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Exiles in British Sociology

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Anderson: Oh yes, Volkansky, yes I do remember him, he never came back...?

Hollar: No he didn't come back, he was a realist.

Anderson: He's at...erm...Reading or somewhere like that.

Hollar: Liester.

Anderson: Leicester, exactly.

Tom Stoppard, *Professional Foul*

We have all seen them, foreheads wrinkled like a ploughed field, pastel-shaded check summer shirts worn in winter, desks festooned with yellowed index cards covered in hieroglyphics, books like yours only in plainer covers and read more carefully, filthy cigarettes, an accent growing thicker with age. But we have all seen them too, the luxuriant thatch at seventy, the jacket and tie, the tidy desk, the London club and the house in the country, the pipe, the disdain for small talk made all the more intimidating by an English acquired somewhere between grammar school and Oxford. Self-contained in a way only the uprooted can be, mysterious because you never knew what questions to ask them, emissaries from worlds they have lost and you have never known: the Polish gentry, the central European peasantry, Jewish merchants, German workers and, most puzzling of all, the continental European middle class.

The story of exiles in British sociology is less a study in career contingencies than a catalogue of shattered lives, lost youth and belated flourishing, of strangers who came today and stayed tomorrow and the day after. It is a story – or stories - of one culture's receptivity – or lack of it - to others, and of the republic of science and how it deals with its anomalous characters, granting them a status they might never otherwise have dreamed of, casting them into undeserved obscurity, and sometimes doing both to the same person. None of these stories is typical; 'community of exiles' is as often as not an oxymoron, and so here individual anecdotes and episodes may be asked to bear more

hermeneutic weight than they otherwise might, not quite as scenes of instruction, but as more than mere illustration.

We begin with one which occurred at 5, The Park, Golders Green, London, a large suburban house on the north-western corner of Hampstead Heath. It is January 1947 and the Chicago sociologist Edward Shils, Reader in Sociology at LSE, has just heard of the death of Karl Mannheim (b. Budapest, 1893). Having translated (with Louis Wirth) Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*, a book that had defined the intellectual and political problems of the age as well as any, Shils has been a regular visitor, and now wishes to pay his respects to Mannheim's wife. He is shown in by the housekeeper, whereupon Julia Mannheim greets him with the words, 'Ginsberg killed him' (Shils, 1997, p.217).

Morris Ginsberg (b. Kelme, Lithuania, 1889) had held Britain's only formally designated chair in sociology, at LSE, since 1930. In 1933 he had helped Mannheim secure a position here and with it his escape from Nazi Germany; Mannheim would help others who followed. It quickly became apparent that Mannheim was Ginsberg's intellectual superior, something for which the LSE policy of one professor per discipline could not cater; Mannheim, who had been full professor in Frankfurt, had to play second fiddle, and was denied the privilege of giving the all-important first year lectures. This might have been less galling had his 1934 bid for a large Rockefeller Foundation grant been successful, for he might then have been able to reconstitute his interdisciplinary circle of talented graduate students from Germany. As it was, he eventually wound up at London University's Institute of Education where he wrote his least impressive work. Between 1938 and 1944 his chief intellectual stimulation, and the chief conduit for whatever influence he would have in Britain, was the meeting of the Moot group of ecumenical Christians around T.S. Eliot, A.D. Lindsay, John Middleton Murry and a few others including, sporadically, his fellow exiles Adolph Löwe (b. Stuttgart, 1893) and Michael Polanyi (b. Budapest, 1891) (Clements, 2010). Mannheim attended more meetings than anyone, but it was no substitute for the Lukács Sunday circle in Budapest or the seminar in Frankfurt held in the same building as that of his rivals the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research; when his former research assistant and fellow exile Wilhelm Baldamus (b. Berlin, 1908) visited him at the Athenaeum in 1946 he had found him 'tired and defeated'. Never in the best of health, Mannheim was 53 when he died, and while his time in England was not quite the 'unmitigated catastrophe' Shils says it was, one is

entitled to wonder how it would have been in a different institution, and at a different time. Without Ginsberg.

Ginsberg was only four years older than Mannheim, but as the author of the classic essay on the subject would have recognised (Mannheim, 1993), he belonged sociologically to a different generation. Ginsberg was a Lithuanian Jew whose father owned a tobacco factory in Liverpool, in much the same way as the father of one of British sociology's original exiles Friedrich Engels owned a Lancashire cotton mill and the father of Peter Nettl (b. Lidice, 1926) would own a Bradford woollen mill. He arrived here aged 15. If Ernest Gellner (b. Paris, 1925) is to be believed, he remained eternally grateful to his host country, seeing in the Hampstead where he too had ended up the highest point of human evolution, the lowest being the Eastern European *shtetl* from which he didn't himself quite come, so that in his relationship with Mannheim one is tempted to see an intra-Jewish rivalry as much as British academic culture stifling its best talent. One German reviewer of Ideology and Utopia had said that Mannheim was as important to his time as Kant had been to his, and according to Shils, when they first met in London Mannheim's first words had been 'what do they think of me in America?' (Shils, 1997), a remark that suggests a level of ambition that no amount of fêting by LSE could have satisfied. Either way Mannheim, the 40-year-old professor, found himself confronted at the height of his powers with the question Max Weber had put to young scholars at the start of their careers: 'can you bear the thought of seeing mediocrity after mediocrity rise to positions above you?'. On the other hand, his academic marginalisation and resulting involvement with the Moot group, along with his membership of the Athenaeum, may have helped him integrate into English society more readily than a number of later exiles who had firmer and more prestigious academic positions. At any rate, T.S. Eliot in *The Times*, committing the obituarist's cardinal sin of self-reference, described him as 'more English than the English themselves'.

While Shils is not always a reliable witness, Mannheim's first anxious question about his reputation in America and the widow's last despairing cry do frame a recognisable sort of life, or part of one. It was, for instance, neither the first nor the last demonstration that the greatest resistance to outsiders may come from those who were once outsiders themselves. At the same time it cautions us to be aware that the problems of exile faced by established professors are not the same as those faced by graduate students, or by

those young enough to attend school for a period in their host country. The character of the regime or the country that has precipitated their escape or departure will also make a difference, as will the institutional environment into which they seek to integrate; those who tried to make their way in British sociology two or three decades after Mannheim did so were faced with more opportunity for academic success and scholarly prestige. Whoever they were and whatever their age, perhaps the one aspect of their experience that he would have appreciated was that it was taking place in geographical settings that would have seemed to him, as it often did to them, a far cry from and no substitute for Warsaw or Berlin, Vienna or Budapest, Prague or Frankfurt.

Who is an exile? Who belongs in the category? The majority of those I will refer to or have in mind were refugees from Nazi Germany or post-war communist regimes, or people displaced by World War II and unable to return to their homelands. They were exiles because their presence in another country or jurisdiction was the result of banishment or flight and because they would, were they to return, face significant politically organised persecution ranging from death and imprisonment to loss of livelihood and the inability to express opinions freely. That is as neat a definition of exile as one can expect to give. But were those Germans who, after the restoration of democracy in West Germany, chose to remain in Britain, still exiles? What of people who arrived in Britain as students, stayed on, had a mind to return but then could not because the political situation in their home country had changed in the meantime? Left-leaning Spaniards and Portuguese faced the prospect at least of prison, torture or joblessness during decades of dictatorship, while several white South Africans during apartheid, including notably Harold Wolpe (b. Johannesburg, 1926), who arrived in Britain in the early 60s after escaping from prison, would have faced significant restrictions on scholarly and political activity. What of Americans who came here as students to avoid conscription during the Vietnam war but were later granted an amnesty? What of figures such as Talal Asad, Stuart Hall, Elie Kedourie or Sami Zubaida? Return to the country of their origin would certainly have meant a loss of scholarly prestige, but are their stories ones of exile or simply of how movement to more favourable environments is a condition for scholarly success? For the purposes of this essay I have drawn the boundaries fairly tightly, though I will refer throughout, if only in passing, to the sometimes immense contribution that émigré scholars have made to British sociology, both as an institutional practice and as a sensibility.

My excuse for the rough and ready approach is that since the object is to convey the flavour, or flavours, of exile, a few omissions or unexpected inclusions will not affect the overall argument. It is however important to get a sense of the change underway in the scholarly environment that such figures entered. When Mannheim arrived in 1933, for instance, sociology was hardly a securely established or respectable discipline. It would continue to struggle for recognition until the 1963 Robbins report (Robbins incidentally had been instrumental in blocking the Frankfurt School's planned transfer to LSE in 1934 (Dahrendorf, 1995); goodness knows how much more 'defeated' Mannheim would have felt had they moved there). There was only one chair of sociology in Britain, at LSE (though Alexander Carr-Saunders was Charles Booth Chair of Social Science at Liverpool), which hardly provided for a critical mass of sociologically inclined scholars in one place, and one may suggest that conditions were little more auspicious in 1933 than they had been before World War I, when a British sociological tradition had existed, albeit in a diffuse and scattered form. As early as 1903, for instance, the newly founded Sociological Society was discussing the work of Durkheim and Tönnies (Abrams, 1968), and Durkheim's work in particular would be received in other disciplines such as anthropology and classics. Viewed against this background, the subsequent institutional consolidation of sociology had an ambivalent impact. For several external or newly arrived observers of British sociology after World War II, it was precisely the concentration of the discipline in a small number of places that was its main weakness. The LSE, for instance, and sociology in particular, still bore the marks of its Fabian origins, and according to John Rex, in the early 1950s, before he helped to knock it into shape, British sociology was less a serious social science than the 'book-keeping of social reform' (Mullan, 1987, p.13). Something similar struck Raymond Aron when he told A.H. Halsey that its basic weakness was that it was the attempt to deal intellectually with the political problems of the Labour Party (Halsey, 2004, p.70). One wonders whether and how that might have changed had Aron – author incidentally of a pointed attack on Mannheim in 1936 - accepted the postwar job at LSE which was offered him during his wartime exile in London as editor of *La France Libre* (Aron, 1990). As it was, he penned the first article in the *British Journal of Sociology* and was a frequent visitor to these shores in the 50s and 60s.

A more systematic exploration of British sociology's alleged backwardness can be found in Perry Anderson's 1968 essay 'Components of the National Culture' and his 1990 reconsideration of it, 'A Culture in Contraflow'. The first generated an extended debate, and I add to it here for two reasons: firstly, by 'national culture' Anderson meant the human sciences, whose task is to formulate 'fundamental concepts of man and society'; secondly, Anderson assessed the contribution made to them by what he called the 'white emigration', central European scholars who by 1950 had come to prominence here. His central claim was that while British anthropology, economics, philosophy, political theory and aesthetics had respectable pedigrees and could compare with anything in the rest of Europe, Britain had never produced a classical sociology to compare with those of Weber in Germany, Durkheim in France or Pareto in Italy. This was important because it is sociology - not it may be noted, philosophy or history - which might best be able to coordinate the results of the other disciplines and so provide a society with a means of reflecting most penetratingly on itself.

Behind British sociology's failure to be queen or king of the social sciences lay the 'fundamental historical fact' that the English bourgeoisie had staged a technological revolution without a comparable social one: because it had assimilated the outlook of the aristocracy, and in addition had had to face no coherent or intellectually powerful socialist movement, it had never had resort to the comprehensive theories of society and history that make up classical European sociology. Marked 'to this day' (1968) by 'listless mediocrity' and 'wizened provincialism', British sociology remained a poor cousin of social work and administration, 'the dispirited descendants of Victorian reform'. When Anderson referred to 'the withered half-life of the subject' he was not comparing it to radioactive material.

One might think that requiring a subject to stand above all others in order to stand alongside them is setting the bar a little high, but part of the reason that Anderson put it like that was his belief that the most original and challenging synthesiser was Marx, who had combined philosophy, politics, and economics, and was the model and stimulus for the classical bourgeois European sociologies (as well as for the sort of undergraduate programmes taken by students from Eton and Balliol). This was important because the second half of the first essay argues that 'the phalanx of English intellectuals' that dominated the respectable and established human sciences in 1900 had by 1950 been

eclipsed by foreigners: 'a white emigration rolled across the flat expanse of English intellectual life, capturing sector after sector, until this traditionally insular culture became dominated by expatriates, of heterogeneous calibre'. What made these individual sectors vulnerable was their mutual isolation in the absence of a coordinating centre in the form of sociology, and this in turn had an impact on the sort of figures who captured them: Wittgenstein in philosophy, Namier in history, Popper in social theory or Eysenck in psychology were 'white' in the sense that they were not 'red', and gravitated here because they already had an affinity to British modes of thought, in particular a disdain for 'general ideas'. Far from introducing new ideas into moribund disciplines, the capturers merely 'codified the slovenly empiricism of the past'. The one exception had been anthropology and Malinowski, but its energies had been directed at non-industrial societies.

In 1990 Anderson modified his account, though in ways that hardly amount to the partial apology for the earlier piece that some have discerned in it (Collini, 2006, p. 469). He acknowledges that Britain did in fact produce a classical sociology of sorts (Spencer), notes the expansion of the discipline since the early 60s, and praises British sociology - or rather four British sociologists - for having finally begun to get the hang of it in the 1980s. His account of the expansion of sociology, though, is delivered in the same tone as the 1968 essay: the expansion's chief bearers are the generation of provincial English students who attended the LSE in the early 1950s and who then transmitted sociology to the new provincial universities and new departments of sociology in the older ones. His account too of the emergence of an ambitious sociology worthy of the name is a reprise of the earlier claim about the dependence of classical sociology on a Marxist challenge: it turns out that the sweeping theories of history in the writings of Anthony Giddens, Michael Mann, W.G. Runciman and Ernest Gellner were primarily responses to the emergence of a vigorous Marxist intellectual culture in the 1960s and 1970s.

For all its interest, then, Anderson's account is misleading in several respects. The comparison between established human science disciplines and sociology, and the assumption that there was no British sociology worthy of the name before the 1960s, led him to exclude it from the list of those captured by the white emigration by 1950; no consideration at all is given to the influence of exiles in British sociology, even in the 1990 piece. Consideration of that influence is unlikely to be aided by the clunky contrast

with which the thesis about the conservative character of the emigrants in other disciplines was supported, namely that between the adherents of the 'parish-pump positivism of ante-bellum Vienna' who tended to gravitate to Britain and the 'red emigration' of German scholars who went to the United States. The thesis about sociology's expansion in the 1960s relies on a single short article by Halsey (Halsey, 1982), whose title, 'Provincials and Professionals' must have been grist to the Andersonian mill. The assumption that a classical sociology can only emerge as a response to Marxism is never opened to counter-arguments, for instance the one according to which Marx belongs squarely with other classical sociologies from the start as a representative of a 19th century counter-enlightenment (Nisbet, 1966). Finally, the image of a European sociology that, unlike British sociology, constantly takes its bearings from Weber, Durkheim or Pareto, takes no account of the possibility that the practice of sociological inquiry in Germany, France or Italy might have had its own empiricist modes.

Correcting these impressions might seem like a very roundabout way of getting at the role of exiles in British sociology, but comprehensive accounts of this topic are thin on the ground. To suggest that by 1950, the conquest of the other human sciences by conservatives was complete, while British sociology was protected only by virtue of being a prize not worth capturing, is to tell only part of the story. To be sure, Edward Shils recalled that most of the central European exiles who arrived in the 1930s yearned to pass as English gentlemen, developing a penchant for tweed jackets, briar pipes and *The Times*, and that accordingly they 'wouldn't be seen dead with sociology' (Shils, 1985, p.170). Nevertheless, in 1950 British sociology had begun, albeit very falteringly, and just for this reason, to receive a significant number of exiles, not all of whom could be categorised as conservatives. How? Who?

I suggested earlier that 'community of exiles' is an oxymoron, but it has been less so at some periods than others. Most of those who will be mentioned here arrived in Britain between 1933 and 1940 as refugees from Nazism; although they had grown up in a world in which people moved fairly easily between the major universities of central Europe, they now found themselves in a funnel with a fairly narrow end: The Academic Assistance Council (after 1936 the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning), the LSE, Birmingham, Manchester and the Workers Educational Association. The

Academic Assistance Council never offered people jobs, but gave grants to enable them to continue scholarly work for a time and to use it as the basis for job applications should they so wish. This had mixed results: some established figures such as Mannheim (sociology, LSE) and Adolf Löwe (economics, Manchester until 1940) were offered positions immediately (of a sort – Mannheim’s title was ‘Other Lecturer’); Karl Polanyi, attracted by Christian socialism, Cole and Tawney, from 1937 to 1940 worked for the WEA, delivering classes in the towns and villages of Kent and Sussex that would be the basis for *The Great Transformation*; Norbert Elias, Mannheim’s assistant in Frankfurt, arrived in 1935 (via Paris) and plunged straight into the British Museum reading room while another, Baldamus, gave up the idea of an academic career after giving a ‘disastrous’ lecture to workers in Swindon and did menial jobs in Birmingham and Chichester (Erickson and Turner, 2010). After the war Baldamus would be rescued by Philip Sargant Florence at the department of commerce in Birmingham; Charlotte Lützens (nee Mendelssohn, b. Erfurt, 1896) author of *Staat und Gesellschaft in Amerika* (Lützens, 1929), taught sociology classes to students at Queen Mary’s London; Adorno and Werner Falk, a relative of Ernst Cassirer who had published on Max Weber, were in Oxford; Ruth Glass (nee Lazarus, b. Berlin, 1909) became a researcher at LSE, married Henry Durant and published a study of north London housing (Durant, 1939); Viola Klein (b. Vienna, 1907), a student of literature with a PhD on Celine behind her, arrived in 1939 and worked as a domestic servant and nanny in Hammersmith, later becoming Mannheim’s doctoral student; the Marxist economist Alfred Sohn-Rethel (b. Paris, 1899), an acquaintance of Ernst Bloch and Walter Benjamin, arrived in 1937 and wrote policy pamphlets for circles around Winston Churchill; the remarkably well-connected SPD journalist and librarian J.P. Mayer (b. Freudenthal, 1903) rapidly began a collaboration with Richard Crossman (Crossman et al., 1939); in 1933 the lawyer Franz Neumann embarked on a PhD with Mannheim and Laski, though he departed for America in 1937, recalling later that ‘one could never quite become an Englishman’ (Neumann, 1953, p.171).

If the funnel of the 1930s had begun to scatter its contents, some of them were brought joltingly together again when war was declared and they found themselves classified as enemy aliens. At first the British policy was benign, the exiles falling into category C, the least threatening to national security. In 1940 however, mounting fears of a German invasion led to the notorious change in which all category C aliens living in the south and

east of England were to be interned. One result was that some who had fled Nazism as Jews, had lost almost everything and would later discover that this included their relatives, found themselves placed alongside German or Austrian nationals with Nazi sympathies (some of whom would be granted early release as members of reserved occupations). Name changes – Wilhelm Baldamus had become William Bould – were of little avail, and certainly the suggestion that Adolf Löwe avoided internment because he dropped the umlaut seems far-fetched: he was not in the south east, and in 1940 it was not his surname that was likely to attract attention to this German. Even the young Belgian who fought in the Royal Navy as Adolphe Miliband (b. Brussels, 1924) would later change his name to Ralph. Another consequence was an unprecedented concentration of European intellectual and artistic talent. Baldamus, Borkenau, Elias, Andre Deutsch, Claus Moser, Otto Neurath, Nicolaus Pevsner, Kurt Schwitters, three future members of the Amadeus Quartet and thousands of others were thrown together in camps, firstly in Huyton and then on the Isle of Man. Neurath, philosopher and sociologist, member of the Vienna Circle, Director of the Vienna Museum of Housing and Small Gardens, who had been imprisoned in Munich after the defeat of the soviet republic there, had escaped Vienna for the Hague and then in 1940 fled the bombing of Rotterdam. On arrival in Harwich, and brandishing only a creased review of his own *Modern Man in the Making* as ID, he was taken straight to Pentonville prison and thence to the Onchan camp on Isle of Man; his lecture, ‘What makes a tennis court so durable?’ would be one of almost five hundred that would be held there over eight months.

The official and semi-official attitude towards enemy aliens was a combination of mild paranoia, shambling but ultimately effective administration, and condescension towards foreigners, perhaps best encapsulated by the story of Claus Moser (b. Berlin, 1922). At the time of his arrest the 17 year old Moser had registered at LSE but not begun his studies. In the Huyton camp a professor decided to pass the time by compiling a statistical record of the inmates, and Moser became his assistant, a move that would shape his career, his *Survey Methods in Social Investigation* of 1958 becoming a much-cited classic. The rejection of his 1965 application for a job at the Central Statistical Office, on the grounds that he had once been imprisoned as an enemy alien, proved a minor setback, as two years later prime minister Harold Wilson made him head of it, after which there followed a string of honours and a seat in the House of Lords. If in 1965 he had to keep calm and carry on, he may well have learned to do so in the first days of his

internment. The Huyton camp consisted of tents and ill-equipped houses on an estate in Liverpool. While there he received a letter from Alexander Carr-Saunders, by now Director of LSE, saying how sorry he was to hear of the internment, expressing the hope that he would be released in time to become a student, and adding, apparently as reassurance, a P.S.: 'the property in which you are interned was owned by my wife'. By 'property' he meant the whole estate.

When the internment policy was relaxed and the exiles released, the war and its aftermath continued the liminal period that many had entered after 1933. Many did war work of one sort or another, as translators of German documents, strategic analysts, or factory workers, and towards the end of the war and in its aftermath several spent months surveying the wreckage of central Europe with the British armed forces. By 1950, they had gained a tentative foothold on the small but challenging peak that was British sociology.

Having published *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* in Switzerland in 1939 (a title whose resonance in German is not quite captured by *The Civilising Process*), Norbert Elias worked (as did Mannheim) at LSE's evacuated Cambridge site, as 'Senior Research Assistant' to Lance Beales. One of Elias' students and friends at Cambridge was the demographer Eugene Grebenik (b. Kiev, 1919), who would later become head of social administration at Leeds. Ruth Lazarus went to America for three years but by 1950, now the wife of David Glass, was beginning a long and successful career as a left-leaning urban sociologist at UCL; Ilya Neustadt (b. Odessa, 1915) had written a PhD under Ginsberg on Belgian social structure and in 1949 entered the department of economics at Leicester; Stanisław Andrzejewski (b. Czestochowa, 1919), a Polish cavalry officer who had escaped from a German POW camp and made his way via Hungary to London, had met Radcliffe-Brown at LSE, on his advice bought himself a copy of Weber's *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* while with the British Army in Germany in 1945, and in 1950, at Rhodes University in South Africa, was working on *Military Organisation and Society* (Andrzejewski, 1954); Viola Klein had moved from literature to sociology and in 1946 published (with a strange preface by Mannheim) *The Feminine Character*, a study of later Victorian efforts to develop a 'science of sexuality', three years before de Beauvoir and thirty years before Foucault; although she returned to Germany in 1949, Charlotte Lützens had published *Women in a New Society* in 1946, with illustrations provided by the Oxford Isotype

Institute that had been established by Otto and Marie Neurath in 1941; J.P. Mayer wrote short books on Weber and de Tocqueville (he would later edit a French edition of de Tocqueville's work and establish the Tocqueville Institute at Reading) and turned his attention to the cinema, publishing *Sociology of Film* (Mayer, 1946); Peter Nettl, having entered an English school in 1936 aged 11, became the youngest ever major in the British army, and as a result of his experiences with the army in Germany was about to publish, aged 25, the alarmingly comprehensive *The Eastern Zone and Soviet Occupation Policy* (Nettl, 1951); the future sociologist of religion Werner Stark (b. Marienbad, 1909), was in Edinburgh (he would go to Manchester in 1951 and the United States in 1963) working on Jeremy Bentham; Ferdynand Zweig (b. Kraków, 1922) at Oxford was about to finish *The British Worker* and to become a respected industrial sociologist; Karl Polanyi's brother Michael had switched from chemistry to become professor of social studies at Manchester and was a prominent figure in the sociology and philosophy of science, primarily through his debate with the communist scientist J.D. Bernal; and, while his route into exile was via dissidence and so makes him a distinctive case, we may add here that 1950 saw sociologist and psychologist Zevedei Barbu (b. Sibiu, Romania, 1914) defect from the Romanian embassy in London and embark on a career that would eventually see him found the sociology department at Sussex along with another exile, Helmuth Pappe (b. Liegnitz, Germany, 1907).

In his 1968 essay Anderson attached some significance to the fact that Theodor Adorno (b. Frankfurt, 1903) spent three years unnoticed at Oxford between 1934 and 1937 before decamping to America, the lack of attention to this intellectually brilliant foreigner part of a wider pattern. That may be partly right, although he was sponsored by a prominent figure, Gilbert Ryle, and we have seen that the Frankfurt School nearly came to the LSE. Moreover, if there is anything that unites those exiles we have just listed it is not their affinity for British empiricism or a counter-revolutionary sensibility. It may not have been classical European sociology either, for they were too diverse in background for that and sociology was hardly an established academic discipline in their countries of origin. Be that as it may, historical sociology was represented by Mannheim and Elias and Barbu, political sociology by Andreski, class analysis by Neustadt, Glass and Zweig were models of how to conduct concentrated case studies, while Nettl was a magnetic figure, a one-man history, politics and sociology research programme whose political sympathies, range of reading and capacity for sustained work remind one in many ways of Perry

Anderson (Nossiter et al., 1972). We may add here the South African anthropologist Max Gluckman at Manchester (b. Johannesburg, 1911), who inspired researchers and scholars – a notable number of them communists - to apply anthropological techniques to the study of industrial societies and in particular to urban life (Worsley, 2008).

By the end of the sixties, the number of sociology or related chairs had risen from one in 1945 to 30 or so. Indeed, in the early 60s sociology departments emerged from departments of economics, commerce, or social administration and sociology took wing, not only as part of the expansion of universities, but as a discipline to which many prominent figures from other disciplines looked for the sort of Comtean synthesis that had been forgotten since the 19th century (Klein, 1967). All of the new departments contained exiles, and whether they squeezed through a narrow gap or pushed at an open door, and whether they felt that what confronted them on the other side was the light of the world or another cave, some found themselves head of department: Andreski at Reading, Barbu at Sussex, Grebenik at Leeds, Paul Halmos (b. Budapest, 1922) at Cardiff, Neustadt at Leicester, Pappé at Sussex, John Rex (b. Port Elizabeth, 1926) at Warwick; later there would be Baldamus at Birmingham, Zygmunt Bauman (b. Poznan, 1926) at Leeds, Julius Carlebach (b. Hamburg, 1922) at Sussex, and Theodor Shanin (b. Vilnius, 1930) at Manchester. Many of them had backgrounds outside sociology, in respectable disciplines like economics, philosophy, psychology, demography, literature and theology, and their presence in sociology, or their willingness to foster sociology, makes the pride with which some sociologists today proclaim their interdisciplinary credentials seem rather quaint. Their routes, geographical as well as institutional, into secure positions as professors of sociology, were as varied as their backgrounds; of the exiles from Nazi Germany or the Soviet empire some, like Baldamus or Viola Klein, spent the 1950s struggling for little reward or recognition, while others such as Neustadt or Grebenik would have positions of responsibility early on (demography at the time had considerable prestige). Bauman was one of 100,000 or so Jews who left Poland after the officially-organised anti-Semitism of March 1968. Others arrived via more colourful routes. Barbu spent two years in a Romanian military prison for desertion while on the Eastern front during the German campaign against the Soviet Union, had a hand in the drafting of the postwar Romanian constitution, defected to Britain in 1950 while a Romanian diplomat in London, and spent thirteen years at Glasgow University before a chance encounter with Asa Briggs found him setting up sociology at Sussex. He did so

along with Pappe, who had had his PhD thesis pulped by the Nazis in 1933, fled and became an accidental businessman in New Zealand, and was recruited by Briggs while on a trip to Geneva. Shanin arrived via deportation to Samarkand in World War II, armed combat in the fight for the establishment of Israel in 1948, and a period as a social worker.

Some of these heads of departments were fine organisers. One suspects that Ilya Neustadt's publications would rank fairly low for 'impact' today, and even in the substantial *Festschrift* for him he is cited only once (Giddens and McKenzie, 1982); yet he was more directly responsible for the development of postwar British sociology than any other individual, building up the Leicester department from nothing to a staff of 30, devoting himself, along with Elias, to what his 1962 inaugural lecture advertised in its title, 'teaching sociology', and launching the careers of many prominent figures. Grebenik, though a demographer by training, turned Leeds's department of social administration into a recognisable department of social studies boasting talented and prominent sociologists. Paul Halmos was a quiet and efficient head at Cardiff, and for many years series editor of *Sociological Review Monographs*. Julius Carlebach's time as head of sociology at Sussex laid the ground for his becoming a formidable Rector of Heidelberg University.

It is unlikely that all of the exiles who headed departments in the 60s would be considered head of department or managerial material today. When Andreski beat Tom Bottomore and others to the chair at Reading in 1964, he arranged for an office to be provided in a part of the campus unknown to his colleagues and had all telephone lines to it disconnected in order to avoid contact with the university administration; Elias was never head of department and, if Eric Dunning is to be believed, would have been a 'disastrous' one (Rojek, 2004); Baldamus, who became head of department at Birmingham in 1970, could be generous and accommodating to those he respected but like Elias had strong views on anything to do with the curriculum (especially first-year teaching) and could be prickly with colleagues; Barbu blurred the boundaries between private and official conduct in a way that stood out even in the sixties. Many of these figures, good leaders or bad, coming from university traditions where the professor's status was unquestioned, and with their own painful memories of what a revolt against authority could lead to, dealt uneasily with the spread of student protest.

Yet whatever they may have lacked in managerial ability they made up for in intellectual presence; for the most part they were custodians of traditions of inquiry that politics and ideology had destroyed: the social sciences as they emerged in Central Europe between 1890 and 1933 never came close to being reconstituted after World War II, and the exiles in British sociology were able to transmit them only as fragments: small schools or research clusters, jealously guarded undergraduate courses, individual projects, or sometimes just questions that were left blowing in the wind. Nevertheless, the result is an impressive catalogue of achievement, and one is entitled to wonder where English-language sociology of science would be without Elias, Imre Lakatos (b. Debrecen, 1922), Mannheim, Herminio Martins (b. Mozambique, 1934), Michael Polanyi and Karl Popper (b. Vienna 1902), where political and historical sociology would be without Andreski, Aron, Barbu, Bauman, Ralf Dahrendorf (b. Hamburg, 1929), Elias, Gellner, Josep Llobera (b. Havana, 1939), Mannheim, Miliband, Nettl, and Shanin, what urban sociology would be without Ruth Glass, Gluckman, Clyde Mitchell (b. Johannesburg, 1918), Rex, and Zweig, rural sociology without Shanin, industrial sociology without Baldamus, Dahrendorf, Robin Cohen (b. Johannesburg, 1944), Peter Gutkind (b. Berlin, 1925), Wolpe, and Zweig, deviance without Stan Cohen (b. Johannesburg, 1942), social psychology without Marie Jahoda (b. Vienna, 1907) and Hildegard Himmelweit (b. Berlin, 1918), and where sociological theory would have ended up without Andreski, Baldamus, Bauman, Percy Cohen (b. Durban, 1928), Dahrendorf, Elias, Gellner, Mannheim, Martins, István Mészáros (b. Budapest, 1930), Nicos Mouzelis (b. Athens, 1939), and Rex.

The point I am groping towards with this list is a response to Anderson's suggestion that ambitious efforts at a classical style of sociology emerged in Britain in the 1980s. They did, of course, but so did several other sorts of sociology, and part of the reason lies in the maturation of a sociological community from the beginning of the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, a maturation to which exiles made a significant contribution. We would miss something of this were we to say that Giddens' *The Nation State and Violence* and Mann's *Sources of Social Power* were a direct response to the emergence of British Marxism. They do on the face of it sit in the shadow of Marx, though British sociologists in the 1970s took their Marxism from France as much as from Britain. But it would be unsociological to treat these scholars, even fellows of Cambridge colleges, as

free-floating intellectuals in Mannheim's sense. We may also recognise that there was already an indigenous British tradition of the grander sort of historical sociology that both younger British and older European exiles in Britain may have drawn upon. Ernest Gellner's more historical sociological and anthropological work, for instance, may be that of a central European scholar responding to the challenge of Marxism, but it has affinities with, indeed depends partly upon, the kind of philosophical history produced by the Scottish enlightenment. Exiles may, then, enrich a host tradition in many ways, one of them being to help it appreciate its own achievements.

The intellectual achievements of exiles in British sociology do mask considerable variation in worldly success. For every Neustadt, at Leicester already in 1949, there would be a Viola Klein, who with two PhDs would secure her first academic job at Reading aged 57. Stanislaw Andreski was head of department at Reading from 1964, but Wilhelm Baldamus, whose *Efficiency and Effort* became a classic of industrial sociology and who exposed Thomas Kuhn's borrowings from Ludwik Fleck, secured a professorship only at age 62. Sohn-Rethel, also in Birmingham, had no academic job at all and made a living as a French teacher who regaled his pupils with accounts of the rise of fascism; he was published only when in his 70s. Zygmunt Bauman's writings about fluidity, ambivalence, flexibility and security are required reading for today's commentariat, whereas Zev Barbu's *Democracy and Dictatorship* of 1956, which broaches all these themes, is forgotten even by those who still read Raymond Aron on that subject. For every Karl Popper (b. Vienna 1902), who was not a sociologist and had no interest in it, but was ritually cited in sociology textbooks for decades, there was a Michael Polanyi, who wrote much on the nature of the scientific community but whose name quickly faded from mainstream sociology. And for every Norbert Elias, whose *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* was already being quoted in the 1950s by readers of German such as Patrick Gordon Walker and Harold Nicolson (Gordon Walker, 1951; Nicolson, 1955), there was a Norbert Elias to whom success came late with the book's translation into English. In Elias' case, responsibility for the delay of its appearance lay partly with him and his less than accommodating attitude to translators, and we may observe that his capacity to be 'difficult' was not uncommon among those whose sense of relief at mere survival, and of gratitude to the community of scholars that welcomed them, was tempered by the thought that they had once been destined for better things.

Several of them saw a problem early, gave a name to it and were taken notice of, while some did the same and were ignored for years. In 1964, Ruth Glass edited a solid volume of case studies entitled *London: Aspects of Change*, in the introduction to which we read that working-class areas of London ‘have been invaded by the middle-classes...shabby, modest mews and cottages – two up two down – have been taken over...large Victorian houses have been upgraded’. She called this ‘gentrification’, and the term became universally recognisable. Among more specialist concepts, Stan Cohen’s ‘moral panic’ became a staple of the new criminology; Mannheim’s ‘free-floating intelligentsia’ and Michael Polanyi’s ‘tacit knowledge’ entered the sociology of knowledge lexicon; Baldamus’ ‘effort bargain’ gained some currency in industrial sociology; in 1965 Halmos’ *The Faith of the Counsellors* anticipated some of the themes of Philip Rieff’s more successful *The Triumph of the Therapeutic* a year later; Elias’ concept of ‘figurations’ is now widely-referred to though less-widely deployed, while the meaning of Andreski’s ‘kleptocracy’ is well understood even if the examples with which he illustrated it - Latin America and post-independence Africa - were provocative; in 1964 Herminio Martins published an article on celebrity (in *New Left Review* of all places) that is never quoted, but his ‘methodological nationalism’ of the 1970s, though it lay on the shelf for three decades, has now been described by Ulrich Beck as the most important concept in twentieth century sociology; Karl Polanyi introduced the term ‘embeddedness’ in the 1930s, and with the ‘new economic sociology’ of the last two decades, sociology has finally begun to make something of it.

For every one of those whose names we know, there is one whose name or work is forgotten. In 1969 Goldthorpe et al published *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure*, a title that echoes Ferdinand Zweig’s 1961 study, *The Worker in an Affluent Society*. Charlotte Lütken’s *Staat und Gesellschaft in Amerika* (1929) was reviewed at length by Maurice Halbwachs in France and by Eric Voegelin in Germany, and appeared in Spanish in 1931, but never in English. Lütken’s description of America as ‘pseudo late capitalism’ would resonate in some circles today, though her use of ‘habitus’ as an ordinary word for an ordinary thing might upset fans of Bourdieu. And what of Aurel Kolnai (b. Budapest, 1900), whose *Psychoanalyse und Soziologie* was translated into English in 1921 when he was still 21, whose *The War against the West*, an analysis of Nazi ideology, was published by the Left Book Club in 1938, and who spent the last 15 years of his life (1958-73) teaching philosophy on one-year contracts at Bedford College London? Thanks to David Wiggins and Bernard Williams Kolnai’s philosophical writing has become better known and unlike

many discussed here secured a place in the 2004 *Dictionary of National Biography*; his *Sexual Ethics* of 1930 (Kolnai, 2005) contains a masterly discussion of cultural relativism, though a laudatory preface by Roger Scruton may have sealed its fate with British sociology.

Perhaps this pattern of influence and obscurity, success deserved and failure undeserved, is one that can be discerned in any scholarly tradition, in which case it hardly illuminates the distinction between exiles and indigenous British sociologists. What does matter is the shaping effect that these figures had on the feel of British sociology and attitude of British sociologists making their way in the 1960s, in particular their link to other and perhaps better traditions of inquiry, and their sense of what an important intellectual problem was and how big the life of the mind could be. It is also important to recognise the extent to which they in turn were able and willing, not so much to assimilate as to adapt to the circumstances into which they had been thrown. Most of them were Jews whose relatives had been murdered, or if not Jews then people who had seen their country divided or imprisoned, and their sense of cultural disorientation was often permanent (when in the mid-60s Wilhelm Baldamus was driven by a colleague from Birmingham to Berlin, he sat for the whole journey with a compass in his lap). Hannah Arendt, in America, thought that there was something perverse in social science's dispassionate, objectivistic accounts of these horrors (Baehr, 2010). But in a way the record of these exiles in British sociology is a living riposte to Arendt's charge. Andreski for instance, had seen his country destroyed by two monstrous military machines, but responded with a comparative study in which those machines feature as merely just another pair of examples. It never seems to have occurred to Arendt that such dispassion may be not only a coping mechanism, but an effort to serve 'understanding' as worthy and useful as the more overtly perspectival history writing that she preferred. Remarkably in fact, none of the Jewish exiles in British sociology made the destruction of European Jewry a topic of direct scholarly concern, a situation that contrasted sharply with the United States. They did on the other hand show an interest in inequality in most of its principal forms: class, urban space, rural space, status, gender, age. There was race too, but race as manifested in the relationship between white British and non-white immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s, or in post-colonial Africa.

Earlier I asked where a number of sociological sub-disciplines would be without the contributions of these exile scholars. I left out two: I did not ask where the study of

culture would be without Mannheim, nor where the study of gender would be without Viola Klein. For it seems to me that these are not only areas in which we may find it hard to trace their influence, but areas which have flourished in proportion as those exile scholars and their intellectual sensibilities have died off or begun to wane. The sociology of culture as Mannheim would have understood it ceded ground in Britain to cultural studies, and whether or not classical sociology needs the stimulus of Marxism, it may be suggested that it was precisely Marxist-inspired approaches to the study of culture in Britain that helped marginalise a sociology of culture in the classical sociological sense. If the WEA helped Karl Polanyi before the war to tell his students about the great transformation, then after the war it gave Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams the platform to launch the idea that 'culture is ordinary'. When this was married to continental European Marxism the writing was on the wall for the versions of intellectual seriousness that the European exiles had brought with them, with parody sometimes the only response (Parkin and Parkin, 1975; Kolakowski, 1990). And that is what they were, European exiles, mostly central European exiles, and while their rise to positions of prominence coincided with immediate memories of World War II and then with the end of empire and a concerted effort to bring Britain closer to Europe, their passing from the academic scene has coincided with a shift in focus both intellectual and geographical. Once the brief flirtation with the idea of central Europe in 1989 was over, 'Eurocentrism' began to be a term of abuse that now comes as readily to the lips of students as 'functionalism' or 'positivism' once did. Although they often utter it in the name of something less narrow than Europe, say a 'global' or 'cosmopolitan' sensibility, it is not always easy to discern in it an intellectual urbanity to match that of the figures mentioned here.

Indeed, the story of British cultural studies is something of a retort to the suggestion that conservatives have a monopoly on insularity. The language of contemporary cultural analysis – and of sociology in general – is also something that marks a significant break with the period in which the post-war exiles came to prominence; they belonged to the two generations of central Europeans who feature in documentaries like the *The World at War* from 1970, who whether their accent is strong or weak, whether they dress smart or casual, whether they smoke or not, speak comprehensible, considered, grammatical English. Andreski's *Military Organisation and Society*, for instance, is over-technical in places but it is a model of clarity (and perhaps the nearest British sociology has come to a work

in the spirit of Weber's *Economy and Society*); one chapter, in which he derives eight types of situation from three variables and deploys an economical combination of upper and lower case lettering, seems to have been the model for his friend Gellner's better-known chapter on 'Types of Nationalism' (Gellner, 1983); neither Andreski the Pole nor Gellner the Czech were impressed by the combination of dull textbooks and obscure (French-influenced) theorising that began to appear in Britain in the 1970s. For Andreski the problem was exacerbated by the very expansion of the social sciences that had given so many exiles a chance but which now made sociology home to people not up to the job, who used 'difficult' language to mask the paucity of their ideas (Andreski, 1972); Glass saw a bleak future for clarity and good sense in the new urban sociology of Manuel Castells (Glass, 1977); Gellner would reprise some of these themes in his attacks on postmodernism shortly before his death.

Finally, our exiles were mostly central European men born before World War II, and they brought the attitudes of their era with them, attitudes that began to be noticed and called into question. We may end, then, as we began, with a scene, this time from the corridor of a provincial British sociology department. It is the early 1990s. A man in his late sixties, greying hair all over the place, walking stick in hand, a man whose father knew Walter Benjamin in Berlin before the war, whose mother and aunts perished in a concentration camp in Latvia, who in the 1950s, as the only white man in a Chicago steel works had been presented by his black colleagues with a collection that would help fund his graduate studies, who has devoted his scholarly life to the situation of workers in Africa, who has fought all his life against racism and intolerance, makes what he takes to be an innocent remark to a young female colleague. In return he receives a lecture on sexism. Later in life, he will refer repeatedly to this incident for the personal hurt it caused him.

Leszek Kolakowski, exiled from communist Poland, once said that Britain was an island in Europe, Oxford an island in Britain, All Souls an island in Oxford, and he himself an island in All Souls. Others may have felt something similar, but the truth is that, quite apart from a body of concepts they fashioned or doctrines they propagated, the enduring legacy of British sociology's exiles consists in the way they participated in the shaping of the discipline's national identity, and in the lessons they taught their hosts: about the existence of a larger life of the mind, and about how important it is and how difficult it

can be to maintain the right balance between involvement and detachment, both in personal conduct and in scholarship.

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