

Expulsion of Jewish Scientists from 1933 — Twelfth Topos Case, Configuration K

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Expulsion of Jewish Scientists from 1933 — Twelfth Topos Case

Index card v0.2-f. Extends the configuration series A–J with Configuration K. Structurally different from A–J: not single case but structural mass displacement; not procedural but legal; not killing but professional ban + exile.

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Preliminary: scale finding analogous to G

K, like the stabilised G, is **not a person configuration** but a **structural mass configuration**. About **133,000** German Jewish émigrés went to the US by 1944; ~25 % of German physicists were “non-Aryan” in 1933 and affected; **11 past or future Nobel laureates** were stripped of their positions in 1933. The index card treats the **phenomenon**, not individual biographies.

Layer profile (6 layers, collective)

Layer 1 — Legislation and administrative execution from 1933

- **Dating:** from 7 April 1933 (“Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service”)
- **Source:** *Reichsgesetzblatt* I 1933, pp. 175ff.; Hentschel 1996 (source anthology *Physics and National Socialism*, Birkhäuser); Beyrerchen 1977 (*Scientists Under Hitler*, Yale UP)
- **Core content:** § 3 BBG: “Civil servants who are not of Aryan descent are to be placed in retirement; in the case of honorary officials, they are to be dismissed from office.” Since German universities are state-funded, the law applies to all non-Aryan teachers. **Front-fighter exception** (Hindenburg compromise, § 3(2)) is effective only briefly and is undermined by later laws (Reich Citizenship Law 1935).

- **D1:** near-contemporary (administrative-juridical)
- **D2:** G1 (legislative and administrative writing)
- **D3:** direct
- **D4:** political (NS ideology); administrative-state
- **D5:** canonical in historical research

Layer 2 — Scientific pre-operationalisation 1924–1933

- **Dating:** 1924–1933
- **Source:** Beyerchen 1977; Gercke / Willrich, “Archive for Racial Statistics by Profession” (Göttingen 1924); records of the Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland
- **Core content:** As early as 1924 Achim Gercke (chemistry student) and Hugo Willrich (history professor) at Göttingen publish lists of Jewish and “Jewish-connected” university members at Göttingen, Berlin, Königsberg, Breslau. **Administrative infrastructure prepared before 1933** — NS execution 1933 is not spontaneous but operationalises a list logic built up over years. Methodologically important: D4 functional context “racial statistics by profession” outlives political regimes as administrative logic.
- **D1:** near-contemporary
- **D2:** G1 (lists, statistics)
- **D3:** direct; pre-operationalisation
- **D4:** racial-ideological + administrative-preparatory
- **D5:** canonical in research

Layer 3 — Expulsion itself, statistics and individual fates 1933–1939

- **Dating:** April 1933 (first waves) to September 1939 (war start largely closes emigration routes)
- **Source:** *List of Displaced German Scholars* (Notgemeinschaft, 1936; updates 1937); AIP / *Physics Today* “The Scientific Exodus from Nazi Germany” (tracking 129 physicists); Moser 2014 (*American Economic Review*, Stanford); Atomic Heritage Foundation; Stachura 1992
- **Core content:**
 - **25 % of German physicists** lose their positions.
 - **>2,600 scientists** in the *List of Displaced German Scholars* of 1936.
 - Individual fates: **Einstein** (Princeton, Institute for Advanced Study, taking up 1933); **Max Born** (Cambridge → Edinburgh; Nobel Prize 1954); **James Franck** (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins; later Manhattan Project); **Niels Bohr** (Copenhagen, 1943 flight to Sweden, then USA); **Erwin**

Schrödinger (Oxford → Graz → Dublin); **Lise Meitner** (Stockholm, later Cambridge); **Fritz Haber** (Cambridge, dies 1934 — “patriotic tragedy”); **Leo Szilard, John von Neumann, Eugene Wigner, Edward Teller** (all Princeton/USA); **Theodore von Kármán** (Caltech, already 1930).

- **Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland** (mediation organisation, Zurich-based, founded 1933 by Philipp Schwartz).

- **D1:** near-contemporary
- **D2:** G1 (statistical surveys, lists, correspondence, autobiographical accounts)
- **D3:** direct
- **D4:** political-administrative; humanitarian-organisational (Notgemeinschaft); scientific (receiving countries)
- **D5:** canonical

Layer 4 — “Lethal Indifference” (Kershaw) — the non-expelled scientific establishment

- **Dating:** from 1933
- **Source:** Kershaw 2008 (*Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution*); Beyerchen 1977; Rosbaud 1945 (memoir); Mètode (Universidad de València) “Einstein and Nazi Physics”
- **Core content:** “Lethal indifference” (Kershaw) of the non-affected scientists. Rosbaud 1945 quotes a Göttingen member: “If they should venture to break our university to pieces by expelling men such as James Franck, Born, Courant, Landau, we shall rise like one man to protest against it.” Next day the papers report the dismissals — “*and all the other members of Göttingen University remained sitting and had forgotten their intention to rise and protest*”. Heisenberg writes to Born (in exile) that Planck has received assurances from Hitler — the scientific establishment accommodates itself. **Structural asymmetry finding to G:** in G power shatters the discipline against resistance of the knowers; in K it shatters them with acceptance or silence of the non-expelled knowers.
- **D1:** near-contemporary (eyewitnesses) to distant (Kershaw)
- **D2:** G1 (letters, memoirs, academic historiography)
- **D3:** direct + known-intermediate
- **D4:** historical-moral + science-historical
- **D5:** canonical in research; partly repressed in national memory culture

Layer 5 — Science transfer effects and economic measurement

- **Dating:** from 1933 with effect measurements from 1940s, peer-reviewed quantifications from 2000s

- **Source:** Moser, Petra (2014): “German Jewish Émigrés and US Invention.” *American Economic Review*; Stanford Economics — empirical study; Hoch / Yarden 1973ff. (Jewish science emigration in Mandate Palestine / Israel); Krohn 1993; Stachura 1992
- **Core content:**
 - **US patents** in fields of Jewish émigrés **+31 %** from 1933 (Moser 2014 — peer-reviewed empirical study, difference-in-differences design, causal identification).
 - **Manhattan Project:** Szilard, Wigner, Teller, von Neumann, Franck central; not so realised without 1933 emigration.
 - **Israel:** scientific tradition founded (Hebrew University Jerusalem, Weizmann Institute Rehovot, Technion Haifa) builds substantially on 1933 émigrés.
 - **Great Britain, Turkey** (Istanbul University Reform 1933, ca. 200 German scientists), **Switzerland, USA:** specific receiving clusters.
 - **Knowledge transfer as topos:** not “lost” but “relocated”.
- **D1:** distant
- **D2:** G1 (academic historiography, economic empirics)
- **D3:** known-intermediate
- **D4:** economic-historical + politically functional (Cold War US self-understanding: “we took in the best minds”)
- **D5:** canonical in the specific research

Layer 6 — Topos condensation and pop narratives

- **Dating:** from 1945, intensively from the 1960s
- **Source:** pop biography (Einstein in countless films, books, stamps); Pais 1982 (*Subtle is the Lord...*, Einstein biography); films such as “Einstein and Eddington” (BBC 2008), “Genius” (NatGeo 2017); Hollywood sci-fi topoi
- **Core content:**
 - **Mass phenomenon condenses onto Einstein** as symbolic figure — structurally analogous to Vavilov topos in Configuration G.
 - Other collectively bearing figures (Born, Franck, Haber, Schrödinger) recede; Lise Meitner is discovered as topos figure only late (Sime 1996 biography as turning point).
 - **Symmetry finding to G:** in G discipline repression condenses onto Vavilov, in K onto Einstein. **Topos condensation onto one person is a systematic pop phenomenon for mass configurations.**

- Apocryphal topoi: Einstein quotations (e.g. “God does not play dice”) are freely misattributed; invention of Einstein-mathematical-weakness topos in educational research pop literature.

- **D1:** distant
- **D2:** G1 + G2 (oral pop culture tradition)
- **D3:** cross-genre transposed (history of science → pop biography → film)
- **D4:** popular-scientific + politically functional (US Cold War self-narrative)
- **D5:** canonical in pop culture; partly criticised in specialist research

Configuration K (new)

K — Structural mass expulsion through legal professional disenfranchisement; migration-induced knowledge displacement with measurable economic effects; topos condensation onto individual figures despite collective reality; “lethal indifference” of the non-expelled knowledge bearers.

Six characteristic features:

1. **Legally anchored, not procedural.** Unlike A (Socrates), C (Hypatia), E (Galileo), H (al-Ḥallāj), I (Ibn Rushd): no individual trials with charge and verdict, but **collective administrative execution** on the basis of a law. The process is structured as a legal mass act.
2. **Pre-operationalisation through ideological statistics.** Unlike G (Vavilov: Lysenko’s rise within the existing scientific establishment): in K **a decade-long scientific pre-operationalisation** exists (Gercke / Willrich Göttingen from 1924). The “racial statistics by profession” is administrative preparation that makes the legislation immediately executable in 1933.
3. **No death as power mode.** Unlike A, B, C, D, G, H: not killing but **professional ban + existence withdrawal + migration**. Death follows secondarily (Haber 1934 in exile; isolated suicides), not as main mode. **Power mode is professional ban, not execution.**
4. **Mass migration effect with measurable knowledge transfer.** Unlike all preceding configurations: in K **the knowledge transfer can be economically quantified** (Moser 2014: +31 % US patents in affected fields). Knowledge fate is here **statistically observable**, not only biographically narratable.
5. **Lethal indifference of the scientific establishment.** Unlike G (Vavilov: solidarity of the non-arrested colleagues, seed-collection protection in Leningrad): in K **the non-expelled are predominantly silent fellow travellers or beneficiaries.**

Göttingen example Rosbaud 1945: protest announcement, silence after execution.
Scientific establishment accommodates itself to the expulsion — a structural property that G does not have.

6. **Topos condensation onto individual figure (Einstein) despite mass reality.**
As in G (condensation onto Vavilov) — structural symmetry between the two mass configurations. **Pop topos needs an individual person, cannot work with mass statistics.** Methodological finding: topos condensation as lawful phenomenon in mass repression.
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Three v0.1 findings — re-examined (state after 12 cases)

Finding 1 (apocryphal phrase): 4/12 with classical apocryphal phrase (B, C, E, H). K has *Einstein-quote misattributions* as pop phenomenon, but no single “martyr phrase” for the expulsion as a whole. Finding: mass configurations develop **different topos structures** than single-case configurations — condensed person plus dispersed quote pop culture.

Finding 2 (knowers without first-person voice): 4/12 (33 %). In K the expelled overwhelmingly preserved their voice (publications, autobiographies, interviews) — knowledge transfer into other languages and countries is a **preserving displacement** of voice. Topos-wise, however, the mass voice is condensed onto Einstein.

Finding 3 (empirical decidability): Not primarily applicable to K — no single matter of dispute but structural act. State: 2/12 (F, G). Finding continues to be carried by the lead configurations.

New candidate finding (mass-configuration symmetry): G and K share four structural features that A–F (and H, I, J) do not have: 1. Scale beyond single case 2. Disciplinarily/structurally effective extinction or displacement 3. Topos condensation onto individual figure 4. Statistically observable collective effects (G: discipline backwardness; K: knowledge transfer)

This points to a **structural class distinction** between single-case configurations (A–F, H, I, J) and mass configurations (G, K) that should be systematically developed in v0.3.

Connection to A–J

- **K ↔ G:** both mass configurations with topos condensation; G works within-state, K compels diaspora.
- **K ↔ D (Maya scribes):** both collective repression acts. D exercised by foreign colonial power; K by own state power. D: destruction of knowledge bearers; K: expulsion of knowledge bearers.

- **K $\leftrightarrow$ J (Tycho legacy):** both with measurable knowledge transfer. J: into another theory (Kepler $\rightarrow$ heliocentric); K: into other countries (Manhattan, Israel, UK).

Limitations

- Index card, not full analysis. Full version would statistically analyse the *List of Displaced German Scholars*, compare regional receiving clusters, quantitatively test the “lethal indifference” thesis.
- Secondary sources English-German centred. Russian, Turkish, Brazilian (two specific receiving countries) and Chinese (Shanghai ghetto 1939–45) scholarship not systematically referenced.
- Configuration K formulated based on one case (expulsion 1933–39 Germany/Austria). Comparison cases: expulsion from Italy 1938 (Razza laws; Fermi); Soviet repressions 1947–53 (Stalin antisemitism); Iran 1979 (science emigration after Islamic Revolution). These would stabilise the configuration type.
- v0.1 Eurocentrism is here structurally confirmed — K is a primarily Western phenomenon that has reached other cultural areas (Turkey, Iran), but methodologically remains within the Western concept of science.

Sources

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 - **Mètode (Universidad de València)**, “Einstein and Nazi Physics” special issue.
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