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Physicists' Forced Migrations under Hitler

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When the Nazis came to power in early 1933 they initiated formal and informal measures that forced Jews and political opponents from public institutions such as universities. Some physicists retired and others went into industry, but most emigrated. International communication and contact made emigration a viable option despite the desperate economic times in the Great Depression. Another wave of emigrations followed the annexation of Austria in 1938. Individual cases as well as general patterns of migration and adaptation to new environments will be examined in this presentation. One important result of the forced migrations was that many of the physicists expelled under Hitler played important roles in strengthening physics elsewhere, often on the Allied side in World War II.