

LION FEUCHTWANGER (1884 - 1958)

Writer

1884

July 7: Lion Feuchtwanger born in Munich as the son of Jewish factory owner Sigmund Feuchtwanger and his wife Johanna (née Bodenheimer).

1903

Feuchtwanger begins studies of German literature and history in Munich.

During this time, he becomes part of the Munich bohemian scene and writes his first plays, stories and theater reviews.

1907

Ph.D. dissertation on Heinrich Heine's (1797-1856) "The Rabbi of Bacharach".

1907

Begins work as an advising dramatist at the Munich theater.

1912

Marries Marta Loeffler, who is expecting his child. His daughter dies soon after birth.

1914

Feuchtwanger, on a trip to Tunisia with his wife, is overtaken by the beginning of World War I. He barely escapes internment by the French.

1914

Begins military service in Munich. Released prematurely due to health reasons. During this time, Feuchtwanger's plays become increasingly political in content. He becomes one of the early opponents of the war.

1918

Work on the dramatic novel "Thomas Wendt."

Publication of the drama "Jud Süß" (Jew Süss), which he retracts a short time later despite its great success and transforms into a novel nobody wants to publish at first.

1923

Publication of the historical novel "The Ugly Duchess" about a Tyrolean duchess who tried in vain to overcome the handicap of her homeliness and her role as an outsider.

1924

Together with his friend Bertolt Brecht, he works on the play "Edward II".

1925

Publication of the novel "Jew Süss". Feuchtwanger describes the case of Joseph Süss Oppenheimer, the financial advisor to a duke of Wuerttemberg, who was sentenced to death in a sensational court case in 1738 and cruelly executed.

For Feuchtwanger, this story has parallels to the life of Walther Rathenau and the issue of the assimilation of Jews in Germany.

Move to Berlin.

Withdraws from theater life.

1927

Premiere of the play "The Oil Island".

1930

His first contemporary novel "Success" is published. It narrates Bavaria's history from 1921 to 1924 and also deals with Adolf Hitler's attempted "beer hall" putsch on November 9, 1923.

1932

Publication of the first volume of the "Josephus" trilogy, titled "The Jewish War".

1933

When the Nazis take power, Feuchtwanger is on a lecture tour in the United States. He does not return to Germany but moves to Sanary-sur-mer in France.

His house in Berlin is searched, looted and seized by the Nazis. Many manuscripts are lost.

Feuchtwanger becomes politically active as a writer. His novel "The Oppermanns" depicts the fate of a German-Jewish family in Berlin during the Nazi regime.

1935

The second volume of the "Josephus" trilogy, "The Jew of Rome" is published.

1936

Feuchtwanger's Hitler satire "The Pretender" is published.

1940

Feuchtwanger's leaning towards socialism manifests itself in the novel "Exile".

During World War II, he is interned in the Les Milles camp near Aix-en-Provence. After a short while, he flees with the help of his wife. He lives in hiding in Marseille.

September: Feuchtwanger flees to Los Angeles by way of Spain and Portugal.

1942

Delivers an account of his camp experiences in "The Devil in France".

1943

Move to Pacific Palisades.

1945

Collaboration with Brecht on "The Visions of Simone Marchard".

1945

After the war, Feuchtwanger returns to writing historical novels.

1948

During the persecution of socialists and communists under Joseph McCarthy (1908-1957), Feuchtwanger is suspected of communism. The United States refuses him citizenship, preventing him from leaving the country again. His political difficulties give rise to his play "The Devil in Boston" about the Massachusetts witch hunts.

1954

The last volume of the "Josephus Trilogy" is published in German. It is titled "The Day Will Come".

1955 - 1957

Feuchtwanger turns to Jewish tradition on a deeper level again with "Raquel, the Jewess of Toledo" and "Jephta and his Daughter".

1958

December 21: Lion Feuchtwanger dies in Los Angeles.