know the world, the feeling of loss remained a strong and prevailing emotion throughout their lives.

¹⁹ On this topic see e.g. Marita Krauss, 'Exil, Neuordnung und Erneuerung Deutschlands: Jüdische Remigranten im politischen Leben Nachkriegsdeutschlands', in Hans Erler, Arnold Paucker, and Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich (eds.), *Gegen alle Vergeblichkeit: Jüdischer Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 2003), 388–406; ead., 'Deutsch-amerikanische Presse- und Kulturoffiziere als Teil der Besatzungsbehörden', in Arnd Bauerkämper, Konrad H. Jarausch, and Markus M. Payk (eds.), *Demokratiewunder: Transatlantische Mittler und die kulturelle Öffnung Westdeutschlands 1945–1970* (Göttingen, 2005), 129–55.

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